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by

OSWALDO de RIVERO B.



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Foreword

FOR the best part of this passing decade the international community has been engaged in shaping its economic future, in constructing a more lasting and equitable relationship between the peoples of the North and the South, in restoring vitality and relevance to the international institutions which serve it and, above all, in resuscitating the spirit of internationalism which had characterized the post-war era. It was a time of transition from an era largely preoccupied with the pursuit of prosperity through national sovereignty and power to an era characterized by concern for the quality of life and for safeguarding human survival itself through international action. These issues of transition will probably continue to dominate the conduct of international economic relations through much of the remainder of this century.

But, as with the post-war restructuring of the political order through self-determination, general precepts deriving from the imperatives of economic change have outpaced the development of complementary rules of law needed to give them strength and validity. Advocacy of change in the existing economic order has therefore tended in the main to appeal more to principles of social and economic justice, and even to hard-headed mutual interest, rather than to the legal norms which should also underlie the new order. Not that the law offers no assistance — there is certainly no dearth of legal norms which could be called in aid; but, until now, there has been a noticeable lack of any comprehensive and coherent attention to and study of such norms. Oswaldo de Rivero's seminal work on New Economic Order and International Development Law is a major and timely contribution to filling this gap. As such, alone, it should be warmly welcomed; but it is, above all, its admirable quality that will make it an indispensable companion for so many of us on the journey towards the new order.

The book traces the legal doctrines of the old order fashioned for controlling relations between the peripheral economies of the South and the industrial centres of the North — doctrines which themselves helped to