

controversy; still greater difficulties may be expected in seeking agreement on the further extension and broadening of such provisions desired by many coastal states and the developing countries in particular.

The International Area of the Seabed

One of the tasks of the Conference will be to elaborate a set of rules for the international seabed area and to decide upon the nature and functions of the international authority that will govern exploration and exploitation in the area on the basis of the 1970 Declaration of Principles adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The Declaration, which in itself virtually constitutes the nucleus of a draft treaty on the regime for the area, provides that the seabed beyond national jurisdiction and the resources contained therein are the "common heritage of mankind" and may not be subject to national jurisdiction.

The mineral resources of the international seabed are very real. At the present state of knowledge, these resources comprise ferro-manganese nodules, which are known to cover vast areas of the deep ocean floor and contain four elements of commercial significance: manganese, nickel, copper, and cobalt. It is considered that within a relatively short period of time, some of the more developed countries will have the technological capability to extract and process these nodules for commercial purposes. Since it is expected that nodules will be mined primarily for their nickel content, and since Canada is the world's major producer and exporter of nickel, it is evident that this new source cannot be ignored by Canada. It would, therefore, seem to be clearly within Canada's national interest, not only to promote the establishment of an orderly regime in the area for the benefit of mankind in general and of developing countries in particular, but also to see that Canadian economic interests are protected.

In 1970, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution calling for a moratorium on all exploration and exploitation activities in the international seabed area. As that resolution