

The BBC Trust is now a mouthpiece for the Israeli lobby which abused Bowen.

But I am mincing my words.

The trust – how I love that word which so dishonours everything about the BBC – has collapsed, in the most shameful way, against the usual Israeli lobbyists who have claimed – against all the facts – that Bowen was wrong to tell the truth.

Let's go step by step through this pitiful business. Zionism does indeed instinctively "push out" the frontier. The new Israeli wall – longer and taller than the Berlin Wall although the BBC management cowards still insist its reporters call it a "security barrier" (the translation of the East German phrase for the Berlin Wall) – has gobbled up another 10 per cent of the 22 per cent of "Palestine" that Arafat/Mahmoud Abbas were supposed to negotiate. Bowen's own brilliant book on the 1967 war, *Six Days*, makes this land-grab perfectly clear.

Anyone who has read the history of Zionism will be aware that its aim was to dispossess the Arabs and take over Palestine. Why else are Zionists continuing to steal Arab land for Jews, and Jews only, against all international law? Who for a moment can contradict that this defies everyone's interpretation of international law except its own?

Even when the International Court in The Hague stated that the Israeli wall was illegal – the BBC, at this point, was calling it a "fence"! – Israel simply claimed that the court was wrong.

UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 called upon Israel to withdraw its forces from territories that it occupied in the 1967 war – and it refused to do so. The Americans stated for more than 30 years that Israel's actions were illegal – until the gutless George Bush accepted Israel had the right to keep these illegally held territories. Thus the BBC Trust – how cruel that word "trust" now becomes – has gone along with the Bush definition of Israel's new boundaries (inside Arab land, of course).

The BBC's preposterous committee claims that Bowen's article "breached the rules [sic] on impartiality" because "readers might come away from the article thinking that the interpretation offered was the only sensible view of the war".

Well, yes of course. Because I suppose the BBC believes that Israel's claim to own land which in fact belongs to other people is another "sensible" view of the war. The BBC Trust – and I now find this word nauseous each time I tap it on my laptop – says that Bowen didn't give evidence

to prove the Jewish settlement at Har Homa was illegal. But the US authorities said so, right from the start. Our own late foreign secretary, Robin Cook – under screamed abuse from Zionists when he visited the settlement– said the same thing. The fact that the BBC Trust uses the Hebrew name for Har Homa – not the original Arab name, Jebel Abu Ghoneim – shows just how far it is now a mouthpiece for the Israeli lobby which so diligently abused Bowen.

Haaretz gave considerable space to the BBC's findings yesterday. I'm not surprised. But why is it that Haaretz's top correspondents – Amira Hass and Gideon Levy – write so much more courageously about the human rights abuses of Israeli troops (and war crimes) than the BBC has ever dared to do? Whenever I'm asked by lecture audiences around the world if they should trust the BBC, I tell them to trust Amira and Gideon more than they should ever believe in the wretched broadcasting station. I'm afraid it's the same old story. If you allow yourself to bow down before those who wish you to deviate from the truth, you will stay on your knees forever.

And this, remember, is the same institution which said that to broadcast an appeal for medicines for wounded Palestinians in Gaza might upset its "neutrality". Legless Palestinian children clearly don't count as much as the BBC's pompous executives.

How do we solve this problem? Well I can certainly advise viewers to turn to Sky TV's infinitely tougher coverage of the Middle East and – I admit I contribute to this particular station – I can recommend the courage with which Al-Jazeera English covers Gaza and the rest of the Palestinian-Israeli war.

I can well see how BBC executives will say that this article of mine today is "over the top". Jeremy Bowen may indeed think the same. But the First World War metaphor would be correct. For Bowen and his colleagues are truly lions led by BBC management donkeys.

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