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ments. Yet what are the tendencies here? We establish a system of procedure and protocol that begins to rival that of Byzantium. We develop a specialized terminology in which ordinary words are invested with arcane significance — whole paragraphs of ideological meaning are read into the choice of a single ordinary noun or adjective. We form ourselves into international blocs and support propositions or positions that are in violation of our own declared national policies. How then can we be seen to foster the well-being of our peoples? Too faintly, too faintly.

Over the years I have travelled widely across this globe, and just since June I have had an opportunity to talk to people in ten different countries. The people I have spoken to have strengthened my conviction of the vast reservoir of international goodwill that exists in the hearts of individual citizens around the world. Why then is so much of the energy of this organization devoted to acrimonious wrangling among representatives of governments? What relevance have the debates in this chamber to the ideals, the hopes and the needs of those for whom this organization was created — the people of the United Nations?

Too often, the answer to this question is little. We have allowed ourselves to be captured by the self-imposed dictates of this forum. We have lost sight of why we are here. The people of Canada, and I suspect the people of countries all over the world, are recognizing what is happening here. We do not operate in a closed sphere. Modern communications, and an increasingly informed and interested population ensure that what we do is known and understood across the globe. Our credibility is in jeopardy, and with it the very existence of this organization. For without popular support we shall be unable to continue. Unless we make our work, our talks, our very motives more relevant to the concerns of the people we represent, we shall lose the support we need to continue.

As I see it, the major challenge facing the United Nations in the next decade is to make itself once again a vehicle for filling the needs and rights of the peoples of the world....

Thirty-one years ago, when the UN adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it took a step of great importance to people everywhere. Similarly the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted by the General Assembly in 1966 reflected the heartfelt aspirations of the population of this planet. These documents summarize what this great organization is all about: the fostering and protection of rights.

There are three broad areas of human rights that I want to speak about today. The first is the sort of thing that immediately springs to mind when the term human rights is used. These are the political rights, such as those to freedom of speech and association, the right to equal treatment before equitable law, the absence of racial, religious or sexual discrimination. The second area is the right to physical safety, the freedom from war. Finally, I want to speak about the rights arising from our natures as human animals, our needs for food, shelter and an appropriate share of the world's riches.

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