

Self-righteous bunkum

Yesterday's *Sun* editorial began: "To compare this weekend's raids by South Africa with the American action against Libya is obscene. But some will do so." Right you are, *Sun*.

What is obscene, I think, is the self-righteous, sanctimonious and thoroughly misinformed views that President Reagan, the hard right, much of the media and Hollywood have foisted on us about terrorism. Or the *Sun* explaining that it was okay for the ANC to blow up people in South Africa because apartheid is a hateful system, but when Palestinians attacked Israel or Libyans attacked Americans, that was terrorism.

Unfortunately, the small fact that Libya cheerfully admits funding and training the ANC eluded the *Sun's* editorial writers. Now, I ask, why are ANC killers, trained by Libya, any less terrorists than Palestinians trained by Libya who explode a bomb in Rome or Tel Aviv? Does the *Sun* really think that the South African civilians killed by a shopping centre bomb planted by the ANC are any less victims of terror than American or Israeli civilians? Evidently.

The U.S. and Ottawa denounced the South African raid as "an outrage." Yet, as Zambia's President Kaunda observed after the attack on his country, South Africa was merely following the precedent and logic established by America in its attack on Libya. The U.S. tried to assassinate Khadafy, Israel tried to kill PLO chief Yasser Arafat and bombed Tunis. These acts were applauded in North America. When South Africa makes tiny, pinprick raids on ANC targets in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana — reprisal for recent mining attacks that killed blacks and whites in South Africa — the West erupts in pious indignation.

What all this suggests, and what the *Sun* appears to be saying, is that only Arabs, Iranians and Mus-

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lims are "terrorists." Others who explode bombs, down airliners and murder are "guerrillas" or "nationalists" or "freedom fighters." This association of terrorism with Mideasterners is hardly surprising: It is the fruit of five years' incessant propaganda aimed at convincing North Americans that anyone opposed to the U.S. in the Mideast is a terrorist. And we know it is now open season on such miscreants.

The *Sun* went on to explain it was okay for the U.S. to attack Libya because "it struck for free people everywhere" while nothing that South Africa did could be justified because of the evil system of apartheid. Please, *Sun*, spare us such bunkum. A majority of the world's nations condemned the U.S. for its attacks, including many of its democratic allies. Does the *Sun* recall that the UN also condemned Israel for practising "racism"? Is everything that Israel does also immoral and unjustified? What sheer nonsense.

Here we see the perfect example of the double standard being applied under the high-sounding puffery of "anti-terrorism." Lebanese who attack an occupation force of U.S. Marines garrisoned in downtown Beirut are "terrorists." Black ANC squads that bomb civilian targets in South Africa are "nationalists." South Africa, because it is evil, is not allowed the right of self-defence. Israel and the U.S., because they are good, can blow up anything from Honduras to China, provided it's labelled "terrorist."

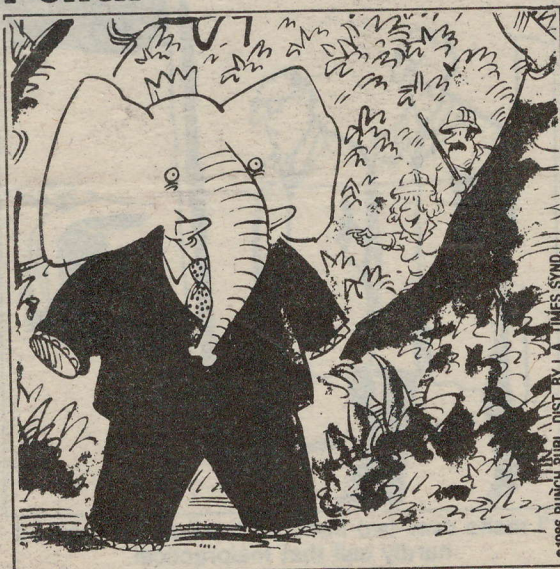
Let's inject some common sense and logic into this circus of disinformation. Anyone who explodes a bomb and kills civilians is a terrorist, no matter whether Arab, black, yellow or pink. Anyone who drops a bomb from the air on civilian targets is practising terrorism. The nature, the evil of the attack cannot be judged in terms of its target.

Otherwise, who is to say what is terrorism? For example, to the PLO and to some of the over 100 nations that recognize it, Zionism is an evil as reprehensible as apartheid. Following the *Sun's* thinking, this view of so many of the world's nations should also make Israel a just target for attack.

Of course, Washington has simply arrogated to itself the role of judge, jury and executioner in dealing with terrorism. Libyans, in fact any Arabs, are actual or potential terrorists. Contras and Afghans are freedom fighters. ANC killers trained in Libya are freedom fighters, but Palestinians trained there are terrorists . . . and so on.

I'm sorry for being obscene, but shrill hypocrisy makes me angry. I'll leave it to the *Sun* to explain to the next South African child whose legs have been blown off by an ANC bomb why her pain is morally justified.

Punch



"Oh, Gerald! That one would be just perfect for the nursery."