

THIRD-WORLD POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

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A Review of Developments

Gwyneth Williams

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Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 1981

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First published 1981 by
THE MACMILLAN PRESS LTD
London and Basingstoke
Companies and representatives
throughout the world

ISBN 978-1-349-05250-9

ISBN 978-1-349-05248-6 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-05248-6

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Abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific States
ANCOM	Andean Common Market
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
ASPAC	Asian and Pacific Council
CENTO	Central Treaty Organisation
CIEC	Conference on International Economic Cooperation
CMEA/COMECON	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
dc	Developed country
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ECLA	Economic Commission for Latin America
EEC	European Economic Community
EPTA	Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GATT	General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs
GNP	Gross National Product
GSP	Generalised System of Preferences
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ILO	International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITO	International Trade Organisation
ldc	Less developed country
lldc	Least developed country
MFN	Most Favoured Nation
MSA	Most Seriously Affected Country
NIEO	New International Economic Order
OAS	Organisation of American States
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

OPEC	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
OTC	Organisation for Trade Cooperation
SDR	Special Drawing Rights
SEATO	South East Asia Treaty Organisation
UAM	Union Africaine et Malgache
UN	United Nations
UNCSAT	UN Conference on Science and Technology
UNCTAD	UN Conference of Trade and Development
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNIDO	UN Industrial Development Organisation

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement is gratefully made to all those people and institutions who have contributed to my interest and efforts. Particular thanks are expressed to those working at grass-roots level in the Third World with whom I have enjoyed the privilege of personal association; to colleagues at the Overseas Development Institute who provided me with an introduction to the complexities of under-development; to Professor David Henderson who first stimulated my interest in the subject of this book; to Ann Weston for reading the manuscript; to colleagues at the BBC who provided encouragement; to friends who helped through many discussions and cups of tea; and to my father for his constant support.

Introduction

This book is concerned with one aspect of the Third World, its political organisations. But it is a crucial aspect in that it represents perhaps the best hope of success in achieving solutions to problems of underdevelopment.

Underdevelopment is an incredibly complex matter involving inter-related political, economic, social and cultural issues. While there may not be agreement as to its causes and solutions there does exist a general consensus regarding its characteristics and problems. These clearly relate to quality of life and to basic human rights; for a very large proportion of the world's people it is a matter of poverty and inequality. The attributes of underdevelopment are not those of a state of nature, but represent a process, a set of problems with causes and thus possible solutions.

Such characteristics provide enough common ground for one to talk of a Third World. But it is evident that the term is merely one of convenience. Every one of its countries is different: some are capitalist, some Communist; some agricultural, some mineral producers; some very poor, some not so poor; some oil producers, some oil exporters; some least developed, some developing. The list is endless.

Within each country again exist immense differences and divisions in so many respects. And when one is concerned with North-South dialogue — a term widely used to cover the whole area of negotiations and contact between the developed and underdeveloped world — what is meant is negotiation between their elites.

The book thus provides a summary review of the efforts of the Third World to organise politically, through what has become known as the North-South dialogue, in order to achieve what it regards as its rightful place in the world community. This is attempted by outlining the development, over the last few decades, of its major organisations and conferences; through these its aspirations have been pursued, its dilemmas exposed, and some successes achieved. The sequence is dealt with in some detail, but it is hoped that the major issues have remained clear.

The points of view of both the developed and less developed countries are put forward, but those of the latter are emphasised and interpreted as well as is possible by a writer not of the Third World. The approach is factual, but commentary and explanation is necessary and is provided through a 'realistic or objective subjectivity' which the writer considers essential in dealing with controversial issues.

The subject is an enormous one so that selection is clearly necessary, and even then a full treatment is not attempted; each topic considered lends itself to much further study and research. Thus the book is designed for a variety of readers. For the expert in the field it represents a convenient source of information on the sequence of events; for experts in other aspects of underdevelopment it seeks to assist in providing information on political issues; for the informed reader who is interested in one of the modern world's most important problems it presents a useful summary review of developments.

The book has been written out of concern for the Third World. It was prompted by personal experience of conditions in some of its countries, and encouraged by study and research in its affairs.

Certain organisations and conferences which seem to the writer to be most significant have been selected for presentation in chapter form, while others like the Group of 77 and the New International Economic Order have been considered *en passant* within several chapters as they become relevant. The topics of each chapter when considered together provide a composite picture; every one is highly complex in its own right, but what is far more important is that they are all interrelated.

The first two chapters deal with the United Nations Conferences on Trade and Development — UNCTAD I to V. These are followed by an account of the Non-aligned Movement, and the Sixth and Seventh Special Sessions of the United Nations General Assembly. The last two chapters discuss OPEC and the North-South Conference on International Economic Cooperation. Finally, as an Appendix at the end of the book is provided a Date Chart of the Main Events Affecting the Third World from 1944 to 1980, so that reference may be made — at any stage of reading — to the overall sequence of events considered in the previous chapters.

In this manner, in an order which seems reasonable but is by no means inflexible, an attempt is made to separate the interwoven threads of a highly complex subject, and at the same time to bring out their interrelationships.