

## Gaza War Coverage

# New report reveals BBC bias against Palestinians

**Granville Williams**  
on the revelations  
in new report of BBC  
coverage of Gaza

It's been clear for a while that any attempt to show Palestinians in a sympathetic light on the BBC will inevitably provoke pro-Israeli and right-wing groups to protest. The result of the furore around the film *Gaza: How To Survive A Warzone* which led the BBC to take the programme off iPlayer is making the BBC ultra-cautious.

At the moment there's concern about the fate of another documentary. Despite being signed off by the British broadcaster's lawyers, the BBC continues to withhold the release of *Gaza: Medics Under Fire*, a documentary it commissioned that tells the story of Palestinian doctors working in Gaza.

It appears that director-general Tim Davie and Deborah Turness, the BBC's CEO, are unwilling to release the film, despite Turness telling editorial meetings that she wants the corporation to be 'on the right side of history'.

It's in this context that a new report from the Centre for Media Monitoring (CfMM) *BBC ON GAZA-ISRAEL: One Story, Double Standards* deserves the widest publicity. (<https://cfmm.org.uk/bbc-on-gaza-israel-one-story-double-standards/>)

The study found that the BBC gives Israeli deaths 33 times more coverage than Palestinian ones. In an analysis of 3,873 ar-



Israel's UK ambassador Tzipura Hotovely speaking on BBC's *Sunday with Laura Kuenssberg*, 15 June 2025



The new Centre for Media Monitoring report

ticles and 32,092 broadcast segments from 7 October 2023 to 6 October 2024, the CFMM found that the BBC used emotive terms four times as much for Israeli victims and applied 'massacre' 18 times more to Israeli casualties than Palestinian ones.

According to its authors, the report 'reveals a systematic omission of key historical and contemporary context that has acquired an institutional quality at the BBC, and a failure to scrutinise Israeli claims and denials.'

The study also found that the BBC had interviewed significantly more Israelis (2,350) than Palestinians (1,085) on TV and ra-

dio, while BBC presenters shared the Israeli perspective 11 times more frequently than the Palestinian perspective (2,340 v 217).

Rizwana Hamid, Director of the Centre for Media Monitoring said: "The BBC has a duty to reflect the full reality of this devastating war, including the lived experience of Palestinians. When language, framing, and editorial choices consistently favour one side, the public loses access to the truth. Our findings are based on evidence, not ideology — and we urge the BBC to reflect, engage, and reform."

**MM**

**EDITORIAL: See Page 2**

# As Gaza starves, where's the media outrage?

The same destructive tactics used by the Israeli defence forces in Gaza are now being deployed against Iran. The Israeli campaign has evolved from attacks on air defences, nuclear sites and military targets to more indiscriminate bombing. Residents in large parts of Tehran were warned on social media on 16 June to evacuate before assaults on these areas began.

The results are the same too, with hospitals overwhelmed dealing with wounded people.

## Editorial

“The injuries are terrifying and it looks like we are working in a makeshift hospital on a battlefield,” a doctor at Iman Khomeini hospital said.

In Gaza meanwhile, people are literally dying to get food as they face the critical risk of famine. Since the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), a private organisation operating with Israeli and US support, began

operating in early June there have been near daily shootings by Israeli forces at their sites.

On 16 June as crowds of starving Palestinians converged on two GHF aid hubs Israeli troops opened fire and at least 37 were killed. The aid points have become death traps. This is in marked contrast to the safe and secure UNRWA system which Israel has now blocked. Hunger is being used as a weapon of genocide but where is the outrage in the media against Netanyahu's brutal policies? **MN**

## Union membership rises as journalists move to the political Left, writes **Tony Burke**

According to a survey published by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, UK journalists are getting older, younger journalists are far more likely to be female and older journalists (over 50) are mainly men.

The survey covered 1,130 UK journalists and was carried out between September and November 2023 – eight years after the last comparative study.

The survey shows that in 2015, 54% self-identified with the political left which has since risen to 77%; the profession has become ‘less attractive to Generation Z and millennials’ (currently those aged between 18 and 44); the average age of a UK journalist is 45, three years older than the median for the working age population but ‘in line with other academic professions’.

The report said: “This is in contrast to the global average – where journalists’ median age is below 40, and often lower than the median age of the working population – but is in line with the US and the rest of Europe, where a lack of growth in the industry might explain the prevalence of older journalists.”

### Where are the older women?

It also flagged that women over 50 were ‘markedly underrepresented’ in the profession. Overall 50% of journalist respondents were women but this fell to 36% among the over-50s. In addition, two-thirds of newer journalists with up to five years of work experience were women, but men made up 66% of journalists with over 30 years of experience.

Ethnic minority journalists were most likely to be aged 30 to 39 (some 32% of their total fall



## Reuters reports on UK journalists

in that age category, compared to 22% of white journalists). When it came to those aged over 50, 40% of white journalists fall into this category versus 21% of ethnic minority people.

Overall white journalists make up 90% of the industry and are overrepresented compared to the UK population (82% according to the 2021/22 Census). Some 3% of journalists were from an Asian or Asian British background, compared to 9% of the population, and 1% of journalists were from Black, Black Brit-

**White journalists make up 90% of the industry and are overrepresented compared to the UK population**

ish, Caribbean or African backgrounds, compared to 4% of the population.

In 2015, 74% of journalists reported being on permanent contracts. This has since dropped to 65%, the report said, in a ‘broader shift in the media industry towards more flexible, yet often precarious, employment arrangements’. Male journalists were more likely to be on permanent contracts.

Meanwhile, the proportion of freelance journalists has risen from 17% to 28%, although the survey may underreport part-time, and therefore freelance and temporary contract, workers due to its methodology.

The report noted that use of freelancers ‘allows media organisations to scale their operations quickly and cost-effectively, but it places significant burdens on journalists’ in terms of benefits such as pensions.

“Economic pressures and organisational dynamics have undoubtedly contributed towards this shift, but other influences, such as personal choices or broader societal changes, may also be contributing to this trend,” the report added.

There has also been a welcome growth in union membership by journalists between 2015 and 2023, suggesting that the rise in freelance working has led to increases in membership. Just over half (52%) of journalists in 2023 said they belonged to a union, rising from 44% in 2015.

### Cheaper to use freelancers

Peta Steel, former NUJ Organiser in the freelance sector said: “It’s been evident for sometime that it’s cheaper for media managements to employ freelancers instead of using full time staff either on contract, shift work or for individual pieces.

“No costs for offices, pensions or holidays. The pandemic, growth of technology, increase in social media, changes which include outlets going on line, as well as the closure of local papers, magazines and agencies have solidified the practice.

“With fewer places to sell material to, older journalists with more experience are best equipped to survive as they have learnt how to adapt to the different types of work, what to demand to keep their operations going, and how to cover their outgoings and lifestyles.

“Many of the older freelancers may also have originally been on staff before becoming freelancers and are also more likely to have had contact with the union and realise what extra back up they can get.” **MN**

# The greatest challenge of our time

**Martin Shipton** on the background to the NUJ Conference motion on AI

**N**UJ activists at the union's 2025 delegate meeting in Blackpool voted unanimously in favour of a motion from South Wales branch that instructed the NEC and the Ethics Council to draw up guidelines on the use of Artificial Intelligence.

Concerns are mounting among union members that some employers see AI as a means of cutting the workforce and replacing content written by journalists with material that's generated artificially.

Delegates were told how reporters working for Britain's biggest news publisher Reach plc were routinely expected to put three stories a day through an AI tool known as Guten. The stories have already appeared on other Reach websites and are repurposed because they have attracted high numbers of page views in their original form. By using Guten to rewrite the material, the intention is to avoid an algorithm downgrade that is applied when material is recycled from other locations.

## Ethical issues

Using Guten three times a day to cheat algorithms is in addition to the standard requirement on Reach reporters to file five conventional stories a day.

Seconding the motion, Simon Barrow from the Ethics Council said: "There is a whole range of ethical issues that come into AI. Central to it is the danger of the loss of human control, critical thinking and accountability. There's the danger of perpetuating mistakes through databases – what are called hallucinations

in the trade, which just means basically false information.

"A lot of AI algorithms are what are called black boxes, which means that you don't actually know what the data is going into it nor do you know how it's used or manipulated and so on. So there's a whole issue of transparency there. And then, of course, there are copyright and intellectual property concerns.

"There are privacy and data security concerns. There are issues about existing or non-existing regulatory frameworks and so on. We hope that as an Ethics

**"AI is a poor imitation of our members' work at best. At worst, it is a threat to journalistic quality and integrity and a blunt tool that management will use to slash jobs and conditions"**

Council we can work with the NEC and others in the union to produce some guidelines which are realistic on the use of AI and take into account the pressures and intensity of working in a newsroom."

NUJ national organiser Huda Elmi said: "Artificial intelligence is the greatest challenge of our time with the work that we do,



**Martin Shipton alerted NUJ to fight back against destructive extension of AI**

and our union must rise to the occasion or risk being sidelined as our sector rapidly transforms. Let us be clear. AI journalism cannot replace the talent, creativity, or skill sets held by our members in all sectors that we represent.

"The demand in this motion for the NEC to produce guidance for chapels will be vital in giving our members the tools to fight back against the abuses being run out in their workplaces. Each one of us knows or has experienced the threats and exploitation we face because of AI. We have seen the reports of inaccurate data that is routinely used to inform AI generated stories or how AI stories are being falsely attributed to journalists or how creators are having their likeness stolen without their knowledge or consent.

"AI is a poor imitation of our members' work at best. At worst, it is a threat to journalistic quality and integrity and a blunt tool that management will use to slash jobs and conditions.

"Our members urgently need information and guidance on the ground to fight back against the destructive expansion of AI in their workplaces."

In a wider context, the negative use of AI that is already occurring is a symptom of the degradation of newsrooms that has

created an existential crisis for many news outlets.

For managements, AI is a further tool to sustain a failing business model that relies on ever more page views produced by a diminishing number of writers. The revenue for news websites comes from the fractions of a penny per page view derived from what is known as programmatic advertising.

## Mental health

Unrealistic monthly page view targets are imposed on reporters, who face immense pressure to deliver, often at great cost to their mental health. This is especially the case in firms where union membership is low and individuals feel isolated. Sadly – and dangerously for our democracy – it is leading to situations where reporters are abandoning long-held ambitions to be a journalist and going off to pursue entirely different careers. **MN**

*Martin Shipton was named Journalist of the Year and Political Journalist of the Year in the 2024 Wales Media Awards for his coverage of the scandal surrounding the short-lived Welsh First Minister Vaughan Gething. Martin writes for Nation. Cymru where he broke the story.*

# Relentless rise of a political chancer

**Nick Jones** on Nigel Farage's divisive use of the media, and his own role in advising Farage in the 1990s

Nigel Farage's success in outflanking Keir Starmer when he pledged to reinstate winter fuel payments and child benefits reflected his innate understanding of how to enlist the UK's dominant right-wing newspapers to help upstage political opponents.

A knack of knowing when to pounce on a wounded leader or a party in distress is an invaluable attribute in the jungle of British politics and is even more powerful if the opportunity chimes with the news media's agenda.

For the last two decades Farage's adroit positioning has helped to weaponise a succession of aggressive press campaigns.

His grasp of the mindset of the Conservative commentariat - and a wider knowledge of the inner workings of the news media -

took years to develop, starting in the early 1990s with the launch of UKIP (a time which I can write about with personal insight).

Farage has become a ubiquitous weapon of choice for the Tory press. He is ever ready and willing to piggyback their campaigns whether for delivering Brexit; exploiting fears over immigration; pressurising Conservative Party leaders; or most recently when seeking to undermine Labour's re-election prospects.

### Farage in pursuit

Hot on the heels of Reform's stunning success in early May in taking control of ten English councils; gaining two mayoralities; and snatching victory in the Runcorn by-election by six votes, Farage was in full pursuit: Starmer's vulnerability was all



### The Right-wing press strongly promotes Reform's election victories

too evident.

In the wake of Labour's dire losses and uncomfortable headlines about continuing turmoil over the withdrawal of winter fuel payments and the refusal to end the two-child benefit cap, Reform were on a roll.

As Starmer struggled to quell a looming revolt, Farage went over the heads of Labour's Red Wall MPs with a promise of full reinstatement.

'Farage to outflank Starmer on benefits' was the front-page headline of the Reform-leaning *Sunday Telegraph* (25.5.2025) - a well-placed exclusive that became the dominant storyline for the Sunday political programmes, adding yet further pressure on Starmer.

In the lead-up to May elec-

tions, Farage had regularly made the *Daily Telegraph's* front page.

'I've got a fighting chance to be PM' said the headline over a *Telegraph* report out 'on the doorsteps (and the barstools)' with the Reform leader as he toured Labour and Tory strongholds (24.4.2025).

He was front page news again celebrating Labour's defeat in the Runcorn by-election. 'The six votes that shook politics' was the headline over Farage's claim that



The Telegraph pushes Farage as the next PM

## Farage rang me twice at home offering me the job of UKIP press officer, an offer I had no hesitation in turning down



The last UK EU election in May 2019. *The Sun* promoted the Brexit Party's victory

the May elections had secured the 'greatest local election result for an outsider party'. (*Daily Telegraph*, 3.5.2025)

Farage's timing could not be faulted. Opinion surveys indicated that Reform were ahead of both Labour and the Conservatives.

The challenge he faced was to take command of the rolling story, piling on the pressure on Starmer and a hapless Kemi Badenoch, a feat he accomplished with ease.

### Eager to learn

From his earliest days as a founder member of UKIP, Farage had always been an eager student.

I had met him first when he stood in the 1994 Eastleigh parliamentary by-election at a time when my status as a BBC political correspondent was regarded as an irritant by the Labour Party machine due to my developing interest in the news media's role in political campaigning.

To avoid potential friction with Tony Blair's acolytes, BBC

Westminster had frequently assigned me to cover fringe events such as UKIP conferences where former Conservative Eurosceptics were debating – and keen to discuss with journalists – how best to promote their campaign to secure the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.

My third book *Campaign 1997*, which charted the manoeuvring behind Blair's landslide victory, was considered to be even more 'unhelpful' by the New Labour spin machine.

Its launch at Politico's bookshop in the summer of 1997 was boycotted by the party's leading

**I smiled with wry amusement when I saw Farage pull off well-aimed publicity stunts on the eve of Tory conferences**



The Tory Party's leadership is a media target for Farage too as well as Labour's Keir Starmer

media apparatchiks, anxious not to be seen in the company of a journalist who had been deemed "unreliable" and who had incurred the wrath of both Peter Mandelson and Alastair Campbell.

A contingent from UKIP had no such inhibitions, keen to buy the book, anxious to keep in touch.

After his election as an MEP for South-East England in the 1999 European Parliament election, Farage emerged as one of UKIP's most quoted politicians.

### Candidate for Question Time

My contacts with UKIP led to a chance inquiry in March 2001: a BBC producer asked how I thought Farage would acquit himself on the Radio 4 programme *Any Questions*. I assured her that Farage would be an accomplished panellist.

Later the following year, after I had to leave the BBC on reaching sixty, Farage rang me at home. He thanked me for helping him to get 'launched into broadcasting' and asked for some advice.

When was the best time for UKIP to hold its party conference? Would it be wise to stick to the week immediately after the Conservative conference or should they go later in the autumn so as not to be overshadowed?

I said UKIP's tactic should be to try to upstage the Conserva-

tives by generating damaging headlines just as the Tory representatives were arriving for their own conference.

Ideally the UKIP conference should be squeezed into the weekend leading up to the opening of the Tory gathering and their aim should be to grab the news agenda; their news value was as an irritant to the Conservatives.

"Yes, I get it," replied Farage. "So, it's the timing in the news cycle that matters most of all."

Needless to say, I smiled with wry amusement when I saw Farage pull off well-aimed publicity stunts on the eve of Tory conferences. On several subsequent occasions, I realised how valuable my advice had been. Farage rang me twice at home offering me the job of UKIP press officer, an offer I had no hesitation in turning down.

Like many journalists I was only too happy – and still am – to chat away with contacts, whatever their political persuasion, especially as I have taken such an interest in the dark arts of media manipulation.

At the time I had no reason to dodge Farage's questions, but little did I think my chats might have become a minor building block in the relentless rise of a political chancer whose malign influence has had such an impact on the course of British politics.

# So, who the hell do we vote for?

**Tim Gopsill** on  
the voting choices  
the Left faces

When Keir Starmer won the Labour leadership in 2020 he set out to achieve one task above all others and that was to rid the party of its left-wingers. The imperative was to assure City financiers, big business and national media that Labour could be ‘trusted’ to govern. His campaign has been a terrific success. The banks seem happy and party bosses are not likely to be too worried that, after the cull, Labour membership is understood to have fallen below 300,000, only just over half of its 550,000 peak under Jeremy Corbyn – though the figures are kept secret and not divulged even to the party national executive. Decision-making has been steered away from democratic participation towards corporate lobbyists, consultancies, trade union bosses and wealthy donors.

What has also ended is the leftist foray into Labour that delivered this half-million membership, a desperate venture to save social democracy. Why should they now vote Labour when the party has rejected them? Many more voted Labour in the hope of improving their lives. Millions of people have nowhere to go. Who can they vote for?

## Socialists are suspicious

The obvious choice is the Greens, who have a progressive social programme as well as the reversal of climate change. The Greens have a leadership election due in August and one candidate, Zack Polanski, considered the most left-wing, is running a vigorous campaign to recruit disgruntled ex-Labourites. But many socialists are suspicious of what they see as the party’s jumbled policies and incoherent organisation.

Conservatives and LibDems are no different from Labour; the emptiness of their dialogue is what frustrates and infuriates large numbers of people. And though we are told that Labour is set to lose sackfuls of votes to



Guy Smallman, Socialist Worker

Over 2000 people were at the We Demand Change conference in East London on 29 March

Reform UK, they won’t be from voters on the left.

What many are talking about is a new left-wing party – as if there aren’t enough already: the proliferation of rival Communist and Trotskyite groups is an embarrassment if not a national joke, even among themselves.

To be fair there are also groups working to bring them together, like the Socialist Labour Network, Network of Independent Socialists and Campaign for a Mass Workers’ Party.

There might however be a better way. In March yet another new grouping called We Demand Change staged an open event at a rave venue in the East London docklands. Two thousand people turned up. Corbyn and other left notables were speakers, but the gathering also included the Green Party and direct action groups like Youth Demand, Extinction Rebellion and Palestine Action.

**What many are talking about is a new left-wing party – as if there aren’t enough already**

The event concluded with an open mic discussion of the whole crowd on the very question: a new party for the left, or what? Contributors included non-party activists in run-down areas who are challenging corrupt and complacent Labour councils and MPs that are enforcing the leadership’s crackdown on community activism.

In some places they have taken over Labour councils and there were dozens of community candidates at last year’s election, of whom five won their seats. One was Jeremy Corbyn. Their five-strong bloc in the Commons is of course equal to Reform’s.

## Candidates heavily vetted

Early in the new Parliament Labour suspended seven MPs who stood firm in a ritualised ‘loyalty test’ set up by the leadership over the two-child benefit cap. It looks now as if they will be vindicated but that is not the point. Labour candidates in 2024 had been heavily vetted for compliance, but even in the face of the threat from Reform there is still fight on the left against Starmer. The question is, how might it be organised?

There was no vote taken after the We Demand Change debate but a predominant feeling emerged in favour of a network

rather than a party: an arrangement that in every constituency a single left or progressive candidate shall be given a free run, whether a leftist, a trade unionist, a community activist or a Green, with others standing aside to support them.

Perhaps it doesn’t actually need a party as such to co-operate at election time. In France last year all the parties of the left and the Greens formed a Popular Front to defeat the far right, and succeeded.

There was a specific rationale in support of this view. One of the community independents who nearly won was Leanne Mohamad in Ilford North, East London. She came within just 528 votes of Labour’s Wes Streeting, the government figure most hated on the left, after Starmer himself.

Streeting is not just the Health Secretary driving through Labour’s policy of increasing private sector involvement in the NHS; he is Starmer’s presumed and groomed successor.

In the Ilford poll the Greens also had a candidate, who won 1,794 votes. Had Rachel Collinson agreed to stand down, Leanne Mohamad would now be in Parliament. Even more to the point for the left, Wes Streeting would not.

Julian Petley explains why Reform needs rigorous media scrutiny

# Normalising the far-right in the media

How journalism should deal with an insurgent far-right populist party such as Reform is clearly a matter of considerable contemporary concern, particularly in light of its recent successes at both the national and local level. As the veteran media commentator Raymond Snoddy put it in *The Media Leader*: “If Reform is claiming, as it is, to be a party capable of governing this country, then the media must subject it to the same kind of scrutiny applied to Labour or the Conservatives. Such scrutiny must be applied to the past record of those associated with Reform, its current policies and its performance where it is in power, such as the ten local authorities where it is now in control.”

Thus far, the omens are very far from encouraging. Newspapers such as the *Telegraph*, *Mail*, *Sun* and *Express* have already all but endorsed Reform (and not simply in their comment columns and editorials) and, courtesy of Ofcom, *GB News* is effectively its broadcast propaganda arm.

## Winning Reform's trust

Meanwhile, as Adam Bienkov has revealed in *Byline Times*, minutes of a recent meeting of the BBC's Editorial Guidelines and Standards Committee show that the Corporation is drawing up plans to adjust its news story selection, at both national and local levels, in a vain effort to win the trust of Reform voters.

At a time when the local media have an unparalleled opportunity, not to say duty, to scrutinise how Reform is running the local authorities which it has captured, such a move can only

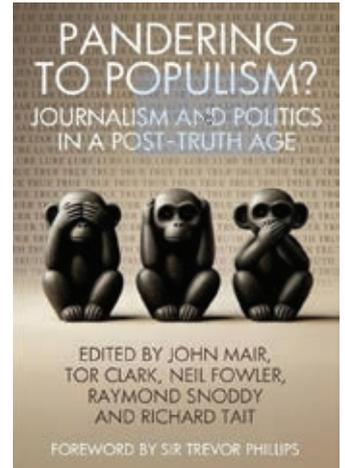
be described as an abject betrayal of the BBC's democratic responsibilities.

Perhaps, the greatest danger in journalistic coverage of Reform is that, either unintentionally or deliberately, it will serve to normalise a party that is anything but normal. (In fact, it isn't even a party but a company limited by guarantee.)

Its pronounced xenophobia, its hostility to the very concept of human rights, its opposition to many of the tenets of liberal democracy – particularly the separation of powers, and not least its loathing of the judiciary – as well as its fraudulent posing as an ‘anti-establishment’ party and ‘the voice of the people’, all mark it out as a far-right populist party.

The nature of such parties, both in Britain and elsewhere, is the subject two recent books: Jon Bloomfield and David Edgar's *The Little Black Book of the*

**The Telegraph, Mail, Sun and Express have already all but endorsed Reform and GB News is effectively its broadcast propaganda arm**



Phillips, in his foreword, challenges the term ‘far-right’ to describe Farage and other populists

emergence of the anti-establishment radicalism of the 1960s.

However, this is simply to take Reform's populist ‘anti-establishment’ rhetoric at face value, which is particularly difficult given the key roles played in it by plutocrats such as Nigel Farage, Richard Tice, Nick Candy and Zia Yusuf. Yes, ‘men of the people’ every one.

In Phillips's view, the default description of ‘far right’ for parties led by Farage, Trump, Meloni, Orban, Le Pen and others says more about the ‘arrogance of the media consensus than it does about the forces it describes’.

Phillips enquires what it is that such parties are supposed to be far from and surmises that it is ‘the comfortable dinner party consensus of senior journalists and executives that life would be so much better for everyone if the people just did what people like us recommended in our opinion columns and leaders’.

## ‘Liberal elite’ to blame?

So it's all the fault of the much-mythologised ‘liberal elite’ safely ensconced in their Islington lair – except there is emphatically no such consensus in a media environment dominated by right-wing papers, *GB News* and a thoroughly cowed BBC. Furthermore snide expressions such as ‘comfortable dinner party consensus’ and ‘people like us’ are, in this context, themselves heavily loaded with populist baggage.

Phillips argues that ‘the advent of Right Populism has

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*Populist Right* and the collection *Pandering to Populism?* (of which Snoddy is one of the editors, and to which I am a contributor). The latter, as its sub-title, *Journalism in a Post-truth Age*, implies, is particularly concerned with journalism's role in covering the rise of far-right parties.

For the most part, the collection's tone is critical and admonitory, but a glaring exception is the Foreword by Sir Trevor Phillips, which reflects the dominant approach to Reform in much of the British media.

Phillips argues that right populism looks set to become the most severe test of the Fourth Estate's claim to be a vital feature of modern democracies since the

## Farage, the far-right and the media

● From Front Page 7

posed a sharp challenge to the very purpose of contemporary journalism', and sees this as posing 'difficult questions about the boundary between reporting and campaigning'.

But this is to confuse interrogating the democratic bona fides of a far-right party such as Reform and taking a stand against it, which are two entirely different things.

### Taking sides

However, Phillips maintains that 'there are those in our profession who believe it should be the business of journalists to take a side when reporting this movement, usually in the name of some broadly-defined universal values – tolerance, equality, inclusion. I am not one of them'.

Very clearly not, and such values are also conspicuous by their absence in the right-wing press and GB News.

Furthermore, those few journalists who do concentrate on exposing the reality behind Reform's 'anti-establishment' rhetoric are in no sense 'campaigning' against it but simply doing the job that journalists are supposed to do, namely speaking truth to power and acting as the public's watchdogs.

Thus, for example, when the *Mail*, after Reform's local election victories, published the party's 'Manifesto' across two pages under the headline 'NIGEL FARAGE: Our victory was seismic and the Reform era is just starting. Here's everything my government would do – from ditching Net Zero to finally tackling immigration', *The Economist* responded with a lengthy and detailed analysis which concluded that 'Reform's policies add up to an agenda of fiscal recklessness that rivals, and may well exceed, the disastrous 49-day, hair-raising, market-tanking premiership of Liz Truss in 2022'.

Perhaps Sir Trevor would like to tell us which of the two is the 'campaigning' article? And which the work of journalism worthy of the name? **MN**

# Bob McChesney: Champion of journalism and democracy

It was a profound shock to hear of the death of Bob McChesney, eminent media scholar and activist, who died on Tuesday 25 March in Madison, Wisconsin, aged 72. His death is a tremendous loss to the media reform movement.

McChesney co-authored several books with his close friend John Nichols, including *The Death and Life of American Journalism and Dollarocracy*. Of his own works, *Rich Media, Poor Democracy* and *Digital Disconnect* stand out.

McChesney believed in turning ideas into action – he co-founded the media reform group Free Press with John Nichols. He believed that people deserved a



Bob McChesney

say in policy decisions that for far too long were made in their name but without their consent.

He taught us that the me-

dia wasn't something that just happened to us, but something that we can and must shape and change.

As new political and societal challenges arose in an ever more chaotic moment for America and the world, he explained how they should be understood as fresh manifestations of an ancient danger: the concentration of power – in this case, the power of the media, in the hands of old-media CEOs and new tech oligarchs, all of whom cared more about commercial and entertainment strategies than democratic and social values.

Our deepest condolences to his wife Inger and family – Granville Williams. **MN**

## Thumbs up for miners' strike book!

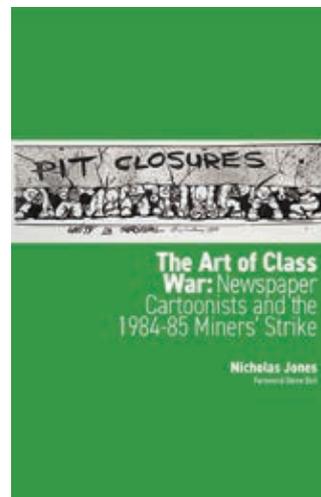
We've had some great publicity for *The Art of Class War* by Nick Jones. There was a double-page spread in the April issue of *The Journalist*, and Martin Rowson wrote a strong positive review in the latest issue of *The British Journalism Review*.

You can buy the book at Housmans and the Cartoon Museum bookshop in London, News From Nowhere in Liverpool and Five Leaves Bookshop in Nottingham.

Or you can buy the book from CPBF North for £12.00 inc P&P. Email [cpbfnorth@outlook.com](mailto:cpbfnorth@outlook.com) for details.

### South Yorkshire Festival

We'll be back again at the South Yorkshire Festival with our regular event in the Unison Room at Wortley Hall on Sunday 10 Au-



gust 2.00-3.30pm.

Nick Jones, author of *The Art of Class War*, will be speaking about how cartoonists for the left press – *Militant*, *Socialist Worker*, *Newsline*, *Morning Star* – tried to

boost support during the strike and fight back against the highly-paid cartoonists of the Conservative press.

Jane Ingham will also speak about the recently published book *Need Not Greed* (Bluecoat Press £45), a collection of the cartoons of Alan Hardman of *Militant*.

Both *The Art of Class War* and *Need Not Greed* will be on sale at this event.

### London meeting in November

Nick Jones will be speaking on *The Art of Class War*, at The Cartoon Museum on Thursday 13 November, 7.00pm. The museum is in Wells Street (close to Oxford Street) and doors open at 6.30pm. It's a ticketed event and you will be able to buy tickets once the event is up at: [www.cartoonmuseum.org](http://www.cartoonmuseum.org). **MN**

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