

# Israel held to double standard

On Nov. 18, the Palestinian militia, under the leadership of Yasser Arafat, opened fire upon unarmed Palestinian civilians, killing at least 12, wounding hundreds.

Upon hearing this tragic news, I called up my cousin, Karel Kovanda, who happens to be the Czech representative to the United Nations Security Council.

"So, is the Security Council going to condemn Arafat for slaughtering his own people?" I asked.

"No," he replied. "What Arafat does is his own business."

Such is the hypocritical double-standard that is the United Nations. And others supposedly interested in peace in the Middle East, have applied to Israel and its adversaries for decades. You can be sure that if the soldiers who murdered those Palestinians had been Israelis, the United Nations would have swiftly condemned them.

How will the Arab community, third world forums, and other pro-democratic movements react to this bloody twist in Palestine?

Most likely, they will remain silent. As has been the case for years, when Arabs commit atrocities, the world is silent.

Condemnation is only reserved for Israelis who kill. When an Israeli shoots a demonstrator, he is labeled a Nazi, and the entire movement of Jewish national sovereignty, Zionism, is fallaciously equated with racism. When an Arab dictator shoots a demonstrator, no such denouncement is forthcoming.

Yasser Arafat, the supposed leader of the Palestinian people, has gunned down Palestinians. The implications are astounding.

ing, and in addition to grieving over more bloodshed in that troubled area, one can't help but wonder if it will again be proven that while Israelis are scrutinized in their misdeeds, Arab leaders are ignored for theirs.

While certainly not absolving Israel of its guilt for the brutal and unjust occupation of Palestine over the last few decades that has resulted in more than a thousand Palestinian deaths, one cannot but notice still another obvious injustice when only Israel is condemned by the United Nations and supposed pro-Arabs, while injustices in that region, often far worse, abound.

Few peace-niks rallied against Syria's Assad when Amnesty International reported in 1983 that his troops butchered between 10,000 and 25,000 civilians in the town of Hama, almost overnight.

How many pro-Palestinians labeled Jordan a Nazi state, after Jordan opened fire on Palestinians within its borders?

The evil actions of Saddam Hussein, such as in 1988 when Iraqi planes dropped poison gas on the town of Halabja, murdering over 5,000 Kurdish civilians, do not receive the condemnation they deserve. So it goes when Palestinians are murdered

in Lebanon or Kuwait, when Baha'is are persecuted in Iran, when Egypt executes its own Muslim fundamentalists, when death tolls go up in Algeria or Libya or Sudan.

Yet when Israel plays the bloody game of oppression, the United Nations, pro-Palestinians and others on the left are quick to condemn.

Now Yasser Arafat has joined the deadly ranks as a killer of Palestinians (he's killed Jews for years).

Will the world remain silent, as usual, and leave their harsh judgment solely for Israel? Or will Arafat and every other perpetrator of injustice (from Assad to the Israeli troops who still shoot at stone-throwers) be equally condemned?

Palestinians blow up Israeli buses in Tel Aviv. Israelis shoot demonstrating students in Nablus.

The cycle of murder must be broken, and one step in that direction would be to use an even-keeled scale of justice for both sides. Condemn Arafat for the murder of Palestinians, as we've been rightfully condemning Israel for years.

*Phil Zuckerman is a graduate student in sociology at the University.*

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