It is, therefore, evident that all countries of the world have come to share a common interest in international law and in its development into a body of rules which satisfactorily regulate the various and often conflicting interests of states in a modern society.

For all of these states, struck by the impact of technological, scientific and economic change, a question which arises over and over again is: do the individual rules of international law adequately meet the requirements of a specific situation? To what extent should the older rules be preserved? To what extent should we reject the old and pursue the new? To what extent is change possible? To what extent is it desirable?

I should like to illustrate how such questions as these arise for a country like Canada and how we try to answer them. I shall do this by referring to three particular fields of international activity where the question of the value of the old and the new has recently arisen and where the Canadian Government has had to formulate important aspects of its foreign policy in the light of changing norms and principles of international law. These are, first, the Law of the Sea, second, the concept of state responsibility, and third, friendly relations among states.

To take first of all the Law of the Sea -- here is a field of international law where we have seen dramatic changes in the past generation. At the Hague Codification Conference in 1930, Canada, along with other Commonwealth members, was a staunch supporter of a three-mile limit for all purposes and not just for the territorial sea; we were strong advocates of the "sinuosities rule" for determining the starting-point of the territorial sea and we favoured a relatively narrow closing-line for bays. But under the effect of modern technological methods of fishing, Canadians from both the east and west coasts have become concerned about the need to protect our own fishing interest in our adjacent waters. Our coastline is surrounded by great bodies which in some cases thrust into our heartland. The law of the nineteenth century and the law of the greater part of the twentieth century was not adequate to protect our interests and our needs. Nor was it adequate to protect the interests of many other states. In the post-war period, we have seen startling changes. First, the acceptance of the straight-baseline system as a method for determining the starting point of the territorial sea. In a decision of historic importance the International Court of Justice in 1951 shook the foundations of the Law of the Sea by recognizing the legitimacy of the straight-baseline system in certain types of cases. For Canada, this decision had particular significance because of the unusual features of our coastline -- in particular its highly indented configuration.

The second development of historic importance is the growing acceptance of the fishing-zone concept in international law. Only a few years ago, there were some who denied the legitimacy of claiming fishing limits extending beyond the territorial sea to a distance of 12 miles. Today there are many countries, Canada among them, which have established exclusive fisheries jurisdictions. Since the last war, we have also seen the birth and acceptance of the doctrine of sovereignty over the resources of the continental shelf. We have seen the birth of new rules for determining the closing-lines for bays. We have also seen many countries depart from the three-mile limit for the territorial sea.