

certainly, in Nicaragua itself, there are developments occurring not only internally but externally that are very important that we ought to know a lot about, and that we ought to know about objectively and have the facts and have the truth and not be, in a sense, driven by ideological preconception, which I think is a danger for outsiders like myself who come in and who may be influenced by preconceived ideas.

Q: You must've talked about the coming election in Nicaragua and I would assume you discussed with government people the lifting of censorship, press freedom there, as an election approached. What did they tell you?

DPM/SSEA: I think one of the most striking experiences I had was to meet the editorial board of La Prensa in Managua and to have them explain in detail and with examples the rather rigorous press censorship to which they are currently subjected. I'd never understood that in this hemisphere press censorship could take place so systematically, and I think that a state of emergency exists and that is the justification for the press censorship. But I did talk about elections and had a very good exchange with the President of the Council of State in Managua about elections. It's a subject that I thought I know a bit about and tried to make the point that an election was an non-event if it didn't have strong opposition.

Q: How important is the opposition in the Nicaraguan election, is this issue of censorship to the question as to whether we might send observers there?

DMP/SSEA: I think that we haven't been asked for observers, but I think I would be at least in principle guided by the same consideration that guided me in terms of El Salvador, namely that we ought to have people who could go, who would call the situation as it occurs according to their lights and tell us what happens as well as they could find out.

Q: I gather one of the main topics of conversation on this trip just about everywhere you went was the Contadora Group. Where are those conversations leading? What is the perception of the achievement so far as Contadora?