

Canada now returns to its original proposal which has been commonly known as "The Canadian Proposal" since it was presented to the United Nations in 1956. It is no new concept, it is no strange concept. It has been modified only to the extent made necessary by the inescapable fact that the minimum uniform measurement of the territorial sea which is possible since the proposal of the United States was presented appears to be 6 miles.

Our new proposal is exactly the same in principle in every way as our original proposal first placed before the General Assembly then submitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and then presented here on March 17. We have made it clear that our main concern is to establish a 12-mile fishing zone for the protection of coastal fisheries. The creation of such a zone was in fact a new concept not embraced in the original recommendations of the International Law Commission. It did and does provide a method by which those nations who wish a wider zone to protect their fishing can do so without the necessity of expanding their territorial sea. It seemed obvious, when we first brought this proposal forward, from the statements which had been made both within their own countries and at the United Nations, that most states which had extended their territorial sea in recent years had done so primarily for the purpose of acquiring that wider area of control over fishing.

We recognize that unless those nations which were determined to extend the area of exclusive fishing rights knew that there was going to be such a fishing zone, they could not then agree here at this conference to a narrower territorial sea although it was only for the purpose of protecting their fisheries that they wished in the first place to extend the distance over which they had exclusive control. We confine our proposal to the measurement of a territorial sea which now seems generally acceptable to the nations operating more than 80 per cent of the world's commercial shipping tonnage, and with that the creation of a 12-mile zone in which there will be exclusive control of fishing which has been demanded now for so many years by nations whose fishing resources are being threatened by the rapid expansion in number and size of fishing vessels of an entirely new type. We do agree with the form in which the United States proposal has been presented and, although our new proposal asserts exactly the same principles as our first proposal, our new proposal is now drafted in a way which states these principles entirely within the confines of article 3.