

of the United States.

DPM/SSEA: I think that it is a process that is moving slowly, maybe because it is so difficult. I've heard people say in Central America that it is very valuable because at least they are speaking and trying to resolve. They have a forum in which they can deal with each other, the five Central American countries for example. Others have said it may have had an effect in halting possible conflict directly between Honduras and Nicaragua but I agree that it is moving slowly and it's a fragile process and therefore it has to be nurtured very carefully and supported by other countries even more strongly than it has been in the past I would say, including the United States and the Soviet Union and Cuba and all others.

Q: Do you think there needs to be a stronger commitment on the part of all third parties that are now in the area?

DPM/SSEA: Well, I think when I say greater support I have in mind of course the countries directly involved, but also the international community as a whole, which may have tended to leave everything to the Contadora. And I think that's good, as the first decision, that it's better to have a regional solution. But in order to have a regional solution, it requires international support and the existence of a regional process doesn't mean that everybody else can wash their hands of the problem and say well you go to it. I think that is not a likely productive route.

Q: Canada has been accused of doing just that though by the Conservatives. They feel we have no policy in that area, that we're just ignoring it, that we should take our responsibilities as a full partner of the OAS, join the OAS and take a more active involvement in Central America.

DPM/SSEA: Well, if you're relating the question of the OAS to the problems in Central America, then of course, the OAS itself is not seized directly with the problem. It is a Contadora process which may be composed of members of the OAS, but it is not an OAS sponsored activity. So it doesn't seem to me at the moment that Canada joining the OAS would have any direct bearing on what we're talking about, namely the troubles in Central America. There may be other reasons why we should join, but I don't see that as an immediate or pressing reason.