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Q: You've appeared lately to be distancing yourself somewhat from the policies in that area adopted by the United States. You went to Nicaragua and refused to go to El Salvador. Are you indeed trying to distance yourself from the U.S.?

DPM/SSEA: I think people are paying more attention probably to what I have been saying recently than what I had said earlier, because I have been saying that we disagree with the United States from the point of view of its military presence in Central America. We have a difference of opinion with them and with other countries which are involved in that area from the outside. One shouldn't just talk about the United States. One should talk about Cuba and the Soviet Union. It's always very difficult to identify with full precision exactly what each country is doing. Even some members of the Senate and the Congress find it difficult to be kept fully informed as to what their own government may be doing or may be involved in. But I have made it clear for quite some time that we don't agree with that aspect. Maybe my trip has sharpened the presentation somewhat but the substance has been there all along.

Q: The mining incidents though have been taking place for several months now. Are you concerned about incidents like that? Do you think that the mining incident clarifies differences with the United States? Are you concerned about increased activity in the area?

DPM/SSEA: Yes, I think that the mining has been a further escalation of the tension, although it's interesting that I found the rhetoric stronger in the United States and Canada than I did in Central America on the incidents. But it is also worth mentioning that the Contadora ministers themselves have stated in their comments on the mining, have stated their concern about the increase in guerilla activity, not just directed against Nicaragua but generally in the area. One has to, in talking about the mining, look at the overall situation and the overall situation is not a very appetizing one or an appealing one at the moment. So what is the solution? The solution is to try to seek a political settlement through the process I have been talking about and with the support of the international community and I think the international community has been somewhat lax in exerting its full pressure on the situation.

Q: So will Canada be taking a more active role in that area?

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