

F. Bastien/Radio Cda The question I wanted to put to you, or push that argument a bit further, if I may. I was wondering if, in the course of the discussions, whether you discussed the possibility of perhaps in the future, harmonizing your positions in a more direct way, in view of the fact that Canada and Mexico share the same neighbour?

(laughter)

SSEA I always give the guest the first opportunity...

(laughter)

For. Secy: Well, surely one of the aims of these ministerial meetings, of the Joint Ministerial Commission, is precisely to coordinate positions on different matters. In the case of the political issues that are the particular responsibility of Mr. MacEachen and myself, yes, I think that we aim at establishing a mechanism that may provide us with all the tools for consultation and coordination, and / information, as well, on different issues of common interest. In the three opportunities we have had for meetings and discussing the affairs of the world, I have found in every instance, the clear possibility of establishing such coordination. Of course in very many instances, this coordination cannot always be previous to the events. Sometimes we are surprised by how quickly events take place and also I think that in every case, we would prefer to consult before anything happens. Sometimes events overtake us. So, this means that whenever we have that possibility, I am certain that we shall make every effort to consult previous to events, but if it happens afterwards, we shall do our very best to take a common position on a specific issue.

SSEA Well, I have found that on quite a number of issues we discussed, we were, generally, in the same field. Maybe there are, if we were to write resolutions, we might use different words, but I think generally we saw the situation from a similar point of view. And on the consultation, or coordination, I think that is very important. You ask the question with respect to our neighbour - and we would have appreciated consultation from our neighbour, at least Canada would - more consultation, prior to the recent events, I think we have made that clear.