
our message right across the United States of America. We must say strongly and fervently and unapologetically that this is an institutional forum which deserves the celebration of humankind, not witless and gratuitous criticism.

In any event, that said, I think we should move to the strengths. This afternoon's ceremony drove it home for all of you. I don't want to go into it in great detail because there isn't all that much time for embellishment; but when you are summoning the arguments in defence of the United Nations, let's not retreat into the old dialectic.

Think for a moment — number one if you will — of the specialized agencies. I've often thought to myself, as surely you have, that the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) almost single-handedly legitimizes the nature and character of the United Nations. Just reflect on it for a moment. Four hundred thousand youngsters under the age of five saved every year by UNICEF. Saved from death every year by UNICEF. When I stood in a refugee camp five or six weeks ago in the Sudan, right on the border with Ethiopia, to which 80 000 Tigreans had made a migration desperately seeking survival... when I stood in that camp and chatted with the doctors from *Médecins sans Frontières*, and asked them how it was possible to keep children alive in circumstances of such eviscerating desolation, they said to me that "part of the reason is that we have these little packets of oral rehydration therapy to distribute — 15 000 of them a day — and in that way, Mr. Lewis, we keep hundreds of children alive". Now it is important for the world to be reminded over and over again, with unself-conscious vigour, that you'd never have that outcome without the United Nations. That's the kind of thing which the world body achieves.

More still, you have the United Nations Development Program which spends \$675 to 700 million (US) each year, turning such amounts into further billions of dollars of projects which speak to the economic long-term viability of the countries whose present economies verge on catastrophe because of the African famine. Beyond that, you have the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), which day in and day out saves tens of thousands of people, and provides shelter and vaguely civilized environments, whether in Pakistan or in the Middle East or in the Sudan. One could set out — as you know as well as I — specialized agency after specialized agency doing ennobling work; indeed — dare I say it — including the United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Therefore it's important when summoning the arguments in defence of the United Nations not to forget the specialized agencies.

Nor — number two — is it possible to forget the kind of very special political environment which is created within the United Nations, despite all of its difficulties. Throw your minds back, if you will, to the fall of 1984, recall with me that the world had not been at the negotiating table in Geneva for more than a year; that everybody felt we were perched on the precipice looking into some cataclysm of human destruction; and that the superpowers weren't talking. Lo and behold Andrei Gromyko comes to the General Assembly and makes a speech within which there is a hint that perhaps the bargaining process can be reinstated; and Ronald Reagan comes to the General Assembly — third year in a row, unprecedented in the history of presidential contributions since 1945 — and makes a speech within which there is a kernel of hope about reinstating the negotiations, and a few months later
