

Funding the Future

Article URL

Published: January 12, 2026, 6:24 pm

I wonder if the BBC executives really thought about what they were doing by taking on Gary Lineker because he told the truth.

They objected to Lineker saying:



There is no huge influx. We take far fewer refugees than other major European countries. This is just an immeasurably cruel policy directed at the most vulnerable people in language that is not dissimilar to that used by Germany in the 30s, and I'm out of order?

It was the comparison to Germany in the 30s to which they said they objected. But, it was criticism of government policy that really got to them, I think. Lineker was, correctly, calling out the Tories as not just fascist (although he did not use the word) but also as racist.

I suspect the BBC executives never doubted that they had the power to take Lineker on. That must have left them deeply surprised that football and footballers rallied around him.

In itself that shows their incompetence. This is a sport where there is over-representation of those considered to be in minorities in the UK.

It is a sport dependent on players of colour being allowed to come to the UK to play.

And it is a sport where those players, their management and the management hierarchy have taken a stand against racism, and stood up against those who have booed when they have taken the knee to indicate that. Throughout the game people have got used to opprobrium for doing the right thing.

And not just on racism, but on the women's game (which I enjoy) and on LGBTQ+ rights too.

Did they really expect a footballer to say that overt racism using the language of the 1930s was acceptable in that case?

If they did, as they have now discovered, they got that very wrong.

The BBC even got their statement on this issue wrong. They claimed Gary Lineker agreed to stand back from Match of the Day, but it is clear that he did not. They suspended him for standing up to racists, something football has done, and done well.

And now his fellow pundits, plus the commentators, have stood with him. No Lineker they say, then not us either.

This was always going to be a year of strikes provoked by callous government policy. I do not think anyone saw this one coming. And yet it is wholly justified.

The racism justifies it.

So too does the fascism.

But so too does the hypocrisy. I could document, but this commentary on Sky does it so well, I share it instead:

<https://twitter.com/lallylangford/status/1634279868606173194?s=61&t=fQEnD35XLiGihXLT1M1wyA>

The argument is well put. Andrew Neil, Jeremy Clarkson, Alan Sugar and others were allowed right wing views elsewhere in the media whilst working for the BBC and no one stopped them.

Richard Sharp, the BBC chair has gifted £400,000 to the Tories and arranged a loan of £800,000 for Boris Johnson.

Robbie Gibb is a BBC director. He is a former adviser to Theresa May. Gibb worked for GB News. Lewis Goodall says Gibb bullied him out of the BBC for his supposedly left wing views.

Tim Davie, the Director General, has been a Tory candidate.

Lineker is not a party politician. He just told the truth about the party the BBC dare not criticise because it is now openly managed in Tory interests and promotes Tories to all positions of political significance. There is a reason why Fiona Bruce has been trending on Twitter. Laura Kuensberg appears biased. Chris Mason always frames his questions from a Tory perspective. Interviewee and panel selection is obviously biased.

But Lineker, they thought, was the one in the wrong.

Lineker, they thought, was the one they could make an example of.

Lineker, they thought, could be isolated.

Lineker, they thought, was an extremist.

But it turned out they were wrong. Because, it turns out, football knows more about discrimination than the BBC does. The current BBC only knows how to do it. Football knows how to spot it and fight it, because it knows the game is dependent on doing so, as is society.

Football can hold its head up high.

The BBC is bust. In an afternoon they suspended Gary Lineker and lied about the sixth instalment of David Attenborough's last major series, which they said they will not broadcast for fear of offending the government. They lied on that too.

If there are two public figures with profound credibility they are Lineker and Attenborough. The BBC branded them both as extremists. The BBC supported the fascists. They were wrong. The BBC has shattered its credibility. Many of us knew it was dubious. Now that is an obvious fact.

But the good thing is that the fight against fascism is in the open. That does not mean it will be won. But it is now clear that it is required. And that is this weekend's good news. Right has to prevail now. We can only hope it will.

And so, today's poll:

[poll id="14"]