

York, U of T, Ryerson students push for reduced Metropass

By ROCCO NOBILE
and SUSAN SPERLING

The student councils of York, the University of Toronto, and Ryerson Polytechnical Institute have commissioned a study examining the feasibility of a reduced fare metropass for students.

The Council of the York Student Federation (CYSF) approached the York Enterprise Development Centre (YEDC) to prepare the study after a November 28, 1985 meeting between CYSF President Reya Ali, two U of T representatives, one Ryerson representative, and three representatives from the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC)'s department of Corporate Planning.

At that meeting, the university representatives proposed the reduced fare motion, which would entail the selling of metropasses to full-time undergraduate students at three-quarters of the present price.

The TTC countered the proposal

with several points, which are outlined in the printed minutes of that meeting. "Firstly, it was pointed out that the foregone revenue from the students' proposal for a four-month student pass would be significant."

The second problem with the proposal, according to the TTC, is that many university students in Toronto are actually non-Metro residents, and it is their (TTC) belief that Metro residents would not appreciate subsidizing reduced rates for non-residents.

Thirdly, the TTC believes that,

rather than reduced fare metropasses, a better idea would be reduced fare bus tickets, because, they stated, "there are many people who are not heavy transit riders and would not take sufficient trips each month to warrant even a three-quarters priced pass...It would be easier to monitor the number of trips made and hence identify the exact cost of the program."

Because the universities proposed a year long test of the reduced fare, the TTC representatives said that a test of any new reduced fare program would be extremely difficult to

discontinue once it has been started.

Finally, the TTC stated that they could only consider any sort of reduced fare program for university students if the program was subsidised by an outside interest, such as the Provincial Ministry of Colleges and Universities or the Ministry of Transportation and Communications.

The TTC asked the university representatives to prepare a study examining the feasibility of the program. CYSF then contacted the YEDC, a business consulting firm affiliated with the Administrative

Studies Programme at York.

The study, which will cost an estimated \$430 to prepare, will try to show that with the implementation of the program the TTC's ridership would increase, and according to the YEDC research proposal, "ideally result in an increase of revenue to the TTC."

The study will, in part, be a critique of a 1985 study prepared by the firm Currie, Coopers and Lybrand, which discussed the feasibility of a half-price metropass program that was rejected by the

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Nicaragua not Marxist threat to US: Johnson

By DONOVAN VINCENT

The United States has embarked on a massive campaign to discredit the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, and Canadians must penetrate the enormous amount of propaganda coming from south of the border, according to a Canadian Forces Major-General.

Leonard Johnson, a retired member of the organization Generals for Peace, spoke to a group of approximately 100 York students assembled in Osgoode Hall on February 12 as part of Nicaragua Solidarity Week.

In a lecture entitled "U.S. Intervention in Nicaragua," Johnson told the students that the American government's "habit of intervention in Central America and their inability to tolerate something happening in that region which they have no control over is the basis for the U.S. activity in Nicaragua."

Johnson said that although the United States claims the Sandinistas are practising a Soviet style of Marxist-Leninism, they (Americans) have nothing to fear in terms of communism spreading into their country.

He added that the American government feels threatened by Nicaragua because of the Sandinistas' success there. He cited examples of significant land reforms, a rise in the adult literacy rate from 30 to 80 percent, and the virtual stamping out of communicable diseases since the revolution in Nicaragua in which the Sandinistas took power.

Although the United States is wary of the Sandinistas, Johnson said, there is no possibility of a U.S. invasion because "the time has passed for (that)." He added, "There is too much solidarity for Nicaragua among U.S. allies and there is no support even for the U.S. embargo against Nicaragua."

Another reason the States would not invade Nicaragua, Johnson says, is their fear of losing is too great. "The U.S. is confident that it could take Nicaragua's cities, but they also realize that an attack on the countryside could prove disastrous."

As well, he said, an invasion would not be supported by American citizens because many have threatened to take a pledge of civil disobedience in that event.

Johnson was one of three speakers at Osgoode for Solidarity Week. On February 11, Jesuit priest Father Mike Czerny spoke on the struggle for peace in Nicaragua and on February 13, Segio Lacayo, the Nicaraguan ambassador to Canada, addressed students on the subject of Nicaragua Today.



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