

then produced an extremely comprehensive report. It provided for 73 articles and was a compilation of all the rules of the sea which have been adopted over the years by the various nations. These 73 recommendations or rules have two different aspects to them. On the one hand they sought to codify all existing international law where there was already in existence extensive practice, precedent and doctrine. Then, on the other hand, they were concerned with the progressive development of international law on matters such as the continental shelf that were as yet largely unregulated because 30 years ago at The Hague Conference they hardly thought of such a thing. And then, in addition, the Conference was asked by the General Assembly to consider a matter not included within the compass of the International Law Commission report, the question of access to the sea by landlocked countries.

After a brief plenary session the conference resolved itself into five committees of the whole, each of which was charged with the consideration of a group of related articles. The results of the committees' work were considered in the final plenary sessions during the last week of the Conference. The committees and the subject matter referred to each were as follows: Committee I, the territorial sea and contiguous zone, and specifically Articles 1 to 25 and Article 66 of the original I.L.C. report; Committee II, the high seas, general regime, and specifically Articles 26 to 48 and 61 to 65; Committee III, the high seas, fishing, and specifically Articles 48 to 60; Committee IV, the continental shelf, and specifically Articles 67 to 73; and Committee V, access to the sea of landlocked countries. That was a new subject to be discussed at the Conference itself. It will be seen that the breakdown of the Conference into these five committees follows in general the subjects of the conventions I have already listed.

Agreement on Shelf

It may be of interest at this point to comment briefly on some of the results of the Conference which were of particular significance to Canada. In commenting on this I might point out that for the first time in history there is now an international agreement on the continental shelf. I mention this first because it is usually lost sight of because this subject was uneventful in terms of news coverage and as far as producing quarrels or differences is concerned.

The Continental Shelf Convention gives to the coastal state sovereign rights over the exploration and exploitation of the natural resources of the sea bed and subsoil off its coast out to a depth of 200 meters. It also provides that these rights may be exercised beyond the depth if the exploitation of the resources is a practical possibility. In the long term, this agreement may have consequences of far-reaching importance to Canada in the development of underwater oil and mineral resources. It means, in effect, a very substantial addition to the potential area of Canada's natural resources. Those