

Coastal zone doesn't exist legally, marine lawyer says

The coastal zone does not exist, at least in the legal sense, Walter J. McNichols declared at the fourth marine law seminar here.

The session focused on legal aspects of both the coastal zone and the continental shelf.

"The term 'coastal zone' means many things to many different people," McNichols said.

He cited popular definitions of the area, pointing out that nu-

merous delimitation follow county lines and do not include water. "In the 1969 Report of the Commission on Marine Science, Engineering and Resources, the coastal zone was defined as that area 50 miles inland from the coast and 50 miles out to sea," he continued.

"I favor a more functional definition," McNichols said, "and consider the coastal zone to be those places on land where the

presence of land makes a difference."

Discussing problems involved with management of coastal areas, McNichols asserted "creation of a new agency for coastal zone management might not effectively eliminate the current patchwork of governmental operations."

Legal status of the continental shelf also was considered.

"Another functional definition

applies here: the continental shelf can be thought of as the wet portion of a continent," McNichols said.

Although national law governing the continental shelf began developing in the 1920's with increased exploration for oil, the first major international legal action was the 1945 "Truman Proclamation"; this doctrine stated that the United States considers that the continental

shelf appertains to it and is subject to its jurisdiction and control.

The proclamation soon became embodied into international law since no other nation protested the unilateral U. S. action. Thus "acquiescence" is a traditional method for creation of international law.

"It is important to remember that the U. S. proclamation applied only to the seabed and its

natural resources—not to the water column, surface of the water or the airspaces above it," McNichols stressed.

"Claims of other nations, particularly Chile, Ecuador, Peru and other Latin countries, have been based on the Truman Proclamation," he continued, "but they have asserted sovereignty or complete rights and not just the right to exploit the seabed."

"Law governing the shelf, just

as in the coastal zone, is confounded by lack of agreement on delimitation of the area," the lawyer said.

A new treaty proposal for the seabed has been presented to the United Nations Seabeds Committee by the United States in contemplation of the 1973 United Nations Law of the Sea Conference. Under the new proposal, a special council of nations or "international regime" would be created for administration of seabed areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

The current convention, which came into effect in 1964 but was drafted at the 1958 Conference, refers to the continental shelf as "the seabed and subsoil of the submarine areas adjacent to the coast but outside the area of the territorial sea, to a depth of 200 meters or, beyond that limit, to where the depth of the superjacent waters admits of the exploitation of the natural resources of the said areas."

"More problems are created by interpretation of that last phrase," McNichols said. "Does it mean the general capacity to exploit resources or must each country develop its own ability before it can claim seabed rights beyond the 200 meter isobath?"

The final seminar in the series will center on environmental protection. It will be held Monday from 4-5 p.m. in Room 226, University Library.

Williams

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These changes have occurred throughout history. We must not confuse style with ideology.

"I've got a history book which describes college students over the past hundred years. If you remove the dates and modernize the language, it's hard to tell which generation is being written about. The book tells about a riot they had at Columbia, S.C. in the early 1880s, for example. A stem-winding, modern-style riot. You begin to wonder, really is there anything different in it all?"

Williams isn't too disturbed about student violence, either.

"I am convinced that the great bulk of students has had about all they want of this immature nonsense," he says. "Maybe I'm wrong, but I think I see valid signs. There's no silent majority involved in all this—just a ground swell of opinion from the bulk of the students who are seeking an education."

"These students aren't any happier with the world than the rest of us, and would like to do something constructive about it. They don't see that burning the place is very constructive. They want a chance to study and think and act with rationality. I agree with that."



Cynthia Akin of Slaton was crowned Miss Texas Rural Electrification in Dallas during the 31st State-wide Meeting of Texas Electric Cooperatives Inc. Miss Akin is 17, and will be a senior this fall at Slaton High School. Throughout the next year Miss Akin will represent the 80 rural electric cooperatives in Texas during numerous functions and compete for the National Miss Rural Electrification title during the Las Vegas meeting in February.

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