

Cuban involvement. In another case, External Affairs says it might cut off Canadian aid to Honduras, if there was evidence of direct Honduran support for anti-Sandinista guerillas attacking Nicaragua. But Canada doesn't have that kind of evidence and we're not collecting any. Ottawa has no experts in the region to monitor the situation. Instead, we rely on U.S. information and analysis, which can be flawed and distorted. Member of Parliament, Pauline Jewett, says this a fundamental defect in Canadian foreign policy.

JEWITT: If the United States says that there is an enormous flow of arms going into El Salvador to the rebels from Nicaragua or Cuba, we just sort of automatically say in the Canadian Government, well there is an enormous flow of arms. We don't even do as much independent assessment as a major newspaper like the New York Times does.

CARDY: Stephen Clarkson is the author of Canada and the Reagan Challenge. In preparing his book, Professor Clarkson interviewed more than 200 foreign policy officials and experts. He believes that Ottawa's relationship with Washington colours our entire Foreign Policy. Ottawa bureaucrats are constantly trying to smooth the waters between Canada and the United States over a host of issues from fishing rights to lumber exports. They don't want to make waves by taking Washington to task over Central America. Professor Clarkson.

CLARKSON: I think Canadian Foreign Policy is designed in general to reaffirm to Canadians that Canada is an independent country. It expresses our seperateness abroad. But where that foreign policy comes up against a major American interest as it did in Vietnam or in Central America, there, we are very careful not to come up head on against the Americans. We tend to back off and say, well we don't want to get them mad as us because we're worried about their possible counterveil against lumber exports or against uranium exports, or against our truckers, or about the auto pact. Not to express our own thoughts about the issue, but support the Americans, hoping that it'll smooth our bilateral relationship with Washington. The tone of the relationship is important. It's important whether Trudeau gets on well with Reagan. Now if Trudeau has gone around saying that the Americans are creating a second Vietnam in Central America and that it's crazy to talk about Communism being a threat when it's poverty, and that directly criticizes Reagan's position, the next time Pierre meets Ronnie, the atmosphere is going to be pretty frigid.

CARDY: Allan MacEachen admits that a major part of his job is keeping Canada-U.S. relations warm and friendly. For him, that means Canada won't be as outspoken as some Canadians would wish. Nor as forthright as Mexico, another nation bordering the U.S. and dependent on it, which has firmly and frequently challenged U.S. foreign policy. Mr. MacEachen prefers quiet diplomacy. He has told his American counterparts that he agrees with them on some points and disagrees on others. He points to Canada's support of the Contadora initiatives. It's an effort by Mexico, Panama, Columbia and Venezeula to find a non-military solution to the conflicts in Central America. And Ottawa has told Washington it should stop resisting direct talks between the U.S. and Nicaragua and the U.S. and Cuba. Allan MacEachen insists that Canadian policy is written in Ottawa, not Washington. But he says there are limits to Canada's role in Central America.