

# Our selective morality

There on *The Journal* was our former UN ambassador, Stephen Lewis, oozing socialist snake oil from every pore, his lips quivering from the rapturous words that he spoke. Canada, said Lewis, was a major world power.

It was Canada's sacred duty to go forth and smite the evil racists in South Africa. Halleluja! Onward Christian-Socialist Soldiers! Beat the tambourine! A non-Canadian listening to such arrant nonsense might have thought Lewis had been smoking a spliff of Zulu Gold.

Alas, no. A lot of empty heads in Ottawa have gotten so swollen they actually believe Canada is a great power — and these are the very same people who gleefully disarmed Canada to the point where today our army couldn't even fight off a good-sized L.A. crack gang.

The anti-South African frenzy into which our leftists have whipped themselves is really no more than an updated version of the old White Man's Burden. Which says it's our Christian missionary duty to help the poor black people of Africa who are so backwards and inferior they can't help themselves without white men.

Ah, what guilt will do. And how well South Africa-bashing plays to Canada's left. That's why Joe Clark has to bite his lip and listen to Zimbabwe scold Canada for trading with South Africa.

Joe's not allowed to say what most Canadians would in his place. Which is: "Why you miserable ingrates. How dare you lecture us on not doing enough to punish South Africa when you take our money and stash it away in Switzerland while your people go hungry. When you openly trade with South Africa, when your leaders rush there for medical treatment, while you secretly buy arms and food from Pretoria."

What nerve. Forked-tongued Africans and Ottawa's endless gullibility are bad enough. But what really galls me is the poisonous cloud of hypocrisy that hangs over our South African policy. If it's Canada's holy duty to smite the sinners, then I have a few suggestions for the brave Brian Mulroney.

The U.S. state department has just reported that Israel killed at least 366 Palestinians last year. "Over 20,000 Palestinians were wounded or injured

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by the Israel Defence Forces," said the U.S. government, a close ally of Israel. Some 2,600 Palestinians were being held in prison without charges.

Now, whatever one thinks of the right or wrong of the Palestinian uprising, one point is clear. In terms of sheer numbers of killed, wounded and jailed, Israel has considerably surpassed South Africa in the arithmetic of oppression.

Shouldn't Canada impose a trade embargo on Israel as well as South Africa? Shouldn't Ottawa remove the charitable status of money given to Israel? Sure. And also expect snow in Zimbabwe.

Moral indignation in Ottawa is exceedingly selective. Punishing South Africans is safe. Pick on Israel and you'd better take cover — fast. Other examples:

✓ The USSR invaded Afghanistan, killed one million of its people and drove 5.5 million into exile. For nine years, Ottawa, busy selling grain to the Soviets, said nothing. *Nothing*. Is segregated housing in South Africa really a greater and more urgent moral issue than the slaughter of one million people?

✓ China has a terrible record of human rights abuses, including recent events in Tibet. Where is Ottawa's boycott or criticism of China? You don't hear any because China can do anything it wants so long as visiting Canadian politicians keep getting their Peking duck banquets and the Chinese keep buying our wheat.

✓ Yugoslavia, another chum of Canada, has at least as many political prisoners as South Africa. According to Amnesty International, they have been tortured and abused. Where is our boycott of Yugoslavia, Brian?

✓ Ethiopia, a major recipient of Canadian aid, has purposely starved hundreds of thousands and perhaps a million people. It routinely uses torture. Yet as late as last fall, Canadian military aircraft were delivering food to besieged Ethiopian army garrisons.

One could go on and on with examples of Canada's oh-so-selective morality. Of course, much of this has been said before. Even so, sometimes you have to keep pointing out the obvious to the obviously befuddled.

Time now for Canadians to tell Ottawa its policy in southern Africa is idiotic, shameful and hypocritical. Either apply the same moral strictures to every nation or get off our high hobby horse and shut up.

Canada is being imperiled by grave and rising deficits. We don't have a penny to waste on such hypocrisy and foolishness. Nor to send Joe Clark and a cast of thousands to Zimbabwe, there to be ordered by African nations to boycott South Africa while they keep trading with Pretoria.

### Punch

