

It is significant that many other countries have already adopted the same contiguous zone for other purposes. It is not merely a question of the area which may be required for conservation. That varies according to local conditions. It may be debatable whether a 12-mile zone is required for most conservation plans. However, it does seem reasonable that a country should have some prior claim upon the stocks of fish heavily concentrated in an area where the local population is dependent on them for their livelihood. Twelve miles may not be scientifically exact. However, it has been sufficiently well established that the International Law Commission recognized it to the extent of declaring that neither contiguous zones nor territorial waters should be extended in any case beyond that distance. Perhaps it may be regarded as a figure of convenience as are many other figures which reasonably interpret a particular requirement just as the 3-mile limit has over so many years.

We understand the natural desire of less-developed countries which so greatly depend upon the food resources of the sea to exercise the widest possible control over the waters which supply their food, particularly when they have not the financial resources to equip and maintain long range fishing fleets. Fishermen are the same all over the world. It is the small fisherman in Canada, as elsewhere, who faces all the dangers to harvest the food from the sea. Community after community depend upon their efforts and their success. It is for them that we seek 12 miles of exclusive fishing rights with the contiguous zone. We are naturally sympathetic to the claims of some of the Latin American countries and others, whose distinguished representatives have explained their own particular fishing problems and the reasons why they have sought control over such wide contiguous zones. But we are inclined to think that in view of the recommendations of the International Law Commission it is most unlikely that there could be agreement upon the approval of anything more than a 12-mile contiguous zone. We do therefore respectfully urge those who seek more to accept the 12-mile zone as the widest area of national control over fishing upon which there is likely to be agreement, except for arrangements in regard to conservation or other special considerations of that kind.

### Territorial Sea

Now I come to the question of the territorial sea. This would seem to be the most contentious question which will properly come before this conference for debate. At first glance, it might seem that if it is desirable to extend the area of control over fishing, the simplest way would be to extend the territorial sea to whatever distance is required. I submit, however, that the two are not bound together in any way and that very unhappy results could follow the adoption of this apparently simple rule of thumb. As a representative of the Canadian Government said in the General Assembly on December 7, 1956, "the general extension of the breadth of the territorial sea could have important consequences for the freedom of sea and air navigation." The same point was raised in the Canadian Memorandum to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on September 10, 1957.