# Gary Lineker faces BBC future uncertainty after sharing post labelled anti-Semitic



Gary Lineker, the celebrated BBC sports presenter, faces significant backlash following his sharing of a controversial social media post that has been labelled as 'anti-Semitic' by sections of the Jewish community. The incident revolves around an Instagram video featuring an image of a rat, a symbol historically associated with anti-Jewish propaganda, particularly during the Nazi era. Although Lineker swiftly deleted the post and expressed deep regret, the fallout has reignited discussions about the BBC's policies on impartiality and the responsibilities of its presenters.

The post originated from the pro-Palestinian group, Palestine Lobby, and criticized the ideology of Zionism—the political movement advocating for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. Lineker, widely respected for his sports commentary and a 26-year tenure hosting "Match of the Day," publicly stated, "I very much regret these references. I would never knowingly share anything anti-Semitic. It goes against everything I believe in." His immediate removal of the post suggests an awareness of the sensitivities around the imagery utilized.

Despite his apology, tensions have simmered within the BBC. Insiders have revealed dissatisfaction among BBC staff, particularly regarding Lineker's perceived disregard for the impact of his posts. One source noted that while he was scheduled to host the Cup final, uncertainty looms over his future with the network. The combination of sharing incendiary content and making comments perceived as critical of BBC management has reportedly heightened unease among colleagues, with one staff member commenting on the “real dig” aimed at Alex Kay-Jelski, the BBC's director of sport.

This incident is not isolated; in January 2024, a group of Jewish BBC staff formally complained about Lineker's social media activity, expressing concerns over anti-Semitism and the corporation's inadequate response. The BBC has previously been accused of being 'wilfully blind' to anti-Semitism in the context of these controversies. Critics, including former BBC director Danny Cohen, argued for immediate action against Lineker for breaching impartiality guidelines and for promoting content seen as offensive to the Jewish community.

The pressure on the BBC's integrity is compounded by Lineker's previous statements regarding the Israeli government's actions in Gaza, which he described as "beyond depraved." His vocal criticism of Israel, including a retweet promoting a campaign to suspend Israel from international football due to alleged violations of international law, has led to a mixed reception from the public and his colleagues alike. Critics argue that his approach violates the BBC's requirement for impartiality, and this incident has reinforced the idea that Lineker's outspoken nature might not align with the broadcaster's obligations.

In light of these events, Tim Davie, the BBC's director-general, underscored the importance of upholding the corporation's reputation, stating, "The BBC’s reputation is held by everyone and when someone makes a mistake, it costs us." The director-general emphasised the necessity for presenters to embody BBC values, particularly in their social media interactions.

Lineker, who reportedly earns around £1.4 million per year, has previously faced scrutiny for comments deemed politically charged. The ongoing debates over his social media activity include discussions on whether the BBC's guidelines provide sufficient clarity and protection for staff against reputational harm linked to the opinions expressed by its most high-profile presenters.

As Lineker prepares to conclude his tenure on "Match of the Day" at the end of this season, speculation regarding his future with the BBC grows. The combination of this latest incident of sharing controversial content and existing tensions over managerial decisions could spell a challenging road ahead for a broadcaster that prides itself on impartiality in an increasingly polarised landscape.

The prospect of Lineker exiting before next summer’s World Cup in North America adds further complexity. His position within the BBC is now said to be under scrutiny, although official sources have not confirmed any decisions, leaving the industry abuzz with speculation.

Ultimately, the ongoing situation underscores the delicate balance between personal expression and professional responsibility within public broadcasting, highlighting challenges faced by media providers in maintaining credibility amidst the evolving social media landscape.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1-2, 5-6, 8-9: Source [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14721555/Gary-Lineker-leave-BBC-fury-anti-semitic-rat-post.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
2. Paragraphs 3, 4, 7: Source [[2]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/01/23/jewish-bbc-staff-formal-complaint-antisemitism-gary-lineker/)
3. Paragraphs 4, 6: Source [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/01/16/bbc-accused-wilful-blindness-to-anti-semitism-gary-lineker/)
4. Paragraphs 4, 8: Source [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/football/2024/jan/20/gary-lineker-says-he-received-threats-after-israeli-sports-ban-retweet)
5. Paragraphs 4, 6: Source [[5]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/01/14/gary-lineker-retweeting-call-for-israel-ban/)
6. Paragraphs 4: Source [[6]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/12/12/gary-lineker-is-humiliating-the-bbc-it-has-to-stop/)
7. Paragraphs 5-6: Source [[7]](https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-66940530)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14721555/Gary-Lineker-leave-BBC-fury-anti-semitic-rat-post.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/01/23/jewish-bbc-staff-formal-complaint-antisemitism-gary-lineker/> - In January 2024, Jewish BBC staff filed formal complaints regarding Gary Lineker's social media activity, expressing concerns over alleged anti-Semitism and the BBC's handling of the situation. The complaints addressed issues ranging from the corporation's coverage of the Israel-Hamas conflict to Lineker's social media posts and the BBC's defense of the presenter. Sources indicated that some staff felt the BBC was indifferent to concerns about anti-Semitism, leading to dissatisfaction among Jewish employees within the organization.
3. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/01/16/bbc-accused-wilful-blindness-to-anti-semitism-gary-lineker/> - In January 2024, the BBC faced criticism for allegedly being 'wilfully blind' to anti-Semitism following Gary Lineker's social media posts. Lineker had retweeted a pro-Palestinian campaign's call for Israel to be banned from football tournaments over 'grave violations of international law.' Critics, including former BBC director Danny Cohen, argued that the BBC's management should have taken immediate action against Lineker for breaching impartiality guidelines and promoting content offensive to the Jewish community.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/football/2024/jan/20/gary-lineker-says-he-received-threats-after-israeli-sports-ban-retweet> - Gary Lineker reported receiving threats after retweeting and subsequently deleting a post by the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, which called for Israel to be banned from international sporting events. Lineker stated that he misread the post as a statement about an existing ban rather than a call for one. Despite the backlash, he emphasized that he was not the victim and expressed concern over the toxic nature of social media discussions surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict.
5. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/01/14/gary-lineker-retweeting-call-for-israel-ban/> - In January 2024, Gary Lineker faced condemnation from MPs and Jewish leaders after retweeting a call for Israel to be banned from international football. The post, from the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic & Cultural Boycott of Israel, urged the suspension of Israel from global tournaments and games due to alleged violations of international law. The incident reignited debates over the BBC's impartiality and Lineker's role as a public broadcaster.
6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/12/12/gary-lineker-is-humiliating-the-bbc-it-has-to-stop/> - In December 2023, The Telegraph published an opinion piece criticizing Gary Lineker for sharing content accusing Israel of genocide, which was deemed factually inaccurate and offensive. The article highlighted the distress caused to the Jewish community and the lack of comparable sympathy shown by Lineker for victims of the October 7 attacks. It called for the BBC to take action against Lineker to prevent further humiliation of the organization.
7. <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-66940530> - In October 2023, the BBC announced a review of its social media guidelines following a controversy involving presenter Gary Lineker. The review aimed to address 'grey areas' in the rules after Lineker's posts led to debates over impartiality. The new guidelines emphasized 'high standards of civility in public discourse,' including treating others with respect and avoiding offensive language, while balancing freedom of expression with the BBC's responsibilities.