

Jeffrey A. Hart

**The New International Economic Order: Conflict and  
Co-operation in North-South Economic Relations,  
1974-77**

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This book is particularly welcome because, unlike most other books on the New International Economic Order (NIEO), it does not trot out all the old clichés or plug the 'party line'. Rather, it makes a serious attempt to analyse what went wrong, and to understand the whole range of complex factors and considerations which influenced the bargaining process and respective positions of the various participants - why individual countries took up certain positions and others reacted the way they did.

It concentrates on the period when NIEO was all the rage, and addresses four main questions. Why did the developing countries stick together in spite of their vast differences in terms of power and interests? Why did the developed countries react in such a disunited and negative way? Why was there so little to show at the end of negotiations? And how was NIEO related to relieving mass poverty in the developing countries? One can, of course, question the presumption of the developing countries' solidarity on the one hand and the disunity of the developed countries on the other, in the NIEO negotiations. Isn't Professor Hart mistaking the shadow for the substance, or perhaps, even engaging in a bit of role reversal? By early 1974, the developed countries had not only regained their composure, but had turned their attention to other domestic issues, for example unemployment and inflation. Nevertheless, he does present a plausible case, and his analysis is soundly and systematically presented.

Part 1 of his study gives a survey of the global economy and the effect which various trade theories had on determining the conduct and outcome of the NIEO negotiations. A number of useful insights are presented on the role of power, capabilities and interests in order to explain how changes in norms, rules and procedures influenced the actions of the participants. Part 2 examines the foreign policies of a sample of countries representing the main participants. Selected Latin American countries represent the developing countries, and some of the OECD countries are taken as representing the developed countries. The United States is given a chapter to itself for obvious reasons. The final section contains the conclusions and some thoughts for the future changes in regimes. All in all this is a very useful book which will undoubtedly help to raise the standard of the debate. *George C. Abbott*