If any of you British citizens think your wallet feels a little light of late, perhaps the reason may be down to events at the BBC within the last few weeks. An internal memo into the BBC's slanted coverage of the Middle East conflict, in particular in regards to Israel, has become the subject of an intense legal battle between the corporation and the Information Tribunal that regulates the media giant. A few months ago a report was published by the BBC Board of Governors on the organization's coverage of the Middle East. It found that the BBC was not systemically biased, i.e. the organization was not constructed in such a way that created bias, but stated that the public believed its news coverage was slanted against Israel. But BBC executives admitted last year that the organization is *"dominated by homosexuals, people from ethnic minorities, deliberately promotes multiculturalism, is anti-American, anti-countryside, and more sensitive to the feelings of Muslims than Christians"*.

For an example of BBC bias against Israel, last year's report focused on the use of the word "terrorism". This word was used by the BBC to describe the July 7th bombings in London, but is never used in the context of Palestinian atrocities against Jews. In fact the media in general has a different word to describe terrorists in almost every country. In Northern Ireland they are "dissidents", in Chechnya they are "separatists", in the Middle East they are "militants", if they are politically minded Muslims they are called "Islamists", if they are far right or far left they are "extremists", if they are killing people in their own country they are "insurgents", ad infinitum. My Bible has only one word for them, "murderers".

Well it seems someone is so fed up with all this media malarkey, that they are prepared to do something about it. A few years ago, a man called Malcolm Balen was brought in by the BBC to moderate its Middle East coverage after Israel banned contact with the organization following the Vanunu nuclear spy scandal. At the end of his tenure, he commissioned a 20,000 page report on BBC coverage of the Middle East conflict. A solicitor has filed a Freedom of Information request, demanding the BBC hand over the secretive document that officially condemned BBC bias against Israel, and the BBC has spent a whopping £200,000 of public money fighting that order in the courts.

Quote: *"In October 2004, as his one-year contract drew to a close, Mr Balen*

presented the BBC with a 20,000-page report. Those who accuse the BBC of anti-Israeli bias suspect that it supported their case but no one outside the BBC has been allowed to see it. Mr Balen has gone on the record to say that he does not believe there is anti-Semitism in the BBC, but did imply that the Corporation had made " mistakes", which should not be seen as evidence of malice. Steven Sugar, a commercial solicitor from Putney, west London, put in a request to the BBC to see the whole report, citing the Freedom of Information Act. "A very large proportion of the Jewish community felt rightly or wrongly that the BBC's reporting of the second Palestinian intifada or uprising that broke out in 2000 was seriously distorted," he said. " I myself, as a member of the Jewish community, felt that and was very distressed by it. Now I don't know whether it is important to see this report or not. Instinct says that if they don't want to give it to me it may be important."

The BBC state that they are bringing the case to court because they needed clarity on how the Freedom of Information act applies to it, but that doesn't wash with me. Not when you are prepared to spend £200,000 to keep its contents secret.

Source Belfast Telegraph