

# The BBC: propaganda which upholds Israeli war crimes

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Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

The portrayal of the BBC as independent and impartial public broadcaster is sadly misleading. The BBC is a global instrument of Zionist propaganda. In addition to defending Israel's terrorism and the illegal occupation of Palestinian land, the BBC is an active complicit in Zionism war crimes throughout the Middle East.

A [study](#) by Greg Philo and Mike Berry of the Glasgow University Media Unit in Scotland reveals that the British media, including the BBC denying the public an opportunity to understand the rights of the Palestinian people resistance to Israel's terror and Israeli occupation of Palestinian land. As a result of the BBC Zionist propaganda, the British public remain confused and unable to differentiate between the gross violence of the oppressors (the Israelis) and the retaliatory self-defence of the oppressed (the Palestinians). It is sad that the majority of the British public are unaware of the fact that since 1967 Palestinians are under illegal Israeli military occupation; the longest and most brutal in modern history. The so-called Palestinian "authority" is a myth created by Israel and the U.S. to manipulate public opinion and cover-up Israel's crimes.

With its veneer of English sophistication and global audience, the BBC is a formidable propaganda instrument. Just after the Israeli army murdered an entire family (the Ghalia's family) and wounded many more Palestinians while picnicking on a northern Gaza beach, the BBC was the first Western media to defend Israel and volunteered to cover-up Israel's crimes. The BBC went along to unchallenged the Israeli lies, and happily repeated the Israeli army (Israeli occupation forces [IOF]) claims that Israel is an innocent bystander. The BBC version was that; "Israel is not responsible for a blast that killed an entire Palestinian family enjoying a picnic on a Gaza beach last Friday, Defence Minister Amir Peretz says". The BBC deliberately ignored hard evidence – Palestinian eyewitnesses, hospital records, the U.S.-based Human Right Watch (HRW) and even Israelis – that refuted the Israeli military version of events.

The Nazareth-based British writer and journalist, [Jonathan Cook](#) wrote that the BBC "credulously reports preposterous arguments seeking to exonerate the Israeli army of responsibility for the shelling of the beach in Gaza that killed a Palestinian family of seven. It treats as equally credible the army's belated version in which Palestinian militants are said to have laid a single mine at a favourite seaside picnic spot in the futile hope of preventing the Israeli navy landing along the [Gaza] Strip's miles of coastline". It follows, that the BBC is complicit in Israel's crimes cover-up against the Palestinian people, and this is not an isolated incident.

The BBC has a history of defending Israel's terror since the creation of Israel by British

imperialists. Israeli Zionists and their supporters in the West are permanent guests on BBC programs, while Palestinians and pro-Palestinian voices are shut-off. It is noteworthy that in order to deceive the public, the BBC (occasionally) criticises Israel's terror against the Palestinians. However, any thing critique of Israel is said in an apologetic and vague form that praises Israel.

Furthermore, the current BBC coverage of the Israeli invasion and barbaric attacks on Gaza and the indiscriminate aggression on Lebanon shows that the BBC favours the Israeli-Zionist narrative at the expense of millions of defenceless Palestinian and Lebanese civilians. While the BBC called Israeli indiscriminate attacks on civilians – using U.S.-made Apache helicopter gunships, F-16s bombers and artillery shells – acts of “self defence”, the BBC blames the Palestinian and Lebanese resistant to Israel's aggression as “major escalation”.

It should be borne in mind that while Palestinian and Lebanese resistant attacks were on legitimate Israeli military targets, all Israeli attacks and blockades were indiscriminate and deliberately targeting innocent civilians, mostly children, and civilian infrastructures. Israel's “self-defence” must baffle any ‘expert’ trying to define terrorism.

In the mean time, Israel continues to impose its trademark, collective punishment – barbaric and coercive measures used by Israel (and the U.S. in Iraq) against Gaza and indiscriminately killing innocent Palestinian civilians. In flagrant violations of international law and the Geneva Conventions, Israel is deliberately terrorising the Palestinians – children and infants in particular – by using sonic booms, destroying Gaza's civilian infrastructures, including electricity and water supplies, health care services, and leaving the population vulnerable to starvation and chronic diseases. UN envoy John Dugard, told an emergency session of the Human Rights Council, that Israel is violating the “most fundamental norms of humanitarian law and human rights law” by deliberately imposing a barbaric siege on the Palestinian population. However, the UN has no teeth to bite with, and remains mute to act to stop Israel's terror.

According to a communiqué by the Swiss Government (custodian of the Geneva Conventions), there is “no doubt Israel has not taken the precautions required of it in international law [including the Geneva Conventions] to protect the civilian population and infrastructure ... The destruction of a power station, the attack on the offices of the Palestinian prime minister, the arbitrary arrests of a large number of democratically-elected representatives of the people and ministers... cannot be justified”. The 1949 Geneva Conventions (*Article 54*) state clearly that: “Starvation of civilians as a method of warfare is prohibited”. It is also “prohibited to attack, destroy, remove or render useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population” (*Article 51*). The willingness of the BBC in particular and Western media in general to be on the side of the Israeli military and deliberately blaming its victims for the violence is evidence that Western media are complicit in Israeli crimes against innocent civilians.

The advertised pretext for this criminal wanton destruction and deliberate collective punishment being carried out by the Israeli army is that Israel trying “to free” one soldier. The soldier was taken prisoner during a legitimate military operation by Palestinian resistance against Israeli military post from which the Israeli army routinely fired thousands of artillery shells into Gaza that have killed more than 30 Palestinians, including several children in the past few weeks. One day before the operation, Israeli commandos or the IOF abducted two brothers, Osama and Mustafa Abu Muamar, and took them to Israel, probably murdered. The heroic operation was called by an Israeli military expert as “a daring

commando action” which scared other soldiers nearby.

Since the invasion of Gaza, the Israeli army killed more than 90 innocent Palestinians, including many children as young as 6-years old, and injured more than 200 Palestinians, including more than 110 children. On the day (12 July) the U.S. vetoed a UN Resolutions condemning Israel’s terror against the Palestinians, more than twenty five Palestinians, including nine members of one family with their seven children, were murdered by the IOF. The besieged territory is the largest concentration camp on the planet, completely controlled by Israeli army. Gaza is constantly and heavily bombed from air, sea and land. These deliberate and indiscriminate acts of terrorism are war crimes against defenceless civilian population.

Furthermore, the Israeli invasion of Gaza is designed to terrorise the Palestinians, destroy a democratically elected legitimate leadership of the resistance movement (HAMAS), and to provide Israel with a cover to annex more Palestinian land in the West Bank and Jerusalem for illegal Jewish settlements (colonies). The Israeli army has been preparing for an attack on Gaza several months earlier and was constantly pushing for it, with the goal of destroying the Hamas infrastructure and its government and has very little to do with “freeing” one soldier. In fact Israel’s terror on Gaza is endangering the life of the soldier, who is being well treated by the Palestinians.

While the Israeli soldier is portrayed as an “innocent” clean-shaven teenager, there are some 10,000 Palestinian prisoners languishing in Israeli prisons. They include, 132 Palestinian women, 388 children and a dozen of infants as young as 3 months old, separated from their mothers and under brutal conditions. Many of the prisoners are imprisoned without charge as “Administrative Detainees”. They were kidnapped from their homes at midnight, imprisoned and subjected to torture, sexual abuses and denied their human rights and fair trial. For the BBC, Palestinians are nameless, voiceless and without identity.

As Jonathan Cook reported, the British media in general and the BBC in particular, “preferred to use words that misleadingly suggested [the soldier] was a victim, an innocent whose status as a soldier was not relevant to his fate. The Palestinians, as kidnappers and hostage-takers, were clearly not behaving in a legitimate manner”. Cook added; “Not only do [the BBC] reporters’ exhibit the biases associated with its institutional racism – as an organisation, the BBC chooses to identify with Israeli concerns before Palestinian ones – but they then compound this distortion by repeating uncritically Israel’s own misrepresentation of events”. Racism is central to the BBC propaganda. Racism is the BBC’s convenient tool to demonise the “Others” and justify killing them. Let’s not forget that Israel is built on violence and racism, and continue to use racism to identify itself as a “Jewish State” only. The notion that Jews are superior to other human beings and entitle to dominate and rule those who do not is just a case in point. In his seminal work *Jewish History, Jewish Religion: The Weight of Three Thousand Years* (2002), the late Israeli historian and academic, Israel Shahak argued that Israel is inherently racist society.

Like Israel, the BBC is devoid of any moral principles and objectivity. Again we are reminded of how the BBC transforms not only the Israelis from oppressors into victims but also the Palestinians from victims of Israel’s terror into perpetrators of violence. The BBC strips the Palestinians from their humanity and justifies their murder at the hands of Israeli terrorists. For the BBC, the Palestinians are “militants”, regardless of their age or gender, embarking on “destroying” the fourth largest army in the world. In other words, Israel is portrayed as a

victim of Palestinian “terrorism”, not the opposite.

For the BBC, one Israeli soldier, enforcing an illegal and criminal occupation is ranked far above those innocent Palestinian civilians. There are no murdered Palestinian children, and pregnant women dying at Israeli check points, and there are no BBC reports on the malnutrition and starvation of Palestinian caused by months-long Israeli blockades. As mentioned earlier, the BBC is global propaganda and its main goal is to mislead not only the British people but millions around the world in order to manipulate public opinion and cover-up Israel’s crimes against the Palestinian people.

In the Wes Bank and Jerusalem, the IOF and the Israeli police are on their rampage of terrorising Palestinians throughout the Occupied Territories, destroying and vandalising Palestinian charities, offices, and businesses. Schools and medical centres have been looted by Jewish extremists. Some 130 Palestinian lawmakers, government officials, cabinet ministers and ordinary activists were taken hostages without charge. The BBC described this mass midnight kidnapping as “arresting”. Furthermore, Israel has rejected peace and a ceasefire proposal put by the elected Palestinian Prime Minister, Ishmael Haniyeh, and threatened to assassinate him. Like many previous acts of terrorism committed by Israel, the BBC ignored to condemn Israel’s acts of naked state terrorism. (For more on Haniyeh’s peace initiative, see his [Washington Post](#), 11 July 2006).

On another front in Israel’s war of aggression, the BBC pro-Israel propaganda is in full swing. To justify Israel’s war of aggression against Lebanon, the BBC argued “[i]t is Hizbullah’s who have taken Lebanon hostage ... and Israeli is reacting in ‘self-defence’”, (Claire Balderstone, *BBC News Hour*, 13 July, 2006). How simple it is?

Only a complicit BBC will call Israel’s indiscriminate attacks – from the air, sea and land – on population centres and civilian infrastructure of Lebanon, including the Beirut Airport, roads, bridges, ports, power plants, water supply and TV stations, the blockade of Lebanon and the deliberate massacre of innocent civilians as Israel’s “self-defence”.

On the morning of Thursday 13 July 2006, U.S.-made F-16s bombed the home of Sayyed Adel Akkash, killed Akkash, his wife and their 10 children, including Akkash’s 6-month-old daughter, and leaving just a pile of body parts. On the day (15 July 2006) the UN Security Council rejected pleas for an immediate ceasefire, at least 35 civilians, including 15 children, were deliberately murdered by Israeli jets while fleeing Israel’s indiscriminate bombardments after they were ordered by the Israeli army to abandon their homes and village. The U.S. was the sole member of 15-nation UN Security Council to endorse Israeli aggression and to block any Security Council’s call for a ceasefire between Israel and the resistance.

In five days of deliberate acts of aggression against the sovereign state of Lebanon, more than 110 innocent Lebanese civilians, including some 32 children have been massacred by the Israeli army in cold blood and in the most cowardly fashion. It is unknown how the BBC and the Western media in general justify these war crimes as acts of “self-defence”. It is important to remember, that this is the same fanatical and extremist line propagated by George Bush and his two lackeys, Tony Blair and John Howard.

Again, the advertised pretext for these deliberate war crimes and state terrorism, is that Israel acting hysterical in order “to free” three Israeli soldiers taken in a legitimate military operation by the Lebanese Hizbullah’s fighters, because Israel refuses to adhere

international law and exchange prisoners in a peaceful way. Lebanese prisoners (mostly prominent leaders) were abducted by Israeli military on Lebanese soil and detained as bargaining chips and to keep an ongoing conflict with Hizbullah. In addition, the BBC ignored to elaborate that Israel continues to occupy land in Lebanon, known as the Shebaa Farms, where Israeli soldiers have often abducted and murdered Lebanese shepherds and farmers. Israel also routinely assassinated prominent Palestinians and Lebanese in cold blood. Furthermore, Israel – backed by the U.S. – is looking to widen the aggression by unfairly accusing and threatening Syria and Iran.

The aim of the Zionist state and its main backer (the U.S.) is to divide the Lebanese people, seek revenge against a legitimate political and resistance movement, and in the process trigger a broader war in the region, through acts of provocation and pre-emptive aggression. Israel creates a violent environment and uses violence to shape its miserably failed Zionist strategy in the region. The Arab regimes, particularly those of Egypt and Saudi Arabia, should be ashamed for their cowardice, treason of the Arab cause and for not being able to stand up to Israel's aggression.

With journalists in Israel, Lebanon and the Occupied Territories, Western media and the BBC in particular have ample opportunities to tell the truth and expose Israel's war crimes against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples to the outside world. Instead, Israel's war crimes are covered-up with a veneer of disinformation and propaganda. There are no photographs of murdered Palestinian and Lebanese children and pregnant women dying at Israeli check-points or tortured and humiliated Palestinian prisoners on the BBC web site. There are no BBC reports on the living conditions, malnutrition and starvation of Palestinians caused by the months-long Israeli criminal blockade.

The illegal invasion of Iraq is another barbarity where the BBC was and continues to be an active complicit. The war on Iraq by the U.S. and British Governments was the most violent premeditated act of aggression against defenceless people.

The BBC deliberately and systematically ignored much publicly available information on Iraq's weapons programs, and instead played a very dishonest and warmongering role. The BBC unchallenged and repeated Blair and Bush fabricated pack of lies about the (none)-existence of Iraq Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD); the result was up to half a million Iraqis, mostly women and children killed by U.S. and British armies, and the total destruction of the Iraqi society. The BBC continues to actively aiding and abetting a murderous Occupation and murderous occupying forces who are committing gross crimes against the Iraqi people.

After three years of illegal and murderous Occupation, the BBC is fully aware of the Occupation-generated violence and destruction. Yet the BBC continues to play ball and distort facts on the ground in Iraq. How an illegal invasion and a murderous occupation that killed hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqis – mostly women and children – could be described as just “melancholy thoughts”? How could the scares of torture, rape and sexual abuses of tens of thousands of Iraqis by U.S. and British soldiers be described just mere “memory”? The complicity of the BBC in the crimes against the Iraqi people is crimes against humanity, as it was rightly

The complicity of the BBC and other corporate media in the war crimes was summarised by the World Tribunal on Iraq in its 27 June findings. After a four day session hearing of evidence, the charges laid against the corporate media, including the BBC are war crimes



and crimes against humanity. (Here is WTI [findings](#)).

The BBC continues to cover-up horrendous war crimes committed against the Iraqi people by US and British soldiers. The destruction of Iraqi towns and cities, the countless massacres of innocent civilians, and the torture and sexual abused of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib and hundreds of other US and Britain-run prisons do not feature in the BBC program lists or on the BBC website. The BBC is deliberately misleading the public and continues actively aiding and abetting in war crimes against the Iraqi people.

Finally, it is baffling that the BBC is unable to tell the British public *where* is Israel and if Israel has recognised international borders. The British people ought to know that the Apartheid Wall is not Israel's "security fence". The Wall was rightly condemned by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague for it "imposes immense and unnecessary suffering on the Palestinian people". It is a formidable wall designed to fractionate Palestinian communities, isolate them into ghettos and steal their land and water resources.

Due to its reliance on government sources and its support for the policies of the British Government, the BBC failed to be independent and impartial public broadcaster. The BBC betrays its Charter and the trust of the people in Britain. As a result, the people of Britain are misled by the BBC disinformation and denied an opportunity to understand the conflict. The British people have the right to know that their government and military are committing cross crimes their name.

There can be no peace in the Middle East until the occupation of Palestine and Iraq end and the injustices committed by the Israeli and the U.S. governments against the people of the Middle East cease. The British public must hold the BBC accountable for its failure to provide independent and impartial information.

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