# Gary Lineker Defends Speaking on Humanitarian Issues Amid Criticism



Gary Lineker, the renowned Match of the Day presenter and former England footballer, has addressed criticism that he should refrain from commenting on political issues. Speaking on the Ruthie's Table 4 podcast, Lineker stated that the issues he speaks out on, such as immigration, climate change, and the Gaza conflict, are "humanitarian" rather than purely political.

Lineker, who has a significant social media following, attributed his more vocal stance in recent years to his engagement on platforms like Twitter. He expressed that using his platform for positive influence is essential, saying, "If you've got a platform like that, I just think what a waste it would be not to use it as a power for good."

The BBC’s highest-paid star emphasized the importance of empathy, particularly in contexts involving migrants fleeing crises. He discussed situations where individuals endure extreme risks to escape danger and pointed out the lack of empathy in such contexts. Lineker stated he would feel "ashamed" if he did not take a stand on these issues.

In the past, Lineker's social media activity has sparked controversy, including comparisons of governmental rhetoric on immigration to that of Nazi Germany, which led to an impartiality row and his temporary removal from hosting Match of the Day.

New social media guidelines by the BBC permit high-profile presenters to express personal views on issues, provided they do not engage in political campaigning. Despite criticism and controversies, Lineker remains steadfast in his approach, underscoring that his advocacy stems from a sense of humanitarian duty.