

Tim Shaw is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Dalhousie. Working through the Center for Foreign Policy Studies he has helped arrange the April 9th workshop on Canada and UNCTAD 4. Here are some of his comments on the workshop and the purpose of UNCTAD.

What is UNCTAD?

UNCTAD is the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. And the 4th session of that conference is to be held in Nairobi, Kenya in April this year. The whole UNCTAD series is one result of the dissatisfaction of the Third World with the rate of development, and is therefore seen as one of the major bargaining forums in which the 3rd World can demand better terms of trade and financial exchange from the First World. So far the first three sessions have not been dramatically successful, but when you take them into association with the two special General Assemblies on the new international economic order and other debates, they have laid a new climate of opinion which is basically much more aware that international assistance is not sufficient and that there need to be structural changes in the international system before most countries in the 3rd World have a chance to really develop. So UNCTAD 4 will be raising a whole series of issues two of which we'll discuss on the 9th of April - the Law of the sea and the possibility of the export of manufactured goods from the 3rd World to the industrialized states.

So the sessions we have here are essentially designed to do two or three things. Firstly to raise a number of issues that will be raised at UNCTAD 4; to talk about the implications of these in general. Secondly, to talk about Canada's relation to the new world economic order; what its policy should and might be at UNCTAD 4; what our preferences would be. So that one result of this meeting will be a document, presumably quite brief and somewhat consensual, about what occurred and any recommendations flowing from our meeting as to Canada's policies on these two issues. The final interest, and this may be somewhat more eclectic and intangible, as what impact would real development in the 3rd World have on regional development in Canada. For instance, do questions such as the law of the sea and the export of manufactured goods from 3rd World to First World affect prospects of fisheries, protein, harvesting from the sea, regional development. What attitude, if you like, will Multi-National Corporations have to Nova Scotia or the Atlantic Provinces if they are also encouraged to invest in the 3rd World. Can there be a trade-off, will both sides benefit, will it be a zero sum game. If, for instance, Jamaica expanded its fishing industry, its mining industry, and expanded its manufacturing industry and exported those materials to Canada. What in fact, if any, will that have on development in the Maritime region.

CANADA, THIRD WORLD, and UNCTAD 4



Workshop on Canada and UNCTAD 4

Killam Library Auditorium, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia
Friday 9 April 1976.

12-1 lunch

1-2:45 Law of the Sea and Development

Dr. Douglas Johnston (Law, Dalhousie University) (Chair)
Wayne Primeau (CIDA, Ottawa)
Sandy McLean (Ministry of Fisheries, Halifax)
Dr. Edgar Gold (Law, Dalhousie University)
Brian Flemming (Stewart, MacKeen & Covert, Halifax)
Wilma Broeren (Political Science Graduate Student, Dalhousie University)
Ralph Ochan (Uganda) (Law Graduate Student, Dalhousie University)

3:15-5 Export of Manufactured goods from the Third World

Dr. Al Sinclair (Economics, Dalhousie University) (Chair)
W.M. Weynerowski (External Affairs, Ottawa)
Dr. Jean-Francois Abgrall (Economics, University of Moncton)
Dr. Benjamin Higgins (Economics, University of Ottawa)
Dr. Gary Webster (Political Science, University of Prince Edward Island)
Kusum Sheti (India) (Business Administration Graduate Student, Dalhousie University)
David Lang (Marine Colloids Corporation, Dartmouth)

5-7 Reception and dinner.

7-9:30 Canada's Policy at UNCTAD 4

Geoffrey Grenville-Wood (Executive Director, UN Association in Canada, Ottawa) (Chair)
David MacDonald, MP (Progressive Conservative, Egmont, PEI)
Douglas MacDonald (Economist, Province of Nova Scotia)
Michael Belliveau (Development Education Resource Services, Halifax)
Dr. Agrippah T. Mugomba (Zimbabwe) (Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University)
Michael McGwire (Maritime and Strategic Studies, Dalhousie University)

Sponsored by—

United Nations Association in Canada
Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University
International Education Center, Saint Mary's University

NB — Workshop on Aid to the Third World, Saturday April 10 in Auditorium H 19, Architecture Building, Nova Scotia Technical College, 9-5 sponsored by CUSO Local Committees at Halifax universities with Dr. Benjamin Higgins (University of Ottawa), Kendal Rust (CIDA), K. Dube (African National Council) Brian Ward (YMCA, Halifax) and John Cameron (World Vision, Halifax).

Canada in Relation to the 3rd World

Canada is in a peculiar position in that it is still a primary producer, but also a primary producer that has a substantial technological base, a substantial rate of economic growth of its own, substantial education, economic and social resources of its own. Compared to the average producer of raw materials in the 3rd World it is very affluent, very privileged. But, this does mean that Canada does have a certain identity, a certain common interest with some of the issues raised by the 3rd World. On the other hand there are some issues where Canada may have interests counter to the 3rd

World. For instance, Canadian corporations have begun to invest overseas. This means that its policies on Multi-National Corporations, on manufacturing in the 3rd World, would seem to be ambivalent, indifferent. Whereas Canada's policies on the law of the sea, fisheries management, the 200 mile limit, etc. are much more sympathetic to the position of the 3rd World.

UNCTAD has attempted to change the basic set of relationships between rich and poor states and therefore to look at ways of improving the development prospects of the 3rd World other than

by international assistance and aid, which of course hasn't had a very substantial effect.

The export of manufactured goods from the 3rd World is therefore seen as one possible development strategy which would enable the 3rd World to improve its rate of economic growth; to provide resources, investment, jobs, and eventually a more developed infrastructure. But before it can become really effective in needs tariffs, quotas, and other limitations on international trade to be changed by the rich states because they have protected their own interests. And this I think poses a real dilemma for the Multi-National Corporation. Is it going to be identified with the foreign policies of the rich states? Or is it going to attempt to follow economic dictates and perhaps invest more heavily in the 3rd World despite its established position in the rich states? Because of Canada's own dependent economic situation combined with its propensity to invest overseas it is in a peculiarly ambiguous situation over these sorts of issues.

Now in composing the panels we have tried to pull in a range of people. We are trying to involve academics people from Federal, Provincial, and Local Governments, people from 3rd World groups and of course people from the 3rd World. The whole orientation of the workshop is trying to involve these people, both on the panels and in the audience, in a dialogue over these sorts of issues. In the evening we will come back and try and direct ourselves, more particularly, to Canada's policy at UNCTAD 4, what we would prefer its stance to be in Nairobi.

Essentially what has happened at UNCTAD, is that the basic cleavages in the international system, the rich capitalist states, the fairly affluent socialist states, and the 3rd World have been organized into caucusing groups and the Group of 77 is the largest numerically and now comprises the hundred or so 3rd World states. To speed up the process of negotiations these three groups prepare positions beforehand and then each other. But of course within each of the groups there are differences in strategies and Canada has played the particularly important role of trying to act as mediator between the rich capitalist industrial economies and the 3rd World countries.

What are the problems?

The basic problems of the 3rd World are fairly well known. A lack of economic growth and obvious related problems of unemployment, under-employment, lack of educational facilities, bad communications, a lack of research and development, problems of receding assistance and capital from a large number of countries, and unfavorable terms of trade so that the price of primary commodities in general falls while the price of imports and manufactured goods rises. Of course this has all been exacerbated in the last few years with the coincidence of the high price of oil

