

## BBC Staff in Open Revolt Over Gaza.

By [Marc Vandepitte](#)

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

*The BBC is dealing with a major internal revolt about its reporting on the Israel-Gaza conflict. Journalists are claiming the organization is systematically biased and frames the story in a particular way.*

The Dutch version of this article was censored by Facebook. Ironically, reporting on this censorship is also being censored...

### Note by Global Research



The BBC is being generously funded by the [Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to produce fake news.](#) [the amounts of money allocated by Bill Gates are in the billions.](#)

### BBC Staff should focus on who is paying for fake news.

Important article by Mark Vandepitte.

M. Ch, Global Research.

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26 dec. 2024

## We hebben je bericht verwijderd

### Waarom is dit gebeurd?

Het lijkt erop dat je op een misleidende wijze hebt geprobeerd vind-ik-leuks, volgers, deelacties of videoweergaven te krijgen.



De Wereld Morgen

· 26 dec. 2024

De BBC wordt geconfronteerd met een interne opstand over haar verslaggeving over de oorlog van Israël tegen Gaza. Journalisten beschuldigen de organisatie van structurele partijdigheid en...  
Gedeeld op De Wereld Morgen

Dit is in strijd met onze richtlijnen voor de community inzake spam.

“We have removed your post. The reason given is that you attempted to deceive users to increase your likes, followers, shares, or video views.”

Mainstream media rarely engage in outright media lies, but it does happen. Just think of the mass grave in Timișoara, the incubator babies in Kuwait, or the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. (For a more detailed explanation of these blatant lies, see the Annex at the end of the article.)

More often, the distortion of reality happens more subtly, through framing, omitting or underreporting events, leaving out context, selecting experts, exaggerating facts, using misleading headlines, suggestive photos, and so on.

In most cases, this distortion of reality does not originate with individual journalists but is initiated and driven by their editors. These editors, in turn, are under pressure from commercial media tycoons. In the case of public broadcasters, they are under political tutelage and control.

Another filter that colors the reporting comes from advertisers. Reports that are not conducive to their profit expectations are avoided as much as possible.

To keep journalists in line, there are three mechanisms. Firstly, it is checked whether their ideology more or less corresponds with that of the editor and the employer. When they are hired, this is not obvious, but over time it is possible and determines further career opportunities.

Secondly, to keep things manageable and to avoid jeopardizing their careers journalists

conform to editorial pressure by applying self-censorship.

If these two mechanisms are insufficient, the editor will either adjust any 'disturbing' elements on rereading, or certain passages will simply be deleted. In the worst case, entire articles or reports are not published.

## **BBC and Gaza**

For unimportant or politically neutral subjects, editorial interventions are usually unnecessary. It is primarily when events are politically charged that reporting is distorted or manipulated. Over the past 15 months, this has certainly been the case with the genocide in Gaza.

As outsiders, we are usually unaware of how reporting is manipulated and directed. There is no real gag order, but an individual journalist who spills the beans can fear for his or her career prospects.

It is only when things get out of hand and a group of journalists publicly express their grievances that we get a glimpse of this invisible but very present pressure on reporting. In recent months, this has been the case with regard to BBC reporting on the war against Gaza.

In November 2024, more than 100 journalists from the public broadcaster signed an [open letter](#) calling for fairer and more accurate reporting.

They accuse the BBC of systematic bias, emphasizing Israeli narratives, undervaluing Palestinian victims, and failing to reflect the asymmetry of the conflict.

The criticism is primarily directed at the online news department, which plays a key role in how millions of people worldwide interpret the situation in Gaza.

## **Structural Bias**

The discontent among journalists is the result of years of frustration. Many employees claim that reporting on Israel and Palestine is structurally influenced by senior management, and in particular by Raffi Berg, head of the online Middle East desk.

Berg is accused of editing articles and headlines in such a way as to downplay criticism of Israel. Complaints from journalists about his influence are said to be consistently ignored by the management.

The journalists proposed explicitly stating that Israel does not grant access to Gaza to foreign reporters. They want Israel's responsibility to be more clearly stated and for experts in human rights and war crimes to be proportionately referred to and given the floor as sources.

These calls were largely ignored, further fueling frustration among employees.

## **Incidents**

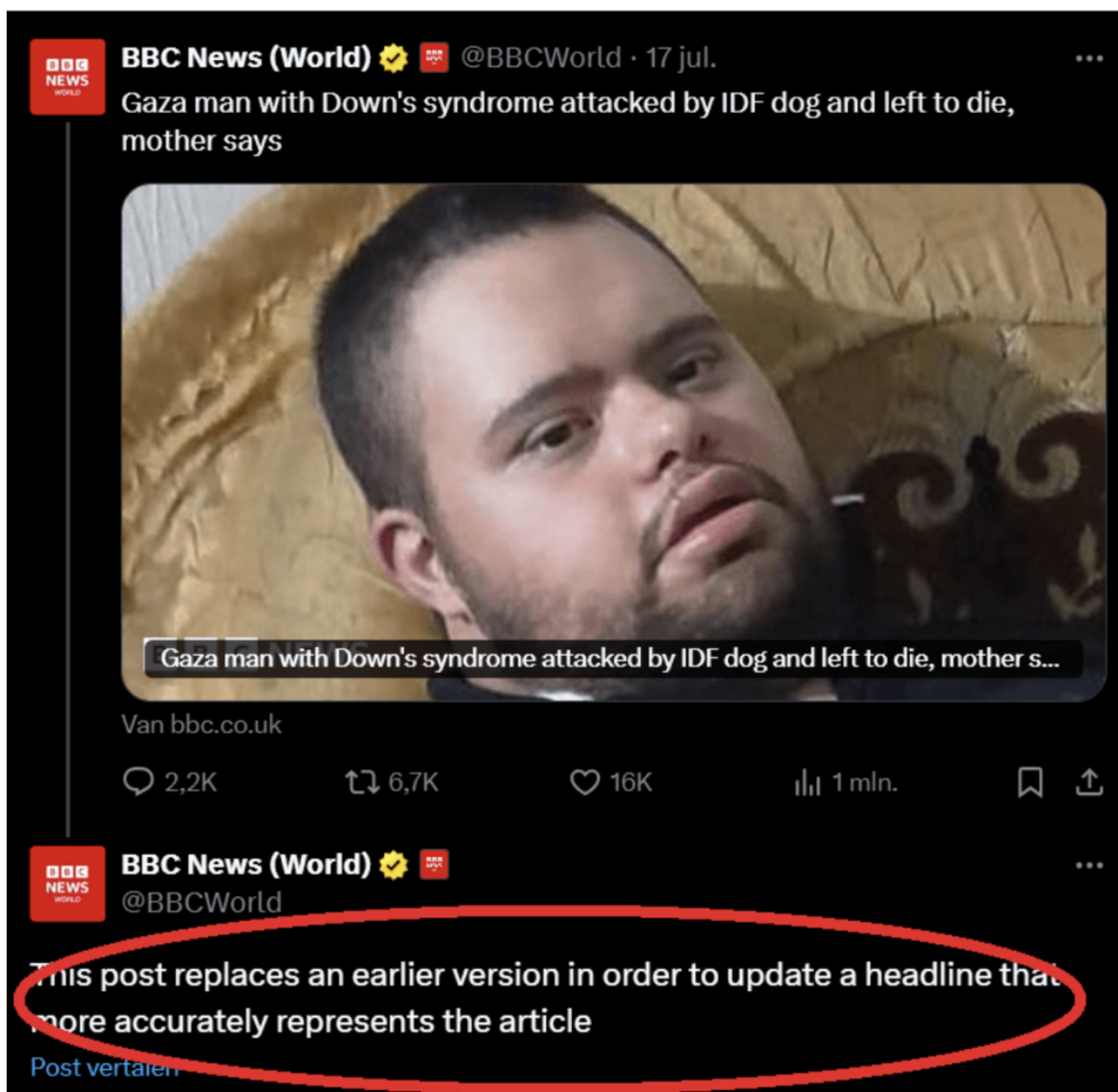
Several incidents have escalated internal tensions. In December 2024, Amnesty International published [a report](#) accusing Israel of genocide in Gaza. Journalists criticized the

BBC for its minimal and delayed attention to this report.

While other news organizations prominently featured the report, it was only mentioned on the BBC website 12 hours after publication and only as the seventh item on the front page. The report was initially even missing from the special 'Israel-Gaza war' section, leading to significantly fewer readers.

Another widely discussed case was the reporting on Muhammad Bhar, a Palestinian man with Down syndrome, who was attacked by an Israeli military dog and left to die.

The original headline "The lonely death of a Gaza man with Down syndrome" was heavily criticized because it did not clearly state Israel's responsibility. After public and internal pressure, the headline was changed, but even then, the responsibility of the Israeli military was not adequately stated.



## **The Role of Management**

Raffi Berg's interference is seen as a central problem. He is said to have a disproportionate influence on the editorial line and to rewrite articles in order to present Israel in a more favorable light. Even experienced reporters working in the field must have their copy approved by Berg before it is published.

Berg is alleged to adjust headlines and texts to emphasize the Israeli side and weaken Palestinian claims.

The management is accused of ignoring these concerns. Despite multiple 'listening sessions' in which journalists voiced their criticisms, little or nothing has been done to improve the situation.

## **Inequality in Reporting**

A data analysis of more than 2,900 articles and headlines on the BBC news website shows that Palestinian victims are described in a less human and emotional manner than Israeli victims.

Terms such as 'massacre' and 'atrocities' are used disproportionately more often for Palestinian actions than for Israeli military operations. In only 27% of cases where Palestinians die, the perpetrator is explicitly named in the headline, compared to 43% in cases of Israeli victims.

By comparison, in reporting on Ukraine, Russian war crimes are more explicitly described, which, according to employees, shows that the BBC is hesitant to criticize Israel. This pattern reinforces the feeling that the organization is sparing the Israeli government.

## **BBC's Response**

The BBC has rejected the accusations, stating that it adheres to strict guidelines for impartiality. In a statement, the BBC emphasized: "We report impartially and without fear or favor".

While mistakes are acknowledged and corrected, many BBC journalists believe that critical shortcomings in the reporting persist and that corrections often come too late. They believe that the current reporting does not meet the journalistic standards that the BBC claims to uphold.

As one journalist put it: "There has to be a moral line drawn in the sand. And if this story isn't it, then what?"

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The distortions in BBC reporting and the pressure from management have come to light because journalists from that broadcaster have found the courage to no longer remain silent. The pressure from editors-in-chief will not be equally strong everywhere, but you can assume that this pressure is present in *all* mainstream media and colors the reporting.

Today, mainstream media are more than ever companies with large commercial interests and have a significant political impact. Reporting - and its framing - plays a major role in

how citizens understand the world, how voters make political choices, and how people consume. So, there is a lot at stake.

The manipulation within the BBC shows how the establishment is doing everything it can to streamline reporting and align it with a vision that is favorable or at least harmless to the establishment. This highlights, once again, the importance of alternative media such as *Global Research*.

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### [Global Research's Holiday Fundraiser](#)

**Marc Vandepitte** is a member of the Network of Intellectuals and Artists in Defense of Humanity and was an observer during the presidential elections in Venezuela. He is a regular contributor to *Global Research*.

### Sources

[The BBC's Civil War Over Gaza](#)

[BBC staff in open letter accuse broadcaster of pro-Israel bias](#)

*Featured image is from Jewish Voice for Labour*

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## Annex: Media Lies

### The Timișoara Mass Grave

In the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall, large-scale protests erupted in December 1989 in Timișoara, a city in western Romania. During the chaotic days that followed, reports emerged that a mass grave had been discovered in Timișoara, containing hundreds of bodies.

International media reported extensively on this alleged evidence of systematic murder by the regime. The news of the mass grave fueled anger against the leader Ceaușescu, both in Romania and internationally. As a result of this 'scandal', there were even calls in the West for military intervention.

Afterwards, it turned out to be fake news. A small number of corpses of people that were not connected with the protests had been used.

### Incubator Babies of Kuwait

In 1990, Iraq, under the leadership of Saddam Hussein, invaded Kuwait. The US assembled a military coalition to expel the Iraqi army from Kuwait. In the run-up to the intervention, a 15-year-old girl testified before US Congress.

She stated that she had worked in a hospital in Kuwait and had witnessed firsthand how Iraqi soldiers had pulled babies out of incubators and left them to die on the cold floor.

This testimony was widely reported in the international mainstream media and became the symbol of Saddam Hussein's cruelty. The story was instrumental in building public support for the planned military invasion.

After the war, it came to light that the story of the incubator babies was a fabrication. The girl turned out to be the daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador to the United States. Her testimony had been carefully orchestrated by Hill & Knowlton, a large American PR firm hired by the Kuwaiti government to generate support for military action.

### **Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq**

As part of the 'War on Terror', the United States wanted to invade Iraq and implement regime change. To justify this attack, US President Bush and UK Prime Minister Tony Blair claimed that Iraq possessed chemical, biological, and possibly nuclear weapons.

They argued that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was a dangerous dictator who could potentially transfer these weapons to terrorist groups, such as Al-Qaeda, and that therefore they posed a threat to the entire world.

These claims were taken up and disseminated by the mainstream media. Afterwards, it turned out that the intelligence and the so-called 'evidence' on which the US and UK had based their arguments were unreliable, misinterpreted, or manipulated. The Bush administration had made deliberately misleading statements about the alleged threat.

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