

*The Address—Ms. Jewett*

behalf of Parliament to go to India and collect the facts upon which we can then make our judgments about what assistance we can give to the people of India. I would hope it would be an all-party fact-finding mission established within the next few weeks or at most few months.

As I say, on many matters we are in accord. On many more we are not. The shadow of war grows in Central America. The danger of a regional war directly involving the United States is more likely now than ever before. Continuing military conflict, covert war, border attacks and grotesque violations of human rights are the reality in Central America. Despite congressional reprimand and international outcry over the mining of Nicaragua's harbours earlier this year, the Reagan administration continues to escalate its military aggression, economic sabotage and attacks on Nicaragua. This poses a danger not only to Nicaraguan sovereignty and independence but to the rule of international law, the self-determination of a people, initial efforts towards development and democracy, and the peace and stability of the western hemisphere.

Honduras has become militarized by the United States to the point where its fledgling democracy and economy are threatened. In Guatemala, massacres and large-scale human rights violations continue and have been well documented.

What has been this Government's response to the crisis in Central America? First, it has refused to increase our diplomatic and political representation in the region. While haggling goes on about Canada's representation in the wine-growing regions of France, this Government accepts that Canada will have no representation except an occasional monthly call in El Salvador, Honduras or Nicaragua. What that means is that the Conservatives, like the Liberals before them, will continue to rely on the U.S. State Department, the U.S. Defence Department and the White House for information on and assessment of this critical region. The Tories are simply continuing an earlier Liberal Minister's policy, that of Mark MacGuigan, of "quiet acquiescence" in Washington's policies on Central America.

Secondly, one of the first foreign policy decisions of this Government was its refusal to send observers to the recent Nicaraguan elections. Although earlier this year Canada had sent official observers to the elections in El Salvador, this Government declined the same courtesy to Nicaragua. The Conservative Government prejudged the process and the outcome of the election and once again acquiesced to Washington's wishes.

Thirdly, the Government has failed Canadians and the cause of peace in Central America in an even more fundamental way. Earlier this year all parties in this House were in agreement that the Contadora group's efforts were the only realistic path to peace in Central America. All parties claimed support for these efforts. In September of this year, when the Contadora foreign ministers presented a proposed peace plan for Central America, the countries of the region expressed approval. Nicaragua in particular, much to the surprise of the United States, agreed to the plan. France and other European nations have endorsed it but the United States, which had

earlier asked for and succeeded in getting certain elements in the peace plan, refused to then support it when Nicaragua accepted it. They said that there were verification problems. What verification problems? France and other countries have not raised this question. The countries in the region, members of the Contadora groups, have not raised this as a problem. Only the Americans are raising it as a problem and this Government, in the words of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) yesterday, echoing Washington, has begun raising it as a problem.

What this Government does not seem to realize is that Washington has wanted to delay indefinitely implementation of the Contadora peace plan. For proof of this one need go no further than an article in the *Washington Post* on November 13 which revealed the contents of a paper presented by the National Security Council of the U.S. for an October 30 meeting of that Council at which President Reagan presided. This paper, which to my knowledge has so far been made available only to the *Washington Post*, credits U.S. foreign policy with success in blocking efforts by Venezuela, Panama, Colombia and Mexico—that is, the Contadora group—to obtain early signing of a proposed regional peace treaty in Central America. It actually states that the United States has been successful in blocking the peace plan.

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The paper goes on to say that problems remain in getting the four core countries, that is Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica and El Salvador, to agree on a position consistent with U.S. policy against Nicaragua, the fifth potential signatory. There are problems with getting the core countries to agree with the U.S. policy of attacking, undermining and destroying Nicaragua.

In considering its policy *vis-à-vis* Central America, perhaps the Government will read some of these documents, such as the one I have just quoted from, a document of the U.S. National Security Council, rather than what they are fed by the State Department, Defence Department and White House.

I believe this is an example of breeding cynicism in our own electorate. Members of the House will recall that when the Prime Minister spoke at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish on September 28 of this year, he said that his "most cherished ambition is to reduce the threat of war and enhance the promise of peace".

But, if the Government is failing Canadians and peace in Central America, it is also failing Canadians in other aspects of the quest for peace, such as the urgent necessity for nuclear disarmament. It is interesting that the Government has chosen two admirable and skilful spokespeople for its policies in this field, not the least of whom is the new Canadian ambassador to the United Nations and indeed the new ambassador for disarmament. While we applaud these choices, if the Government really feels it is essential to go outside of the External Affairs Department, we cannot applaud the policies and actions, or rather inactions, that go with them.