

SSEA: I think that we do have an independent foreign policy. We don't agree with the military solution. We don't believe in foreign intervention. To that extent we differ with the United States. We've said that to the Vice-President, to the Secretary of State. We've said it in my speech. I think we've been rather candid with the United States.

Q: Not more candid perhaps than Mexico though?

SSEA: Well, quite true. But we believe also as part of our policy that the regional countries have a bigger stake, have a bigger role than we do and that is why we have supported the Contadora group.

Q: Some Latin American countries say that we could have a much bigger role in the Continent. Do you think we could?

SSEA: We've made it clear that if we can help, we're available. But, it's certainly not for us to go in there and say, yes, here we are. We want to solve this.

Q: I've noticed though that some of your critics seem to grant you that you have raised objections to your counterparts in the United States. But, they're a bit frustrated that so often that this is a private criticism of the United States that often follows with a public defence of U.S. policy, that somehow, at least publicly your Department does not appear to be aggressively boldly, criticizing the United States.

SSEA: Well, there's always a judgement as to what is the effectiveness of your views, whether you press them patiently and persistently, or whether you pound the table. But, I don't think that it is appropriate for Canada in the light of its overall interests to escalate beyond what we have done our differences with the United States.

CARDY: The ambiguity of Canadian foreign policy has not yet tarnished Canada's image in Latin America. Ottawa is respected for its support for the third world in North-South debate. Latin American government see Canada sharing with them a common dependence on the U.S. economy. Professor Dosman believes that, as a result, Canada could make a difference in Central America. He says Ottawa must identify its own political interests in the region. As a start, Professor Dosman thinks Ottawa should promote peace plans for Central America by giving a clear signal on the issue of Canadian aid to Honduras.

DOSMAN: What Canada can best do is follow the lead of the Contadora Group. It supports that group, but at the same time it provides aid to Honduras, while dragging its feet on aid to Nicaragua. There is a clear signal there. Development aid should not be a reward for military adventurism. This is a state of principle. Yet at the moment Honduras is notoriously a base for attacks, is a country for training troops in El Salvador. Surely, if we're going to reconcile our principles, if we're going to maintain our principles, we should cut off aid immediately, suspend aid, but we haven't.