

The Final Round Transcript

Government: Creighton University
Opposition: Colorado State University

NOTES: (...) = unintelligible or unclear.
(?) = uncertain spelling.

*Webmaster's Note: One change was made –
Patty St. John was changed to Patty
Steck.*

Housing should be a basic human right.

First Constructive Speech (7 minutes)

*Prime Minister, Ryan Syrek
Creighton University*

Before we get started with any sort of debating today, I have to come to the realization that I am never going to actually win an Academy Award. I know it's shocking. As such, this is probably the only chance I will get to reenact such a great occasion with this many people in the room.

I'm so surprised. I never thought I would be here. You like me! You really like me! But really what I need to do is thank some people. The first thing we need to do is thank Skip Rutledge and the Point Loma coaches, teams, staff, and administration for a great tournament.

We'd also like to thank Robert Trapp, the Tournament Director and NPDA President, for his four years of fantastic service. Also, Renea Gernant, the NPDA Executive Secretary, and Brent Northup, the NPDA Treasurer. And, at a little more personal level, of course, the coaches who made all this possible are, Marty Birkholt and Susan Hellbusch. I look down like I needed to remember that. And also the volunteer coaches which made this possible as well Christy Collins (?) and Patty Steck and Doug Switzer (?) who are all very valuable to this program.

And, in addition those members of the Creighton Administration, Father Mike Catera, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Charles Dougherty, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. MaryAnn Danielson who chairs the Department of

Communication Studies, and, of course, Father Michael Morrison, the President of Creighton University.

And just one more thanks, of course, to everybody here for coming; to the judges and all the judges who have had to listen to us thus far. With that said and done, let's move directly into the debate and let the time begin now I suppose.

We were given the idea or the resolution that housing should be a basic human right. Well, this resolution is one of the reasons why I actually enjoy debate sometimes. It allows us to take a social stance which is very important and completely valuable to society and allows us to discuss this. And when we look to such an important and valuable idea it automatically focuses us on the rights of those who definitely need protecting more than others; the rights of children.

We need to define, then, some terms for you. Housing is going to be referred to as a home. Basic human rights, well, it's going to be kind of straightforward but specifically and particularly in this case the rights of children.

And the thesis is thus, then, the United States Federal Government should sign and ratify the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of a Child. The criterion we are going to use to weigh today's debate is one that policy makers should use and will come as a shock to all of you I'm sure—cost-benefit analysis. Weigh the costs against the benefits and you see which one comes out on top. Not necessarily just at an economic level, also philosophical as well. It allows fair ground for both.

We feel that our link is justified for three very major reasons. First it allows "real world" debate as everyday the document sits on the table without the United States signing it. The second reason mirrors the intent to the resolution. Within the document it demands that the child be given home and shelter and that is a specific provision within the document and, therefore, affirms the concept that housing should be a basic human right. In addition, it also provides fair ground as it is not currently done in the *status quo*. So there's got to be some ground there to be had.

First, then, we're going to look at the immorality of the United States Federal Government by not signing this document. First, every

country in the world has signed this document except two: Somalia, which doesn't have a government, and ah, oh yeah, the United States.

As the document was being formed, the United States added a lot of reservations and had a direct hand in the composing of this document and then they didn't even bother to sign it. It is absolutely immoral the practice that we used. The United States not signing this sends one of two statements, but before I get to that statement I'll take your question.

Question: (...) why hasn't the United States yet signed this document?

Answer: I'll tell you this. That's something you're going to have to tell me. Because to me, it sends one of either two statements: First, it shows either that children aren't important to the United States or that, secondly, at the every least, we don't care enough to recognize this important and valuable document.

Moving, then, into the second contention-that is the United States' refusal to sign actually harms the international image. It demonstrates that the United States does not negotiate in good faith. We discussed. We discussed. We discussed. We shaped this document and then just ran away when time came to sign. That is not exactly the most moral stance to take. Everyone from the world signed it and we haven't.

So because we have not signed, we are also not allowed to sit in on the council that forms international law on children's issues and children's rights. Take, for instance, the example of Ireland, who is contemplating the idea that abortions should be considered under this concept. Well the United States right now, without holding whether it's right or wrong-abortion is another debate completely-but without taking a stance on it, the United States right now has no say in whether this was actually occurring. We have no means to sit on this council as we have not ratified the document. We can't even enter into negotiations on the matter.

Moving then into the third contention. That is how the United States' signing solves for a whole lot of problems. Well first it increases the legitimacy of the treaty because of the United States. We are obviously recognized as the foremost world power right now, sorry

Russia, and as such we have a right and when we sign it, it automatically increases the legitimacy of the document.

It also allows the United States to sit in on the decision-making body and put their opinion in. So rights of the citizens of the United States and our government on the issue of the children's rights is a vital one and right now we have no say. Also, the Charter recognizes, and this is some specifics of the Charter in case the Opposition team looks at them, basically one of the provisions is that within five years of signing the document they have to submit a report as to the status of children's rights and the treatment of children within the country. If they are inadequate they must then resubmit every two years until fixed and in doing so this opens the door to United Nations' sanctions and also it allows for Security Council action.

And with that I will take your second question.

Question: At least as far as it applies to the United States, how inadequate is our provision for children having housing?

Answer: As far as the United States goes? Well, the first thing I will tell you is this, the United States as the foremost world power has the responsibility to insure that the world's children is actually taken care of not just within only the United States. But in addition and beyond that the status of the United States would actually help improve as a great example and help further ratify this document as being valuable as we are a country with good children's care. And by signing the document we show that to people with a good children's care actually believe and support this document. It just makes us one of the staunchest supporters of it.

Moving, then, into the fourth contention for you there. Because the United States has the largest intelligence gathering we can best inform and verify. We have a lot of resources at our disposal and with use of the Security Council we can best tell if other countries are infringing upon the rights of children and this is a very vital concept.

Question: (...)

Answer: (...) and I would love to but I have a lot of stuff to get to.

Moving then into the most important stuff: the benefits for the cost benefits analysis. First it increases the United States' international legitimacy. This is something that can't be undervalued as every other nation in the world has signed it. In us doing so, it allows us to ally with them further, and increases our legitimacy a lot.

Secondly, it increases the legitimacy of the document in and of itself. By the United States signing it, the United States being a country with good child care, within its country, it actually shows the idea that this document is a valid and important one. Our ratifying this signifies just the importance and the pivotal nature of this document.

And thirdly it increases the importance of rights around the world. Or at least in this case, especially when we refer to housing for all, of which is the resolution in today's debate. What's important to keep in mind is while we like to be egocentric on the side of the United States and believe that all of our rights are the only things we need to worry about, as a leader we do need to worry about everyone's rights. It sounds a little namby-pamby, I know, but it's true. We have responsibility to maintain the world's rights as well. And it's something that we need to focus on. It's part of our social responsibility.

Finally, it allows sanctions and Security Council provisions it also allows the Security Council's ability to present issues in front of the United States which it has not been able to up until this point. When the United States is around, the document can't be talked of and the issues cannot be brought up when we're dealing with the United Nations. We will remove this restriction. It also increases awareness about kids' rights and children's rights and allows to bring about more rights in addition.

And, also, the last thing I will tell you is, it completes a simple social contract because who needs anything more than children do? And I urge you for these reasons, because the benefits are so clear, to vote for the Government.

Second Constructive Speech (8 min)
Leader of the Opposition, Geof Brodak
Colorado State University

I didn't even think about it until the Prime Minister discussed it, but I guess I too will probably never, ever, ever have an Academy Award given to me. And while I guess it didn't really upset me beforehand, I assume I feel bad but I am not really sure exactly what that feeling is. But I won't go on like Roberto Benigni and say how much I'd like to thank you all and in exactly what ways I would like to thank you. But I do have some thank you's of my own that I would definitely like to offer as well.

And first and foremost on my list would be to thank Dr. Trapp and the tournament staff and the Executive Committee here for such an excellent tournament and for his years of dedicated service as well. But, also, through the four years I attended national tournaments no one has put on better show with better weather with better scenery and probably even better food than Skip Rutledge has here.

But I too, like our friends from Creighton, would like to thank Marty Birkholt for his influence in being part of CSU. I think he has quite a coup having three of the four semifinals actually be under his tutelage. I think that, in and of itself, is an extraordinary accomplishment in teaching.

But not to try to diminish Robert and Marcus's accomplishment, I think they too have been integral in Bill and I's achievement and helping us actually achieve the status of the final round as well as helping the team like stick together.

And that's the next people I'd like to thank. Specifically, Kevin, Susan, Kristina, and Cheryl for sitting here today and watching us and supporting us in the rounds, but also for supporting us for the last three years and helping us to actually have some of the best practice rounds I think I've ever had.

But finally, I think, most importantly, at least for me, is my family who've driven all the way out from Colorado to see me today and I think it's great that they've been in the back of every one of our rounds and have been supportive and have clapped and the whole nine

yards. I think it's great. I love having a traveling parliament. So thank you Mom and Dad and my Grandparents.

And finally, since it's probably in all of your more recent memories, I have another extension of thank you's to Mr. Bill Herman for being an excellent colleague, excellent debater, and an excellent friend over these last several years. So finally, thank you Members of Parliament, distinguished colleagues for your recognition today. And with that we'd like to begin the Opposition's philosophy.

When we were discussing the resolution that housing should be a basic human right, I guess I was just expecting to actually discuss housing policy—either internationally or nationally. And I think, unfortunately, this is the first place where I think we have to begin our discussion—is when the Members of the Government would like to talk about the entire United Nations covenant on children's rights.

And I think my first argumentation here is it covers a lot more things than housing, Members of the Parliament. And you'll realize that the Prime Minister spent a very, very, very minuscule part of his seven minutes actually discussing the needs of children, either in the United States as far as housing, or around the world, or how the United States not signing this document is somehow preventing housing policy.

But instead he'd rather discuss these larger terms about the value of these children's rights documents. I would say that I think this is clearly outside the realm of what we should be discussing today and if we're going to discuss whether or not we should uphold this covenant with child housing rights in it or not. And I think then we're going to discuss that better debate. I think quite clearly you'll decide to oppose.

But the Prime Minister wants to say that this is a "real world" debate and, therefore, we should discuss it. Well fine, but we should discuss it on "real world" terms of the value of the housing being a basic human right and not a whole bunch of other things. Which I don't really think is (...).

Well yes, we do have also have a mirror of the intent, at least some way, but I think overall we need to examine the specifics of the resolution today and not spend more than five to ten seconds talking about housing and that I think is the best ground for debate and that is

best going to be at least what we were planning on discussing for this resolution.

So with that in mind the first argument the Opposition would like to levy as to why we should not have this document contain at least a basic right to housing is very important. Because what we're going to contend, at least on the side of the Opposition, is that there is a clear delineation between what is shelter and what is housing. The example is you have someone who lives in a shelter but you still call them homeless. You have someone who should be provided a roof over their head and those people still don't have housing—they may have some type of shelter.

Now while it may be appropriate that children should have some basic right to shelter—I think when we go beyond that and say they have a basic right to housing this is placing a lot of extraordinary obligations, especially at the point when we call it a basic human right, and expand that beyond just something that is an important need which we should try to fill. Your question, sir.

Question: (...) It seems to me that the Opposition is confusing shelter versus home versus housing.

Answer: What we're telling you is that housing is presenting some type of permanent actual fixture. And shelter is actually trying to provide maybe a roof over their head, like a homeless shelter or some other type of thing. And our argument, today, is that once you establish a house—the actual concrete solid foundation that these children return to time and again—as not only an international goal that we like to achieve but rather a basic human right that everyone has a responsibility of upholding but that not just harms the United States, but probably not as much. But as it harms the rest of the world because then it demands and puts the obligation of devoting massive amounts of resources into building these permanent settlements for children. And at the point where we give the children that right we don't really establish when the right goes away and kick them out into a non-housing environment.

Now what we're telling you today is that the rest of the world has a far lower economic status than the United States. And once we put this obligation upon them to actually build the physical dwellings and deal with this problem as a basic human right, and not just

something that's a goal we should be achieving, but that diverts resources from a much other very necessary procedures and pacts within their government and that actually ends up harming the children more by demanding that it be a basic human right. So that's our first argument, overall, is that we should not be couched in the basic human rights terms because that doesn't actually help us deal with the problem.

But the first argument of the Prime Minister is that the United States is absolutely immoral by not signing this document. Well, my first argumentation, today, is that that is not germane. We're going to discuss whether or not we should sign a document that contains a housing provision or not and that's the debate we're having.

But what he second tells us is it is harming our international image. My first argumentation here is that it really hasn't impacted us very negatively overall. But furthermore, there aren't people saying "Look, look, the United States isn't providing enough for its children and therefore we're causing all this international illegitimacy." We don't believe it is a basic human right now, but we're still very good at providing services for children. But when you couch that and try to say this absolutely has to occur on an international level it's not the best policy I think we should pursue. Your question.

Question: So let me get this straight (...)?

Answer: Because the difference I've already explained to you between couching it as a need and a goal and a basic human right imposes such an obligation.

But the next argument of the Prime Minister is, and what its going to do is, we can't sit in on rights discussions and actually tell Ireland what their abortion policy should be. Members of Parliament, this isn't germane to the resolution at any level and I furthermore would say to you, why should the United States care what the abortion policy in Ireland is? I think our not being part of this document today is really not causing any international problems or harming any achievement of the other countries that have signed onto this document and for that reason I think we clearly must be opposing on that.

But the next argument given by the Prime Minister is that actually signing will actually help the United States become a very legitimate power. But I think I've already shown you that it doesn't

help or harm our legitimacy any by not saying it's not a basic human right but just something we should try to achieve.

But furthermore we say we'll now have to report to countries all the rest of this great document is really, really good and we've got good intelligence. But what you need to realize is that other countries have the ability to deal with children with or without the United States actually being a party to this document. Furthermore how many children in Somalia are not getting housing because the CIA isn't publishing a report to the Security Council, Members of Parliament. This is not a problem that needs to be dealt with.

So when the Prime Minister discusses the advantages, he wants to revisit the legitimacy argument and I think I've already effectively dealt with that. But, furthermore, he says that we're going to lend legitimacy to the document. I would say this is outside the context at least of our discussion today. We're not debating whether or not children should have any rights, whatsoever, in the international community. We're debating whether or not children should be afforded, mandated through international law, this specific right of housing. And furthermore, I will tell you that when he says that the United States can do it, we have to enforce the morality and teach other people what to do, I think, that in and of itself would probably be a reason to reject the document as a whole. Because if the United States wants to justify its position, as far as human-rights, saying: "We're in the United States and we've got a lot of guns so damnit, we're going to tell you what are the best rights to have and we need to be in on all these discussions."

When the Prime Minister specifically tells us we need to be party to these investigations so that we can tell other countries what to do. I think as a parliament we should reject the document simply because the United States would abuse that type of privilege by just running around saying "This is what you've got to do because we're Bill Clinton and the U.S."

And then, finally, he tells you that this upholds some type of social contract. And I would contend to you that nowhere has he explained to you how specifically saying housing is a right upholds the social contract, increases legitimacy, or hence helps the world in any sort of way.

So for the first time, we urge you to oppose.

Third Constructive Speech (8 minutes)

Member of Government, Brian Mathey

Creight on University

I guess of course it's my obligation to bring to you a couple of more thank you's that I feel have gone neglected. Two people I want to thank most of all is, of course Jason Steck and Jon Lang who probably gave us the easiest semifinal of all time.

But in all seriousness, we certainly could not be here right now without the support our teammates have given us, the support that our coaches have given us, the support that everyone else at this tournament has given us and I certainly thank everyone and I appreciate everyone with great respect.

The next thank you I would like to extend is to people who do not get thanked enough and that is a personal thank you that I would like to extend to my high school debate coach, Bill Davis. And I don't think we recognize enough the importance of high school teachers and, in particular, debating skills that these people have outlined for us and the fundamental building blocks they have given, so I would just like to say thank you to him and every other high school coach.

And I guess, finally, the last person I would like to thank would be—the last two would be—Geof Brodack and Bill Herman, themselves. In my very first round at Colorado College, I debated Bill Herman. In my very last one of my college career I also debate Bill Herman. I think we have been friends all along and I thank you for that.

Finally I would like to thank my parents who much like Geof's will be watching this final round. They kind of went out and purchased a new VCR got rid of that old Betamax machine they had so they can watch the videotape.

That's it. Speaking of basic human rights, I would like to talk about housing and children. And, while it might seem childish, I would agree that Mr. Bill Herman does deserve to have a home and a shelter put over his head.

That said we move to the motion presented before this house: That housing should be a basic human right. The Leader of the Opposition has qualms with the way that we have established today's debate. I would like to begin by addressing those, move through the Government's case in turn, and then finally return to the one line of Opposition's analysis.

We first hear from the Leader of the Opposition that the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights covers more than housing. With this I will certainly agree. It does cover more than housing—but it still covers housing. There is no other international treaty nor document nor mechanism that we can use to establish housing as a basic human right. This simply put is the best one we have available and we should finally pick it up off the table and sign it.

Secondly, we hear from the Leader of the Opposition that how is it the United States not signing it somehow brings us inculcation(?) with the idea that this is a human right. Speakers of this House, we are not saying that the resolution demands that homes be built for people. Rather, the resolution demands a recognition that housing is a basic human right and that recognition comes through signing the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of a Child. That is the first and the only place that housing is recognized as a basic human right under international law and it's darn time the United States did something about it.

That said, I urge you to remember the criterion of cost-benefit analysis. And please note that while Mr. Brodak gives you an eloquent speech, he never demonstrates any costs to the Government's proposal. And, insofar, as we can demonstrate benefits, you will certainly side with the Government.

Finally, we turn now to the reasons why this link is justified. First, it is "real world." Now Mr. Brodak tells us that it is fine to discuss "real world" implications of housing—I guess that's why do vocal warm-ups before speeches, huh—but the "real world" (...) a basic human right. And we do. The "real world" implication of that is the signing of this physical piece of paper, document, and treaty and abiding by it under international law. But also I'll give you more about Mr. Brodak's line of analysis in a moment.

But second, we know that it mirrors the resolution. And Mr. Brodak tells us that as a general rule overall, it does not mirror. But Speakers of this House, it certainly does mirror the resolution. Housing should be a basic human right. If we wish to recognize that as the United States under international law there is one and only one avenue we can go about to doing it.

We didn't want just to stand before you and tell you that the United Nations should convene every single country in the world and come into a room like this and debate whether or not housing is a basic human right—it's already been done for us. It's called the United Nation's Declaration on the Rights of a Child and we should begin to adopt it. That's it.

We turn to the first line of the Government's analysis: the immorality of the United States' Government. Mr. Brodak tells us that this is not germane to the debate. But it certainly is if this is the only avenue in which to support housing as a basic and fundamental tenant of human rights. Please note that every country in the world has signed this document but two: the United States and Somalia, Speakers of the House and Members of Parliament.

But more importantly than that, please note that the United States amended the treaty, revised the treaty, and added specific United States and Amerocentric(?) ideas placed into the treaty. Please then note the argument that Mr. Brodak makes against the social contract that tells us that it is poor policy to export our social rights and it is a poor policy for the United States to export its morals to other nations. We've already done it with the treaty. We might as well fess up to it and sign it and begin to live and abide by it.

Question: So what if the United States actually (...)?

Answer: No, the rest of the world has already accepted what the United States said. The fact that everyone signed it but us shows that they accept it but most importantly the United States should accept it also.

That said, we turn to the second line of Government's analysis. That this harms international integrity. We hear from Mr. Brodak that this doesn't impact us greatly overall but with this I would

fundamentally disagree. Why? Because we cannot sit on any board now that discusses children's rights or housing rights.

Second, we cannot sit on any board that discusses particularly this treaty in general. Which means that should this treaty be enforced anywhere about the world, we can't consider it. Should the United States be unable to consider it, the Security Council can't consider it, we are a permanent member of that Council. That renders the treaty meaningless, Speakers of this House and Members of Parliament. And I would urge you to lend that treaty some meaning.

But finally we hear from the Leader of the Opposition about Ireland. The point about Ireland is this. Not that Ireland wants domestic law to help outlaw abortion, but that Ireland wants international law outlawing abortion. And so long as the United States hasn't signed the treaty, the United States can put no say into the issue. This, Speakers of the House, whether abortion be right or wrong, should the law be passed under international law and international guidelines would hold severe ramifications that impacts the United States and only illustrates our need to sign the treaty and let our will be done.

That said, we turn it to the third line of Government's analysis. That the United States signing will fundamentally solve the problem. It increases the legitimacy of the treaty, it actually allows something to get done and most importantly it allows us to sit on the decision-making body.

While Mr. Brodak might tell you that it hasn't harmed the legitimacy of the United States overall, that's well and good, but we are presenting to you clear benefits of the Government proposal and without any disadvantage to weigh it against, you still side with the Government.

Finally we turn to the next line of the Opposition that other countries have the ability to develop children's rights and should the CIA not be informing people about Somalia how is that going to hurt us? Simply put, it hurts us this way. Should Russia submit a report to this Council and its decision-making body, the decision-making body has literally no ability to validate that report. The United States with its intelligence and decision-making abilities can influence and can help these bodies become more legitimate.

Finally we turn to the benefits, we again see the cross-applications the Leader of Opposition arguments previously and so I urge you simply accept what I've already told you.

The only new line of analysis brought to us by the Leader of the Opposition is about the exportation of United States' morals and ideals and ideologies. Speakers of the House realize we have already done it. We've already gone into the Treaty Room and the Treaty Chamber and we've complained about the treaty and we've amended the treaty. We put American ideals into the treaty and then we didn't even bother to sign it. I would contend to this House it is most unjust for us to leave the piece of paper, the treaty, sitting on our desks after we've worked it so hard for it is unjust to the children. It is unjust to the rest of the world, and it fundamentally violates the rights that we hold dear.

Finally, then, we turn to the line of Opposition analysis and this is where it seems the Opposition would like to debate focus—whether or not we should accept housing as a basic human right. And I will prove to you that we do. First, it is what United Nations Declaration of the Rights of a Child demands, so this is still a resolitional debate.

But second, realize that insofar as every other country in the world has signed and recognized the document that demonstrates to us that it is virtually a universal human right and the only outliers are the United States and Somalia who can't even sign the treaty.

But next it's a clear basic human right because of the right to life. And we have a right to life and a right to be protected insofar as we need shelter and homes to protect us from the basic elements of man and the basic elements of nature. We realize that it's a basic human right.

But the next reason it's a basic human right is it upholds the right of culture, also outlined in the document. Why is this? Because I will contend to this House when we overlook communicative(?) theories of setting to realize that housing and what aspect and in what you live fundamentally influences your culture, shapes your norms, values and beliefs, and insofar as people have a right to that they have right to home over their heads.

But the final thing I would point out to you, Speakers of the House, is the resolution doesn't demand that we go about building structures for people-only recognize that this right exists. Certainly some people would stand in violation of it. Let us bring them under sanction of international law through the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of a Child. We beg you Speakers of the House and Members of Parliament to propose.

Fourth Constructive Speech (8 minutes)

Member of Opposition, Bill Herman

Colorado State University

Members of Parliament, Mr. Speaker, thank you for recognizing me, members of the panel, thank you. Members of Parliament for being here (...) never ever, ever, ever going to win an Academy Award. I also have a long list of thank you's. First of all, Skip, Konrad and the rest of the Pt. Loma squad, it's been a pleasure.

And I would also like to extend the same thank you to the tournament staff, especially Dr. Trapp. I am very, very proud to be in the last parliamentary debate round under the Trapp Presidency. It's certainly been a fine Presidency.

But there's also somebody that the previous three speakers have neglected to mention whose help to run the tournament, who's helped run the NPDA, and has helped to run debate since before my parents were born and I think you all know who I'm talking about. That's the man who the first speaker award this year is finally being named after whom it could have been named after five years ago, Members of the Parliament, one Al Johnson, the retired professor from Colorado College.

Of course, I too must thank my coaches Marcus Paroske and Robert Markstrom for their help as well as past coaches especially Marty Birkholt without whom I quite literally would not be here and would not even be competing in debate today. Give them a round of applause.

My teammates Cheryl, Susan, Kristina, Kevin and Nate, who's still a teammate even though he's run out of eligibility and just

kind of hangs around. Also, not only for Geofs family for coming to watch us, but my family too for supporting me through videotape unfortunately. But I'd like to thank them as well (...) as well as all of our District 9 teams and all of our local friends and many friends from many states away who've also come to watch us and support us throughout the tournament.

Of course not to neglect our opponent, Ryan Syrek, a dear friend, one of the oldest friends I have on the circuit, a young man who when I met him in October of 1995 he was one of the cockiest people I'd ever met in my life. Now that I'm debating him in both of our last parliamentary rounds ever, he's still one of the cockiest people I've ever met in my life. And who, when at the start of the tournament, said "See you in finals" I thought he was just being cocky, but, well, he turned out to be right.

And as well as my colleague who at times has just (...) and gotten me through more rounds than I can possibly comprehend. I forget who it was, but whenever they called him my better half, they were certainly correct.

With that in mind Members of Parliament (...) about the subject of today's debate and that housing should be a basic human right. (...) Because keep in mind the case they offer has about this much to do with housing policy. You know why? Because it's somewhere in a 5000 page document that we're going to ratify.

Clearly, Members of Parliament, the essence of today's debate the major resolution is supposed to be at a philosophical, a policy, a value level, whichever one we wanted to take whether housing should be a basic right.

Now what the Government has done with their case is they've ratified a document which assumes that housing is a basic right as one of 1500 of these rights—I don't even know how many basic rights are included in this document. (...) You know Mr. Mathey that would have been nice in a constructive.

Clearly, Members of Parliament, Geof and I expected to have a debate about housing policy, housing rights, housing in general a debate filled with the word housing where finally it got run into your ears and you couldn't stand to hear it anymore. But guess what,

Members of Parliament? The Members of the Government never once in their case talked about why housing is or is not a basic right.

They assume it's one of seven, we now find out, and they ratify this document which assumes it but never do they actually prove the thesis of the resolution and, as far as I'm aware, not only as my fine coaches Marcus Paroske, Robert Markstrom(?), but even the director of forensics of their squad taught us, that the resolution is the thesis to be proven in the round by the Members of the Government. So because they assume it, rather than proving it, you're voting Opposition on presumption alone.

Question: (...)

Answer: Only if the way of the Government defines the round properly reflects the intent of the resolution as written and it clearly does not do so.

Now the Members of the Government are offering you (...) ratifying housing as one of seven basic human rights. Guess what Members of Parliament? What they are essentially asking you to do is prove this resolution "This House would buy a pen" by talking you into becoming an Office Max franchisee. Those are clearly different things, Members of Parliament.

Now under the criterion, clearly, Geof and I offer some costs to ratifying this treaty although Geof contend there really aren't any benefits because we have more ink on some paper somewhere and the world is not going to change in any way, shape, or form. And keep in mind, that if there are no costs and no benefits to this policy you vote with the Members of the Opposition and keep the *status quo*--that's how presumption works.

Question: What costs (...)

Answer: Well, I'll be honest, I have the worst memory of anyone I know so I'm going to have to get to a later page before I can rattle them off. But the one that comes to mind, Members of Parliament, is that we're to exacerbate the U.S. control of the world in a system which is already dominated by American hegemony where we already tell enough people to enforce their human rights better and then

go against those human rights with our own policies. Members of Parliament.

Now I'm not going to accuse the Members of Government of thinking so, of thinking to the contrary. But I certainly think the hypocrisy is a clear disadvantage.

Which brings me to their first contention, that it's immoral of us not to sign it. What's their only justification for it—it's immoral for us not to sign it? Well, everyone else has done it. And since my Mother is going to eventually see this videotape I'd like to make an argument now that would make her very proud. I think you all know what I'm talking about, and that's if all your friends jumped off a cliff would you do it? Clearly, Members of Parliament, no other analysis as to why it's immoral exists so every other country in the world besides Somalia has done it. Why does that matter? That was never answered by the Members of Government.

Well their second contention is that it harms our international image and I think it's very important to notice my colleague's analysis that there are no real negative impacts. Clearly there are people in the international arena railing against the United States but what are they railing against? They're railing against our policy in Kosovo, they're railing against our policy in Israel, they're railing against our use of the WTO to twist free trade (....) fifty thousand different policies but so far as I've heard--and keep in mind that I do read the paper so that I can succeed in this activity--not at this time please, as far as I've heard, Members of the Parliament, the fact that we haven't signed this document isn't even on the list.

In fact I think empirically the fact that we tried to twist China's armed and twist Hong Kong's arm and twist all kinds of other countries' arms in complying with our version of human rights through things such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. There are probably a lot of countries; in fact, I would even contend the majority of the 120 some odd member non-aligned movement process in the United Nations, who would be relieved that were not getting farther in the quagmire of the U.S. telling the rest of the world who has rights, who does not, and what those rights are.

And then we keep talking about abortion policy in Ireland and I don't really know why we do that, Members of Parliament, but I think

we can agree that because Ireland is a sovereign nation, because France is a sovereign nation, because the United States is a sovereign nation, because there are about 190 other sovereign nations—not at this time please, I really must move on--we can ask these other nations as sovereign nations to determine their own human rights policies and if they want to sign off on this human rights document that's fine but why we as a sovereign nation need to infringe upon other sovereign nation's definitions of human rights is never justified in the Government's case.

Now we come to the third area I think is very important to notice here that they claim to fix the world—not solve for everything of course—but they claim to make the world better. They claim to solve for the problem of lack of human rights perspective. But keep in mind that their own analysis says that every country but the United States and Somalia has already signed this treaty. Has the world gotten better, Members of Parliament? Has every child got a house? Has every child got food on the table? Clearly if every other country in the world has already signed this document why all 191 of them out of 193 can't take care of it themselves without the United States' help is never provided. Clearly if it is going to get better through this document, these other countries have already done it.

And if the United States has to recognize basic human rights, well my colleague's analysis is all over that, we already do provide housing for all children through our adoptions system, through or foster home system and never really goes into it. OK the adoption foster home system is new in my speech but the analysis that the United States already does enough to protect human rights of children is never contested by the Members of the Government.

So the rest of the world has signed it and all benefits you can get there is already taken care of. The United States doesn't need to sign it, so there's no reason to propose. For that reason, for the second time, I beg to oppose.

First Rebuttal Speech (4 minutes)

*Leader of the Opposition, Geof Brodak
Colorado State University*

Thank you, of course, one final time to our distinguished members of the panel, our Speaker for his recognition and everyone in

the gallery and the isles and probably everyone else we've ever met who has influenced our life.

Members of this House, I think quite clearly there are three reasons for siding for the Opposition when we're discussing whether or not housing should be a basic human right. Now the first reason you are going to side with Members of the Opposition is because the Government doesn't ever debate housing. Now they say we need to have the United States legitimacy. They say we need to be in on the Security Council debates. They even say we need to be able to read Russian reports and we need to be able to tell Ireland about what types of abortion policies we need to have internationally.

But what we don't ever hear is a discussion about why housing is justified as a basic human right. Now this line of argumentation is something I've spent a lot of time developing in my first constructive. And it was the idea that says the debate shouldn't be about whether we should have all these other bundles of rights, because that's not germane to the resolution. But, rather, we should discuss it within the document these children's rights. We should be talking about housing policy. And that clear delineation I made when I discussed with you earlier has never really, actually been responded to. Brian just says, "Well it's in the document, therefore we have got to talk about the whole thing." But I think my argumentation and Mr. Herman's argumentation as we said the debate should be about why housing is a basic human right. And through two constructives from the Members of the Government they have given you no analysis as to why housing should be basic human right other than there's a document out there.

So that brings us to the second reason you should oppose. In that there are no benefits to siding with the Members of the Government. Now Brian says in the last five seconds of his speech in response to one of my arguments was that, "Well, no one's ever going to build any houses anyway because we're going to say, you know, it should be important." Well, with that point, siding with the Members of the Government don't really get you anything if you want to side with Brian's analysis.

Furthermore, the Prime Minister himself grants to us that at least in the United States where he says we don't recognize child housing as a basic human right, we don't have a problem with child

housing in the United States. And then finally you realize that there is no analysis that is shown to why the United States not being part of the international community, at least on housing policy, prevents any other nation from doing anything to improve child housing. Now this is important—at least in terms of the United States. Because they don't get you any benefits; they say, well we're not really going to build any houses and we're not really going to help any children. We're just going to read Russian reports and verify through the CIA. There is no reason, there are no benefits to siding with Members of the Government, and that's their own argument, is that benefits should outweigh the costs.

But there are no benefits and that brings us to the third reason to oppose—is that the costs literally outweigh. Now my first argumentation that I brought up to you explains that at a philosophical level when we say housing becomes a basic human right, it actually does place that positive obligation on Government to actually do a lot of things. Now Brian just says well, "That won't happen."

What we're contending to, at least from a philosophical level, once you take on that role and say, "Yep, I guess we do have that basic human right" it will trade off with other, more primary services, and as a result we're not helping out children out anymore, we're not helping out other human rights, but we're actually decreasing them overall, and Brian never addresses this position.

But furthermore, we tell you at least at a moral level we shouldn't use this document to exploit other countries or tell them what to do or force them to do it. Now Brian says "Well, we've done it in the past and we've forced them to do a whole lot of other things so we should be able to force them to do that too." Members of Parliament, that's not an idea I think that's an idea that United States should support as being a member of the international community.

Quite clearly, housing for children may be important, but when it goes to the point of being a basic human right internationally, the benefits do not outweigh the costs. For the final time, I urge you to oppose.

Second Rebuttal Speech (5 minutes)

*Prime Minister, Ryan Syrek
Creighton University*

I'm not going to do anymore thank you's because everyone's been so thoroughly thanked but one more time thank everyone who's ever been thanked ever before in history. And of course the Members of the Opposition for an excellent debate today.

Before we get to any other additional lines of analysis the first thing we need to examine thoroughly a full accounting of the resolutional issues. The first thing we need to understand is this—it's a very simple concept. Our job here is what Mr. Mathey told you: To affirm the concept, the very notion, the very statement that housing is a basic human right. Wherein this policy has it written that housing is a basic human right, we are affirming the resolution. It is not any more difficult than that.

But I contend to you the very simple concept—and please, do not take this in any glib sort of fashion—just because we did not present the case that the Oppositional team wanted to debate does not mean that we are not resolutional in form. Because (...) there is no better way to affirm this resolution than signing a document which has those words written explicitly in it. It is the clearest way to define and to affirm this resolution.

The idea has been presented that because other things are involved, the resolution becomes secondary. Because other things are involved makes for a better debate. It doesn't necessarily mean that these things are excluded from the resolution. What we're trying to say here is simple. The link is very clear and as both sides have had ample ground to debate, it becomes completely irrelevant.

We need to look at only one simple fact. We are affirming the concept that housing is a basic human right and in doing so, because we have heard these other benefits, the Opposition has absolutely no ground resolutionally to stand on.

We then move to the concept as it was, basically the problem that was brought before us. But before I even get into that, I'd also like to extend one simple concept through. The Oppositional team argued

that if we did not debate the resolutional issue as was presented, that what we should have debated it was in this off-case analysis that was provided just recently by Mr. Herman in his very first speech. The lines of analysis that were presented were judged by him to be the crux of the debate; shelter and housing and all these things like that.

Mr. Mathey made a plethora of responses, his favorite word, and was never refuted in any of them. If this is the crux of the debate I urge you to pull through all of Mr. Mathey's analysis as to his refutation, as to all of the things they have said was the crux of the debate and in that case because they never responded to those arguments we win there too.

Moving, then, to the case that was presented. Quite simply we have a problem that is presented before us. What we need to do in addition to ratifying this concept that housing is a basic human right, it necessitates that we look to a document which does so. This document being the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of a Child. What we see, then, is because we have not ratified that right now, we see that looked upon as an illegitimate sort of document.

But what is the cost that the Oppositional team brings to you as the problem? The only cost that is outlined as the only possible problem with signing this document, that we will somehow be espousing our morals which other countries have read, signed, and agreed to. If the only cost that the Oppositional team brings to you is the idea that we are somehow exporting ideals, it is ideals which other countries hold dear as well. And in echoing this we become a more responsible and legitimate society. It's just that simple.

Also, we need to look to the idea that when it comes down to cost-benefit analysis, then, that we have no costs with which to be weighed against and since that we are resolutional in that we affirming the concept of housing as a need as it is outlined specifically in this document we then see the benefits that are incurred by actually signing this policy.

Well, first it increases the legitimacy. I don't care how you slice it, we worked so hard to prepare this document and then didn't sign it. That's illegitimate. By signing it, it makes us look like we're holding good to our word and that is the most legitimate thing to be considered when you're talking about documents such as this.

Now, the Opposition presents a great argument: "If all your friends jumped off a cliff, would you?" I don't think this is a very good analysis for one very simple reason. Nobody's jumping off a cliff--they're protecting other people. It's not a situation where anybody is doing anything that will harm someone or will harm another person--they're protecting them. And you better believe it, if every one of my friends did something to protect somebody else, I'd be right there behind them helping.

Also I urge you to understand that this will equal an increase in social awareness, a point never addressed by the Oppositional team. And in addition to that we see a number of other benefits that are accrued and I'm not going to spend all my time rattling off them for you. But first we need to realize that we do have a method, then, to actually sit into the Council, to actually sit there and actually deliberate with some of these people and have a say in what goes on and if then our technological advances to validate the reports about the rights of children, something that also went unaddressed.

In addition we see it's very simple. With all these benefits such as increasing the situation of legitimacy and the increased amount of solvency that we have, we see no cost to this proposal and beg for a Government ballot.