

cerned. In fact they are, by and large, neo-isolationists in their views of the world. They specialize not in insightful analysis, but in inspired sophistry. They are fundamentally anti-internationalist. They do not believe that the national interests of the United States should ever be subsumed in the interests of the greater international community. That makes me impatient. Groups of people who do not understand the moral and human imperatives of the international community in 1985 demonstrate a philistinism for which none of us should have any time.

Yet it does great damage; I have to admit that. And although it saddens me to say so, people of such views engage in easy slanders of the Secretariat to which the Secretary-General is hard-pressed to respond. They put Third World countries on the defensive. They provoke many into needless opposition. So they need to be dealt with, not as an obsession, not as an *idée fixe*, not as a preoccupation, but as a group which wields influence and therefore has to be responded to. Before long, I hope it will be possible thoughtfully to document the flaws, the weakness, the generalizations, the partial truths, the factual errors in what will amount to a dossier of indictment. In other words, in a rational persuasive and thoughtful way, to fight back in the defence of the United Nations. 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.

The UN's strengths

Let us consider the strengths. But in summing the arguments in defence of the United Nations, let us not retreat into the old dialectic. Think of the specialized agencies. UNICEF almost single-handedly legitimizes the nature and character of the United Nations. Four hundred thousand youngsters under the age of five saved from death every year by UNICEF. I stood in a refugee camp earlier this year in The Sudan, right on the border with Ethiopia, to which 80,000 Tigreans had made a migration desperately seeking survival. 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 unselfconscious vigor, that you would never have that outcome without the United Nations. That is the kind of thing which the world body achieves.

More still, you have the United Nations Development Program which spends 675 to 700 million dollars 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 UNHCR (the United Nations High Commission for Refugees), 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.