

DPM/SSEA: I have heard some very reputable commentators say that the process probably has, if not lessened tensions between Nicaragua and if it has not prevented a war between Nicaragua and Honduras, it has at least lessened tensions, and I think the process is very difficult. I've just come from a meeting with those in Honduras who are participating in the three Commissions, the security, the political and the economic and social, and one has only to listen to their recounting their experience to understand how very complex it is, as they search for some way to bring about peace in this region. I can only say that their commitment is genuine and that we have to get behind them and support them despite the difficulties. What one might fear is the possibility of bad faith on the part of any one of the participants, and if that were the case it would be very very sad indeed, or if the international community, including the United States, did not give the process its full and sincere backing, because if the United States isn't behind it fully then it would be a serious impediment to a solution.

Q: You know while you were in Washington on this visit that you just referred to, you were asked not to go to Nicaragua, but you did. I mean it does underline a certain difference in position towards this area between our two countries. Is that a route for you to pursue now that you've been there?

DPM/SSEA: I think we have to keep talking, expressing our views to the United States and where we disagree, as we do, we have to tell them so.

Q: For example on this whole question of the mining of Nicaraguan harbors?

DPM/SSEA: Yes I think that that is a very serious development and it's not something that we can condone in any way. I was interested in noting that the Contadora Ministers issued a statement just a couple of days ago in which they analyse the security situation in the area and included the mining as one of the destabilizing elements that has occurred recently. It's serious. There are other serious things happening and I think that we have to have our eye on those as well, as we show our strong disapproval of mining.

Q: Mr. MacEachen, thank you very much.

External Affairs Minister Allan MacEachen spoke to us from Tegucigalpa, Honduras.