



As for the extent to which this Convention has been effective as a means for dealing with fishery problems, the United States has on many occasions made clear its view that the Convention has proved to be a most useful means for dealing with many of the critical fishery problems of common interest in the North Pacific Ocean. The President and various other officials, including me, have indicated the United States view that the underlying principle of the Convention--the abstention principle--is peculiarly applicable and is essential in connection with certain of the fishery problems in the area. The circumstances in the North Pacific Ocean off the coast of North America are unique in terms of long-standing Canadian and American fisheries, and unparalleled investments by the two Governments of time, money and talent in the conservation of the resources. Such unique circumstances must be given adequate recognition. As a practical matter, any pattern of international agreement regarding utilization of those resources which fails to take due account of the special contribution to the productivity of the resources such investments represent will not endure.

The abstention principle does take due account of the special contribution which in this case has been made by the United States and Canada. It thus serves as a valuable procedure for encouraging governments to undertake the burdensome tasks connected with the conservation of marine fishery resources.

In addition, if the principle or something akin to it is not available for dealing with this kind of problem as it occurs more frequently, the alternative courses of action which governments are likely to take to protect their fisheries will run contrary to the interests of the three Governments represented here and, in the long run, contrary to the interests of mankind.

In short, we are convinced of the fundamental value of the principle of abstention for the solution of what are today unique fishery problems, but problems which may in the future be all too common.

We are strengthened in our conviction by the manner in which this Convention has served the three Governments during the past ten years. None of the Governments has found in the functioning of the Convention all that it might have hoped for. Japanese fishermen find defects in the Convention, and so do Canadian and American fishermen. But, within its framework it has been possible for the three national fishing industries to prosper.

I do not wish to give you the impression that we in the United States consider the Convention to have worked perfectly. Indeed, that is not our view, as all who are familiar with the proceedings of the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission can testify. However, the defects which we perceive are not fundamental. They do not go to the heart of the Convention. They are not defects in principle. They are perhaps weaknesses in the use of the instrument more than weaknesses in the instrument itself.

These defects can and should be corrected; and no doubt the United States Delegation will have specific proposals to this end. Thus, we welcome this review of the Convention. I would be less than candid, however, if I did not emphasize

the fact that in essence the Convention is satisfactory to the United States. Such proposals as the United States Delegation may make for correcting weaknesses will not deal with fundamentals of the Convention. These, in our judgment, are best left intact. It seems to us better to seek to improve upon the instrument with which we are familiar and which has, in fact, served well, than to discard it and seek to create a new instrument. The United States Delegation will, of course, be most interested in hearing the views of the Canadian and Japanese Governments and will give the most careful and sympathetic consideration to proposals which they put forward.

It is our earnest desire that these discussions result in arrangements for the solution of common fishery problems in the North Pacific Ocean which all of the Governments represented here will consider both well suited to the advancement of common conservation interests and equitable.

I extend my warmest personal wishes for success in your work.

x x x