

Each of these policies raises complex situations, both in economics and politics. For the underdeveloped countries, the principal accomplishments of this UNCTAD were the formal presentation of an approach carrying a sense of newness in the treatment of chronic problems of world trade and aid and the establishment of a permanent forum of their own where they could thrash out the problems of low-income countries and through which they could more effectively campaign for acceptance of their program. UNCTAD promised a means of establishing solidarity in order to pressure the developed countries (among other things).

The Negative Character of the Developed Countries' Stance at UNCTAD

Unlike the LDCs, the economically advanced countries did not have a unified program and their voting was largely uncoordinated. As the developed countries were in the minority, a positive stance would have done little to alter the Final Act but it could have diminished the negativity of their responses to the proposals of the LDCs.

The United States delegation put itself in the position of leading the opposition to almost all the LDC-sponsored resolutions, and did not come to UNCTAD with a program of action. Not prepared to contribute positive recommendations, the U.S. efforts were largely confined to opposing the proposals of the less-developed countries.

In general terms, the goals of the industrial countries were largely defensive: politically, to appear sympathetic with development aims; economically, to avoid making concessions that would cost money, hurt producer interests, or change the existing most-favored-nation system of multilateral trade concessions. And in the economic sphere, the developed countries were relatively "successful"--as they were bound to be--no significant material concessions were made.

The negative appearance of the voting record was not wholly the fault of the MDCs. The rigid supersensitivity of the LDCs in some cases harmed their own cause. "The developing countries would make uncompromising demands on the...Western industrialized countries, and would not only reject the latter's attempts at modification, but would express dissatisfaction when demands were not accepted precisely as made."^{3/}

^{3/} Sidney Weintraub, Foreign Affairs, October 1964.