

the world's trade, technology and capital. Not surprisingly, the North has rejected the comprehensive blueprints for action presented by the developing countries, particularly the demand for establishment of a New International Economic Order.

It is not difficult to understand why the most economically powerful countries won't consent to radical restructuring of the international order — but as liberals we know that it is the law of life that conditions change, that institutions must evolve or perish, and that the international economic system, as set up after the Second World War, is not eternal and is not exempt from the need for reform. Indeed, we can see all too clearly that it is labouring under heavy strain and needs at least a major overhaul. We can also appreciate that, especially for the poorest countries, there is little magic to be found in the marketplace.

I would suggest that, as liberals, our proper role in this crucial struggle over the international economic system should be to break the dangerous deadlock of the past several years by finding the areas of common interest, working toward mutual understanding between North and South, and pressing urgently for the compromises that can loosen the logjam and create a fairer international economic system.

The second of these new questions that realism thrusts on our attention is somewhat similar: it is the need to find better ways of sharing with other sovereign states the responsibility for a more rational, ordered management of the world and its resources. We have encountered in recent years a rapidly growing number of major problems — from acid rain to Antarctica to outer space — that do not fit into national boundaries or traditional frameworks. Pressures are building, and creative statesmanship is needed.

The law of the sea could well be a precursor to new legal mechanisms which could, at last, permit us to deal peacefully with unprecedented international issues and competing national interests — a way of applying the rule of law and liberal rationality in the international arena. The alternative might well be chaos — a plundered planet left barely habitable through environmental degradation and the squandering of resources; a tragedy of the commons in which everyone overgrazes and overfishes, and mankind is left with nothing.

I have mentioned some of the broad issues and general principles that I consider important in a liberal approach to North-South relations. But actions speak louder than words, and the actual help that each country is providing to the Third World is perhaps the best indicator of how seriously it takes the problems facing three-quarters of humanity.

As a donor country, Canada has been in the middle rank. Our flow of official development assistance has been above the OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] average, but not at the level reached by Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands. In 1980, however, I was able to pledge at the

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