

Nicaragua pleads for aid



EDMONTON (CUP) — The Canadian government has provided some aid to a devastated Nicaragua, but far more is needed immediately, that country's new Canadian representative said at the University of Alberta in a recent speech.

Pastor Valle-Garay, charge d'affaires of the Nicaraguan embassy told a large audience that "Nicaragua is a pile of ashes."

The Central American country was bombed by its dictator, Anastasio Somoza, when a popular uprising ousted him from power this summer, he said.

"No other dictator, not even Hitler, ever bombed his own cities," said Garay.

One million people out of a population of 2.5 million have been displaced, he said. The Red Cross officially lists 600,000 people as refugees.

But in spite of starving people and a desperate situation, international aid is only trickling in, Garay said.

"We need 600 tons of food a day and we're getting only 80." The Canadian government has

sent only \$250,000 worth of aid, he said. Garay praised the Canadian Labour Congress however, for 250,000 pounds of food for the country.

Garay said the U.S. is exerting pressure on other countries not to send aid to Nicaragua because

the U.S. does not support its government.

"But we're going to fool the U.S. We're not going to starve; we're just going to lose weight," he said.

Garay said that in spite of the destruction there is optimism among Nicaragua's people, "because we are now a free people."

"And we're going to keep it that way. We are prepared at any moment to take up arms again if there is ever any trace of American domination in Nicaragua."

OXFAM Canada has set up a fund for Nicaraguan relief and donations can be made to their offices located in major Canadian cities.

Grad Socials

James A. Carlisle

What do physicists, philosophers, economists and biologists have in common? The Graduate Students Association hopes to find out on their Moonlight Cruise in Toronto Harbour on Oct. 5.

This outing is the first of several social events designed to give graduate students a chance to meet others outside their departments. Because the grad school is fragmented into so many divisions scattered across the campus, students don't have a common place to meet. GSA is hoping to make the Grad Pub a meeting place by holding special events and giving discounts to grad students.

The GSA has languished in the past because of apathy but the new GSA council lead by Anita Myers is trying to inject some enthusiasm into the organization and promote more participation. "We have many services, from the emergency loan fund to grad sports and financial support for academic purposes but many new grad students don't know about them," says Myers.

If you are a grad student and you would like to know more about GSA (or buy a ticket for the Moonlight Cruise) drop by the GSA office, N918 Ross Mon. or Wed. 10 AM to 12 Noon, Tues. or Thurs. 1:30 to 3:30 PM or talk to your department Rep.

Help them or they die

L. Andrew Cordoza

Various groups at York are in the midst of raising money to sponsor Vietnamese refugees. The science faculty is now waiting for their family to arrive, while Vanier College — having raised enough money — is about to approach the Department of Immigration. An organization of students at Osgoode, "The Boat People Committee", is also attempting to get funds from its student council to sponsor another family.

The exact amount raised by the science faculty members was not available, but under the special immigration guidelines, a minimum of \$2,500 must be raised in order to sponsor a family. An official of the faculty confirmed that the money had been raised and that the Department of Immigration had been approached. The Department has informed them that the family will arrive in Toronto in "four to six weeks."

Vanier College has raised a total of \$3,500. Faculty members raised \$2,500; Vanier College Council donated \$500; and the Winter-Summer Council added \$500. The Department of Immigration is to be approached shortly. "We are looking at a family of about five persons," said Michael Creal, Master of Vanier College.

Creal, who came up with the idea some months ago, first discussed it with some faculty members and students, including College Council Chairperson Bonnie Walker, and former chairperson, Brad Varey.

A committee of faculty members and students has now been set up to take responsibility for such things as clothing, employment and housing. Creal added that faculty members were "enthusiastic" despite the fact

that "many were already involved in their churches, synagogues, etc." Vanier expects their family to arrive in about three months.

The students at Osgoode approached the Legal and Literary Society for \$2,500. A spokesman for the student council said that

due to "the controversial nature of the issue," the question will be put to a referendum in the first week of October. In the meantime, the Community and Legal Aid Services Program (CLASP) has asked that the money be given to them instead, to aid their large refugee clientele.

Projects launched

Elena Naccarato

What can giving really mean? To one York group, it can mean anything from sacrificing one's own monetary funds to giving up many days and hours of precious time.

During the summer, several psychology professors and graduate students from York formed a group in order to sponsor a refugee family. Last week, we spoke to one of the 12 members, Professor Richard Goranson.

The group sees the refugee problem as a very serious one. When asked for a reason for their benevolence, Goranson answered with a very simple and well-put truism: "You either help them or they die."

Because of this practical attitude, the amount the group is willing to accomplish for the family is impressive. They, in fact, intend to aid the family in all aspects of Canadian life. They foresee the difficulties involved with any immigrant adjustment problem and realize that constant service is the only answer to its alleviation.

In addition to providing the monetary means for essentials (shelter, food, clothing), they will also help their family with all financial arrangements (family budgeting, banking, insurance,

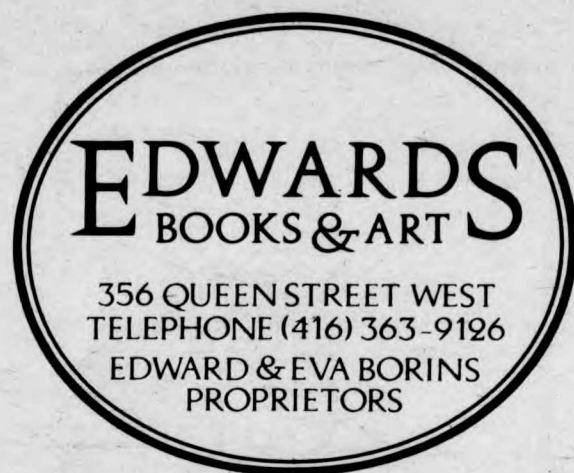
immigration paperwork), all aspects of finding employment (filling out employment forms, contacting employers, getting a Social Insurance Number, all aspects of housing and maintenance, and school placements.

They even intend to offer a contact service which will be available to the family at all hours of the day or night.

The initial steps in sponsoring a family have already been taken. By September, the minimum financial commitment of \$2,500 was reached and the initial contacts with immigration officials were made. The government estimates that \$1,200 will be needed to support each family member for one year, and since they desire to support at least a six-member family, "additional funds are badly needed."

Because of the amount of bureaucratic red-tape they have yet to go through, the group does not realistically expect the family before late December. This at least allows them more time for fund-raising.

With the amount of time and effort that this group has already given, and is yet willing to give, one cannot see any family they are responsible for having to experience the average trauma of readjustment. Their definition of giving can only prove to be a beneficial one for any family.



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