

If we nations can attain what we desire by an extension of a fishing zone to 12 miles without limiting the area of free flight or free passage any more than is necessary, we are following the road of progress not the reverse. We indicated our support for the retention of the 3-mile limit for these and other reasons at a time when the major maritime powers still insisted that this was the only satisfactory measurement which could assure freedom of transportation, freedom of the air and freedom of the seas. Now that there are such obvious reasons for adopting the 6-mile limit, if there is to be any measure of uniformity then I do hope that all the distinguished delegates here will consider the value to all of us of retaining the positive advantages of such uniformity and the retention of as great an area of free passage as possible.

I have been struck by a suggestion made on more than one occasion that there may have been an effort by the great powers to retain certain traditions. Canada is neither an ancient nation nor by any stretch of the imagination is it a nation which conceivably could have any aggressive intentions of any kind. Practical considerations of population alone make that impossible. The proposal we have discussed is of course subject to the provision of another method by which extension of control over fishing can be achieved. We are still convinced that this was the primary purpose of almost every extension of the territorial sea. That was the only way wider control over fishing could be established. Once that factor is recognized as the reason for such an extension, then the need of a wider territorial sea disappears so long as there are clearly established exclusive fishing rights in a 12-mile fishing zone. I think if we respect the general recommendations of the International Law Commission we must start with the assumption that the 12-mile zone is the limit to which we can reasonably go.

I have not attempted to deal with the question of defence or security. I have already pointed out on an earlier occasion that I believe the width of the territorial sea now has little to do with the subject of defence. In the days of carrier task forces, long range bomber squadrons, submarines firing guided missiles and long range nuclear weapons.

Now may I return to the proposal introduced the day before yesterday. Although we had been given reason to believe that this proposal would be generally satisfactory to those nations which face this particular problem, we now find that some of those nations which would have benefitted from this proposal and others which had not previously indicated any such intention are now seeking more than they would have retained in this way. For that reason, Canada, India and Mexico no longer stand as co-sponsors of this proposal. The subject has been discussed eloquently and with warmth and understanding by the distinguished representatives of India and Mexico.