

from headland to headland. This provision, which reflects the 1951 decision in the well-known Anglo-Norwegian fisheries case is of particular interest to Canada because much of our coastline is deeply indented, as I have already pointed out.

In the committee stage there was a move to impose a limitation of 15 miles on straight baselines which would have had undesirable results for us. However, action by Canada in the plenary session was successful in having this limitation removed. The Conference also adopted a provision recognizing that bays with mouths of 24 miles or less are to be regarded as internal waters. This limitation would not, of course, affect bays along coasts where the baseline system is applicable.

The fourth convention deals with the general law of the high seas. The Convention on the High Seas has perhaps less significance for Canada than the others because, in the main, it simply codifies existing international law. It provides for the first time a systematic compilation of recognized international law on a number of important matters and seeks to ensure the maximum freedom of the high seas. This applies not only to navigation but to fishing on the high seas, flying over the high seas and such activities as the laying of submarine cables and the building of pipe lines under the high seas.

Among other things, the Convention deals with such matters as the nationality of ships, safety of life at sea, the suppression of piracy and the slave trade, the right of hot pursuit in certain circumstances and the prevention of pollution of the seas by the discharge of oil or the dumping of radioactive waste. It was, Mr. Speaker, a very thorough compilation of the existing laws of the sea into a code which we now hope will be ratified by the great majority of the nations of the world.

I have referred in brief summary, Mr. Speaker, to some of the highlights of the four conventions. Now I would like to turn to the question of the breadth of the territorial sea and the related question of coastal fishing zones. It is on this subject, of course, that the publicity was given which attracted such widespread public interest. It is unfortunate in one way that this aspect of the Conference's work reached so much public interest because it tended to obscure many of the more constructive achievements of the Conference. I would like to give some of the background of this matter of the breadth of the territorial sea to see whether we cannot make clear what the problem is and the importance of Canada's contribution so far and what we think it can be in the future.

There has been no uniform practice, Mr. Speaker, in so far as the breadth of the territorial sea is concerned. Generally speaking, the great maritime nations have accepted and enforced the three-mile territorial sea off the coasts of the various countries of the world. Many countries for