

ARTS & LETTERS

yet to explain adequately "how a book whose avowed and successful purpose was to champion an oppressed people came to stand as a major symbol of that oppression." One neglected clue in the "eccentric popular history" of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* lies in its role in Southern Reconstruction fiction, notably in the best-selling work of Thomas Dixon, of North Carolina.

Dixon's novel *The Leopard's Spots* (1902) sold over a million copies. It was intended as a white Southern response to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, but rather than reënforce the theme of black-white reconciliation that permeates the "Uncle Remus" stories of Joel Chandler Harris and other "New South" writers, Dixon created an archetypal black man who was "a genetically inferior, oversexed animal whose minute intelligence directs itself toward one goal—the wives and daughters of the white man."

Dixon carried Mrs. Stowe's story forward to 1900. He transformed the cruel, white overseer, Simon Legree, into a Reconstruction politician and finally sent him home to New England to become a capitalist who exploits the white working class. He created a new character, Tom Camp, a one-legged Confederate veteran and Bible-quoting Christian who experienced a crisis of faith when liberated blacks raped and killed one of his daughters. Dixon, according to Riggio, portrayed "a white Uncle Tom, a poor white crucified both psychologically and economically by the black man under the tutelage of an industrialized Simon Legree. It is an image to which many, North and South, responded—and still do."

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Making Sensible Ocean Boundaries

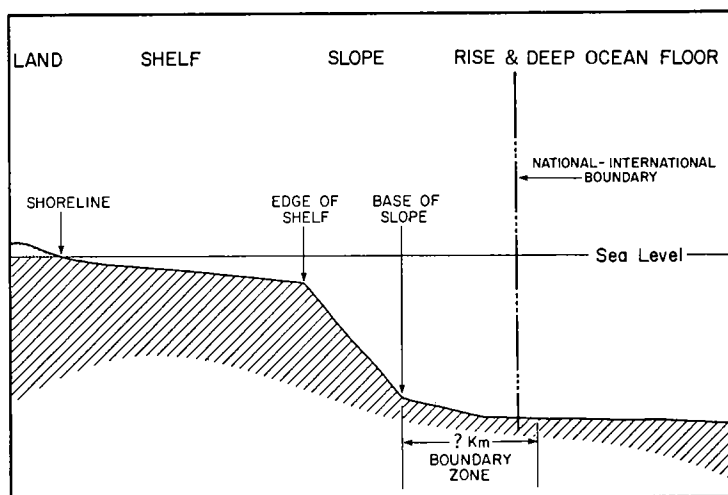
"Ocean Boundaries and Petroleum Resources" by Hollis D. Hedberg, in *Science* (Mar. 1976), 1515 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Proposals to set international boundaries at 200 nautical miles from a nation's coast have the advantage of simplicity but little else to recommend them, says Hedberg, Princeton professor emeritus of geology. There is no logical or natural basis for the currently proposed 200-mile limit; as applied to petroleum and other mineral resources, such a boundary would be unacceptable to many countries. The United States, Russia, and China, for example, would lose large, potentially valuable areas of their continental slopes, whereas others, like Chile, Peru, and Portugal, would receive huge tracts of ultra-deep ocean bed more appropriately assigned to an international regime.

Hedberg proposes a "geomorphic" boundary formula based on the continental margin—"the base of that slope that marks the outer

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limit or base of the continent (or island).” A clear international boundary would be drawn by the coastal nation within the margins of a “boundary zone” extending oceanward from the approximate base of the slope for an internationally agreed distance (Hedberg recommends at least 100 kilometers—54 nautical miles). Such a boundary zone would bypass uncertainties in defining the precise location of the base of the slope and allow the final boundary to be drawn by simple straight lines connecting fixed points of latitude and longitude. Hedberg suggests that the boundary concept be used only to set a national/international division of rights to mineral resources beneath the oceans (requiring drilling or mining and fixed installations on the ocean floor), not to settle more complicated jurisdiction over oceanic waters for navigational purposes or fishing rights.



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Profile of the proposed delineation of a boundary between coastal state and international jurisdictions.

Plumbing The Depths

“The Deep Seas—Unexpectedly an Astounding Variety of Life” by Bruce Abell, in *Mosaic* (May-June 1976), National Science Foundation, 1800 G St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

Until about two years ago, most scientists believed that the deep seas—those regions between 200 meters and the ocean floor—contained little life. Low temperatures, absence of light, high pressures, and limited food and oxygen all indicated an extremely inhospitable environment. But today, writes *Mosaic* editor Abell, “improved sampling devices and some persistent scientists” are bringing to the surface “an