

We must obtain recognition of our rights and needs beyond that limit, if we want to protect adequately our natural resources in three particular situations. A strict 200-mile limit would leave out over 400,000 square miles of continental margin, mostly on the East Coast, 10% to 15% of our fish stocks, also on the East Coast, and would leave all of our salmon unprotected during that part of their lives they spend in the open sea.

We have an uphill battle to fight on these three issues. We have many allies, our negotiators have made great efforts to promote our legitimate cause and we are still confident of ultimate success as part of the over-all accommodation which the conference will hopefully produce. But let us be realistic enough to see our main difficulties.

A second major trend has also emerged at the conference in favour of establishing the international area of the oceans as a zone reserved for the benefit of mankind. Almost all nations agree that the exploitation of manganese nodules, those potato-shaped rock formations which lie all over the ocean seabed at depths of 15 to 20,000 feet and which are rich in nickel, copper, cobalt and manganese, should be carried out for the benefit of the whole world and not solely for the advantage of the technologically advanced states. That is a concept which Canada wholeheartedly supports.

Unfortunately, the Conference has not gone very far beyond accepting this very basic concept. The practical implementation of the concept, that is the creation of a new international authority, has given rise to a most serious confrontation between developed and developing nations.

This may seem to some Canadians as a controversy so far removed from our essential preoccupations that it should not cause us to worry. There are on the contrary two very basic concerns which trouble us.

One is that the two opposing factions on this issue attach such importance to its resolution that failure on this item might undo the whole conference.

Our second concern is that if a proper international legal regime is not established over the international area, we will not only find ourselves faced with conflict between developing and developed states but we, as Canadians, might also suffer from an uncontrolled exploitation of mineral resources, in particular of nickel, which constitute a good part of our hard minerals exports and on which entire Canadian communities depend.

Both for reasons of world-wide equity and our own domestic interests, we must do everything we can to set up a strong and economically viable international authority.