

Foreward

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FOREWORD

Contrary to the popular impression that the Caribbean Basin is nothing more than a retreat for the winter-weary or the fantasizing honeymoon couple, this much neglected tropical area is a vitally growing economic and political force within the international legal system. The following pages of the *International Trade Law Journal* have condensed the present attitude of the Basin countries into one powerful message — the world must stand up and take notice.

The *Journal* and the American Society of International Law were deeply concerned about the lack of knowledge, both economic and legal, of Caribbean affairs. Our intention in conducting the Conference on US-Caribbean Basin Trade was to educate, to make the business and legal community aware that the Caribbean is a dynamic, not a static, region. Those learned individuals who shared their knowledge, ideas and sentiments at the Conference, and whose papers appear in this edition, are primarily responsible for its success. I am most honored that the *Journal* is able to offer such an impressive collection of material, authored by a most impressive group of scholars.

The Conference was divided into six topical panels in order to emphasize the various economic and legal concerns of the Basin countries. The panels included trade and regional coordination, mineral resources and technology, legal problems, agricultural and industrial trade and the Eastern Seaboard's role in US-Caribbean Basin trade. In addition, a symposium on US-Caribbean Basin economic relations was featured as dinner-time "entertainment." While reading the following papers, one must keep in mind that the Conference was structured to permit and encourage controversial discussion, with a toleration of divergent views and opinions. Yet, the Conference presentations and subsequent discussions retained their instructional character and an objective outlook was kept at all times.

When I am actually able to read this issue in print, I dare say, at the risk of being somewhat prideful, that I shall be undoubtedly smiling and filled with childish satisfaction. Thanks are due to so many and have been accumulating since July 1977 when the Conference plans were set in motion. First and foremost, Professor Edward Laing's undying enthusiasm often kindled lagging spirits, and the never-ending energy of the Conference staff was evidenced by the fact that everyone slept twelve hours the day after the Conference ended. My personal thanks to Gil Genn for my initial involvement with the Conference and for his constant unflinching support. Thanks to Heddy Breuer for acting as my right-hand "woman" and, more often than not, my better half. To Judy Warfield and

the remaining editorial board members, I owe much gratitude for their help during the editing process. The Conference could not have materialized at all without the support from the Administration of the University of Maryland School of Law, especially Dean Michael Kelly and Dean George Regan. I give my sincere appreciation to the secretaries who typed the voluminous correspondence, papers and programs involved with the Conference. And, if I may end with a personal note, special thanks to my Mom — without her, this issue may not have been seen until much later!

Karen Alexa Murphy