

commence shortly on these articles. One of the major problems to be overcome in reaching agreement upon the measurement of the territorial sea was presented by the fact that several countries had fixed their territorial sea at more than 6 miles a very long time ago. As an example, Mexico had fixed its territorial sea at 9 miles 110 years ago. That measurement has assumed for the people of Mexico deep historic significance throughout the intervening years for reasons which I need not now discuss. In varying degrees, similar considerations affected the small but important group of nations which had also fixed the limit of their territorial sea at more than 6 miles. This problem was mentioned in the speech of the distinguished delegate of the United States. No solution however was offered which could have been readily acceptable to those nations.

In an earnest effort to find that broad common ground of agreement which will be necessary to obtain the support of this committee and the conference as a whole for any proposal, India and Mexico joined Canada in presenting a revision of our original proposal which could have recognized the reality of some existing territorial seas wider than 6 miles and at the same time would have frozen the position of all other countries so that until there could be a general revision of the regime of law upon which we hope we may agree, no nation which had not already done so would go beyond 6 miles and no matter what measurement they had adopted none would seek recognition of more than 12. We sought to find a solution which would recognize that reality without departing from the principle which we had supported of reaching general agreement upon a limit of the territorial sea which would be satisfactory for all purposes. There was no suggestion on our part of any support for an elastic rule under which states would in the future be entitled to adopt any width they might happen to choose for their own territorial sea. I have already explained why I think this could only lead to chaos. There are many obvious reasons why there should be as great uniformity as possible if complete uniformity cannot be attained for the purpose of removing any uncertainty as to routes over which aircraft may fly and generally in relation to the freedom of the seas. I have discussed this subject in some detail on other occasions and I am sure I need not repeat the arguments I made on an earlier occasion for a recognition of the importance to everyone of us of freedom of the air. Whatever nation operates the airlines, the service given in this way is of equal value to all. The size of this is in itself a demonstration of what this new form of transportation means in terms of international contact. Try for a moment to visualize what the probabilities would be of bringing these delegations together and the answer is given of the importance of this new service to all of us. The growth of this new service is best exemplified by the fact that this year for the first time more passengers will be carried across the Atlantic by air than by ship and yet we still only are in the early stages of this great transportation development.