

story datelined Washington or Geneva or London will sell. If you put a UN dateline on it, in the eyes of some it will not negate the story, but it will certainly diminish the value of it. This is what the UN is up against. There is a sort of psychological climate in which it is operating. In Canada it is different still, but in the United States if you put the UN dateline, somehow it is not credible or it is biased.

"This was certainly not the case when I first came here in 1966. Things went downhill very quickly because of two things: the Middle East and economic issues ... when the Security Council and the General Assembly adopted a number of resolutions [that] displeased Israel. When the issue of Palestinian rights came up, culminating with Arafat's visit, at a time when the PLO was quite actively blowing up planes, there were demonstrations across First Avenue where you could not cross the street. The Jewish community felt very strongly that there were some horrible things happening at the UN—that was their perception of it—to the point that Africans and Arabs suggested that some of the meetings be held in Geneva, where they thought there would be a more neutral atmosphere. Ever since that time, the UN, in the eyes of the pro-Israel community, has lost credibility. Is it because they sense great danger that, if these resolutions were really pushed to the ultimate, Israel would lose, if not totally, at least some territory and certain things?

"At the same time there is on both sides a very irrational dislike or hatred, depending on the speaker, on some of the key issues. There has been a sort of liberation of speakers. They feel freer now to use ridiculous language, very forceful language. It is no longer the diplomatic language one might have been used to in the early 1960s. I wonder, if Khrushchev came here now and banged his shoe on the table, whether it would be such a big deal. It was then, because there were certain things you just didn't do. But now, in both the Security Council and the Assembly, very often on both sides of the argument, they go for the jugular. The Middle East is probably the roughest, for the language is less virulent on Central America and southern Africa. Of course, for the press corps it isn't a bad thing: it makes for a good story.... I'm not a missionary!

"Again, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the whole issue of the New Economic Order came up, Henry Kissinger—using him as the ultimate tip of the iceberg—did not like such ideas. And the UN was speaking out. Here you had all these newly independent nations and there had been an awakening of all sorts of thoughts and ideas, and people came here to express those thoughts. And the New Economic Order became another issue [that] disturbed the Western world generally. When Algeria said that, if we had an equitable relationship around the world in the economic field, one would not need aid—that was the extreme point of view, that aid was just the symptom of something that was very wrong and, in their eyes, the West was at fault.... And then, of course, later on you had the oil embargo connected to the Middle East—it was lethal.

"This is why I go back to what is happening now. I see a return to much more caution by the majority of developing countries; I put aside Libya and Iran. The debt problem, the lowering of oil prices, all these things have their