

ABSTRACT

This study shows that while the Jamaican government and the six bauxite/alumina companies were talking to each other from the beginning of deliberations over the bauxite levy in March 1974, they did not begin to bargain until a number of weeks had passed. Fixed, preconceived ideas held by the corporations stood in the way of the emergence of a bargaining relationship. A bargaining relationship is defined and its dynamics are analysed.

Jamaican expectations of greater benefits from the bauxite/alumina industry that led to the initiation of bargaining in 1974, had been developing from at least the mid-1950's. The corporations' expectations of greater costs in Jamaica, that led them to agree to bargain, had been developing from at least the mid-1960's, but these expectations were largely - though not entirely - misguided. The fixed, preconceived ideas held by the corporations, were largely responsible for the misguided nature of their expectations.

The power of a party is but one of the elements of its bargaining capacity. Although the corporations were - and still are - more powerful than the Jamaican government, the latter was able to deploy all the elements of its bargaining capacity to achieve successfully, essentially all its bargaining goals. The government's success derived from critical, reflective, creative action.