such as those we have reached, for instance, with the Soviet Government and with the Danish Government in respect of the Faroes."[1]

Another reason suggests that the question of "traditional" or "historical" fishing rights can more appropriately be dealt with by bilateral or multilateral supplementary agreements rather than by the rule of law itself. The concept of "traditional" fishing rights is uncertain and controversial; it has not been recognized by any rule of international law, or adjudicated upon by any international judicial tribunal. It may be relevant to mention that in allowing the straight baseline system to be used, in certain circumstances, as a basis for measuring the breadth of the territorial sea and in allowing a twenty-four-mile limit for the closing of bays, the First Geneva Conference did not make provision for traditional fishing claims which may be affected in these waters.

If "traditional" fishing rights are, however, claimed by one state and denied by another, it would seem that the most satisfactory way to deal with the dispute is not through attempting to formulate the rule of law in such a way as to recognize the claim, regardless of the particular historical, geographic, economic or other local circumstances which might be involved, but through bilateral negotiations carried out by the states concerned. The substance of such supplementary agreements or understandings may, of course, differ according to circumstances, for they are primarily a matter for the parties concerned. In the event that agreement cannot be reached, then the parties to the dispute are obliged to settle the question by pacific means such as conciliation and arbitration, in accordance with obligations contained in the United Nations Charter.

To adopt this approach to the question of "traditional" fishing rights has the important additional advantage of flexibility.

[1] 821st Plenary Meeting, Fourteenth Session, October 5, 1959.