

## INTERNATIONAL MARKETS NEWSLETTER

# How the U.S. Looks at Third World Leaders

*WASHINGTON; D.C. March 28 (IPS) The following are excerpts from an interview with a U.S. government official who was willing to give a frank exposition of the Treasury Department's attitude and tactics toward the Third World — provided that his name be withheld. Mr. T., as he is here called freely discussed the tactics used by his Department on Third World negotiators which have so far proved successful.*

*We regret that at this time we are not only publishing these excerpts but have to agree with the pervasive appreciation of the stupidity and gutlessness of the Third World negotiators. However, should these leaders and negotiators continue on their present course they are ensuring disaster not only for themselves, but for us as well.*

**IPS:** Over the last few weeks, simultaneous with the UNCTAD meeting in Geneva, there have been a series of articles in the international press pointing to a commodities agreement as a solution of the payments crisis facing the Third World. Do you see that as a likely outcome of the Nairobi (UNCTAD conference in May) or the Paris meetings?

**Mr. T.:** Let me give you an idea of what goes on in these meetings. The Third World comes in with a "maximalist laundry list" which has something for each one of them. Since all of these demands are definitely unacceptable, we spend the rest of the time discussing what the consequence will be if one commodity is accepted and not another, how much the nations that are importing those same commodities will actually be hurt if the plan goes through and so forth ... Do you know for example, what we did in Geneva? The meeting was supposed to end Friday and at 2:30 in the morning on Saturday, we tabled our proposal and then went

to sleep; Let them stay up all night and study it ...

**IPS:** What about Nairobi?

**Mr. T.:** Well, we'll probably go there and tell them give us a list of all the commodities you want and we will take them and study them for a while. I suppose in six months or a year we will have to report to someone about it. That's what will happen.

**IPS:** But Undersecretary of State Charles Robinson's office is letting us, as well as a number of representatives of the Third World, believe that they are willing to go along with some commodities program as well as debt relief for a limited number of countries...

**Mr. T.:** I know what is being cooked up in that office. But any proposal that originates there has to go past a lot of tomahawks in this town. They know it will never get passed. So long as these people (Third World leaders) negotiate from the standpoint that one side gains what the other side loses and the net increase is zero, all we have to do is to turn the same argument on them and let them quarrel about it. If you remember the same thing happened in Kingston (Jamaica, January meeting of the International Monetary Fund) with the compensatory fund. It did not get passed because India who has mostly official debt, rejected it since this plan would diminish any aid she might hope to receive...

You know what I am tempted to suggest to the Secretary for the Nairobi UNCTAD Conference? We should go in there and tell them (the Third World): OK for the 35 most seriously affected amongst you (not the now-established most seriously affected countries) we will grant all the concessions that you want. Then we could go home for a year or so while they quarrel trying to decide who the 35 are.

Of course there might not be a world when we come back... but then again you can't win them all, can you...