

OPINIONS

# US, UN, and Israel: double standards

by Faisal Kutty

For the past two months in the Muslim, Arab, and many third world nations, two words have appeared to dominate conversations.

The media and marketplaces in nations from Algeria to Uganda have been humming with these same words.

They are used to refer to the actions taken by the United States and its band of faithful followers with respects to the Gulf crisis and their virtual inaction when it comes to Israel.

If you have not guessed by now, the two words are "double standard" and "hypocrisy."

Initially, when these words were used to describe the U.S. (read Western) led actions, it was easy to brush them off in the West as a reaction against former colonizers and a general contempt for the U.S. who, assumed the role of a "world policeman."

The actions over the past several days make it impossible for any free thinking, open-minded individual to continue to brush aside these words.

The recent massacre of 21 (some reports place it at 27) and the injuring of countless other innocent Palestinian civilians and the response of the "world policeman" and its agency known as the United Nations, adds much

weight to the labels of double standard and hypocrisy.

Most of the world condemns Saddam Hussein and his actions, and rightly so.

But what most of the world, with the exception of the Western world, does not agree with is the two different international law books, one used for the third world and the other for the West (including Israel).

Saddam Hussein is not the hero of the Muslim or Arab world, as he

Many experts strongly believe that this was not Saddam's intention. It was merely propaganda as the US administration could not find evidence to label Saddam Hussein a drug kingpin as in the case of Manuel Noriega.

The so-called world response is led by the same US that repeatedly violates the sovereignty of dependent nations and vetoes any U.N. statements or resolutions against Israeli excesses and continued occupation of Palestine.

## There are two international law books, one used for the third world and the other for the West (including Israel)

paints the picture of himself. Then again, the Emir of Kuwait and his ruling family were not the proponents of democratic ideals, as Bush would have us believe.

This regional problem could have been solved eventually by the Arab League and/or the Muslim states themselves.

Even if the claims used by the Americans to justify sending troops, namely defending Saudi Arabia were true, any keen observer of the Arab and Muslim world knows that the other Arab and Muslim states would not have allowed Saddam to take over Saudi Arabia because of its religious significance to the billion Muslims worldwide.

The United Nations under the leadership of the Americans and the British has taken unprecedented steps to restore the British established boundary and lower oil prices.

But this same organization has not suggested or even thought of imposing any measures against Israel for the murder of civilians and the illegal occupation of Palestine.

Even more unbelievable is the fact that the U.N. finds it difficult to come out clearly and condemn Israel.

This inaction on the part of the U.N. prompted Fehdi Labib Terzi, a PLO representative to state,

"The blood of our people is a little more valuable than the oil fields (the U.N.) is defending."

In the US itself, the Bush administration has symbolically slapped Israel's wrist for its recent actions. This was done with qualifying statements so as not to hurt her feelings.

The fact that it was only done to maintain the weak coalition against Iraq was quite clear to Israel and any intelligent observer. The British did not have much to say as they have continued planning military strategies to reestablish the boundary line they worked so hard to draw at the turn of the century.

The Western reactions to this recent event, and the reaction when it comes to the occupation of Palestine in general, and the lack of action in the case of the US attack on Libya and Panama (to name two) has not gone unnoticed in the third world.

It is clearly evident that the U.N. and the West in general are using a double standard and practicing an extreme form of hypocrisy.

The inconsistencies in the actions and reaction of the US and Britain clearly show that they are not pursuing world order and freedom for all as they would like us to believe.

Rather, they are interested in maintaining the world status quo

in terms of Western political and economic dominance and freedom and rights for the West and pro-West nations.

Unless the U.N. breaks away from the control of the Western nations, and becomes a democratic institution employing consistency in its actions, it will not be taken seriously by the third world.

This is especially true now as the counter weight of the Eastern block is no longer present in the world political order.

The Western influence and grip over the U.N. is shown in the way it has dealt with the question of Palestine and many other third world issues.

It has taken action against Iraq, but keeps watering down statements against Israel for the massacre in Jerusalem for fear of embarrassing or isolating her.

This is done though the majority of the nations want to condemn Israel strongly and would, if they had their way, impose sanctions.

Unfortunately, these nations are not from the West and so their views and opinions are worth very little.

If the United Nations and the West in general want to have credibility in the third world and in particular the Arab and Muslim world, then this double standard and hypocrisy must come to an end.

## LETTERS

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their right of religious freedom are horrendous

Under such circumstances, will Native students be expelled? Will faculty who refuse to stop these rituals be fired? If Native students further resist, will the military be called out as in Quebec to enforce the rules with tanks and fighter-bombers?

Although the chapel and other premises where Christian and Jewish rituals are carried out on campus are not licensed, to my understanding, there has never been a concern over their use of wine in religious rituals nor have dire penalties been threatened in this regard.

Surely the Committee can take into account the needs of other communities and academic con-

cerns on campus when rituals, aside from Christian and Jewish ones, are involved.

Jordan Paper,  
Religious Studies Programme

## Late word on pro-choice

To the editor,

Re: letter from Pamela Jarvis, "CYSF correct in denying an abortion referendum," March 1990.

I regret the incredible delay between the publication of Ms. Jarvis' letter and my response.

However, I still feel that a reply is appropriate as Ms. Jarvis' grasp of the democratic process was so utterly tenuous and I fear that impressionable young minds may be forever altered by seeing her opinions in print while browsing through back issues of *Excal*.

To your arguments Ms. Jarvis, Yes, the OFS has something to gain, as does YFS, by taking a stance on the abortion issues. Accurate representation of the will of the thousands of students they represent.

You're right that the Queen's referendum represents a small, homogenous group. But does that make it any less valid? Queen's is a small homogenous community perhaps, in which case this is accurate representation of their views.

Do tell, what is a "respectable polling," 50, 51, 5 per cent? How many Canadians voted in the last federal election? Five per cent, seven per cent? If people don't care to vote, then surely they don't care how they are represented.

Lastly, yes the York Women's Centre is (gasp, horror) overtly pro-choice. You seem to use this adjective to imply negative overtones.

Would you prefer that we be covert about it???

What does pro-choice mean? It has become a media buzz-word but I invite you to look beyond that. It means that I feel that no person or organization has the right to take our options away.

That you have the right to make

your own decisions about a pregnancy, including the right to terminate or continue it.

I am not anti-life, I am pro-choice, I support and insist on my right as a woman, as a human being, to dictate my own body, it belongs to me, not the government.

I am very committed to fighting for every individual's right to make choices of all kinds, not just on abortion.

If you would care to discuss this further, feel free to come by the women's centre at S156 Ross. I'd like to try and understand your point of view.

Sincerely,  
Judith S. Pearson

Not speaking on behalf of the York's Women's Centre.

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