

However, there is a clear trend towards a three-tier concept: first, an economic zone out to 200 miles; second, an international area beyond the economic zones, reserved for the benefit of all mankind; third, the application throughout the oceanic space of sound management principles for the use and preservation of the sea.

I believe I can safely say that whether or not the Conference is altogether successful, the economic zone concept is here to stay. That is to say that within 200 miles of its coasts, a coastal state like Canada will have very substantial rights over the mineral and living resources of that zone and more extensive rights than it now possesses over marine pollution and scientific research.

But a 200-mile limit does not fully cover the Canadian case. 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 will have an uphill battle to fight on these three issues.

A second major trend has emerged in favour of establishing the international area of the oceans as a zone reserved for mankind. Almost all nations agree that the exploitation of manganese nodules, those potato-shaped rock formations which lie on the 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.