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one million, and has fewer than 150 buses in working order. This means crowding and line-ups are outrageous. Foreign visitors who dare a ride on a Managua bus will say that the physical intimacies they share with strangers are much more than those they share with good friends and family members at home. On a visit to Nicaragua, taking the buses may be found to be both a challenge and educational, a chance to see Nicaraguans "up close." But to have to rely on buses every day to get to work, to go shopping or to pay a visit to a hospital, government office or day-care centre is another matter. There are people who must catch a 4 a.m. bus into town from semi-rural areas, rush to transfer to city buses, and at rush hour four or five may pass the bus stop because they are too full. Once on a bus, riders must continue to fight their way back towards the exit, or they won't be able

to get off at their stop. The same process is repeated in the late afternoon. The evening does not slack off much, because people are doing their shopping, moving across town to attend classes or meetings, or just going home after a prolonged work day. In travelling out of town, riders can count

"It is a wonder how the Nicaraguan economy keeps functioning, and how the society can continue to adapt."

on waiting up to four or five hours for a bus, and then will most likely stand for the duration of the trip.

The tremendous pressures on the transportation system are due to a complex of factors: many vehicles are required by the army to fight the war and maintain preparedness against a potential invasion, while others are used to keep necessary goods flowing, such as agricultural products. Over-used vehicles and poor roads combine to produce early breakdowns. The lack of foreign exchange and the U.S. trade embargo together spell a desperate shortage of spare parts, while the call-up of reserves and the ongoing mobilizations for the war cut into the number of mechanics available for repairs. In Managua, and in other urban centres to a lesser degree, there has been a massive influx of people from the rural and war zones. Managua had Edmontons's population in 1979, the year of the popular insurrection and overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship. It now has around one million people.

The overload on the transportation system is repeated in every other sphere of popular needs, in health care and education especially. Though these latter sectors receive large shares of the national budget, the level of services supplied has been suffering since 1984. Everyone one meets who has had reason to seek medical attention talks of the line-ups, the overcrowding of facilities, the lack of basic medicines and even bandages.

Again, the deterioration is caused by numerous factors: vastly increased public access to health care since 1979, the limited base of facilities inherited from the previous regime, the exodus of a significant number of health care personnel, the time it takes to train new health care professionals, the shortage of foreign exchange with which to purchase medicines and materials. And,

A personal account by Fred Judson

Photos by Jonathan Leaning, author of *In the Village*. Photos provided by *Tools for Peace*, and are on display at 9160 Jasper Ave.

not least, something health care professionals call "the epidemiology of war" — the increase in the incidence of tropical diseases contracted by the troops in the bush, the increase of diseases connected to problems of sanitation, and poor nutrition and irregular visits to clinics. The Contras have made health care workers and clinics in rural areas special targets; thus large areas have been deprived of the health care advances made in the 1979-83 period, a time of mass vaccination campaigns, sanitation programs and the establishment of rural clinics. On top of all that, many of the best care facilities have to dedicate their efforts to caring for the severely wounded soldiers and civilians.

What seems to have happened, if one takes into account the very real difficulties experienced by Nicaraguans in transportation, health care, education, electric power and water supplies, food distribution, etc. is that each problem has a negative and exponential impact on the others. The accumulation of difficulties was, up to a point, a quantitative matter; now it has made a qualitative difference. The costs of the war, against the background of an inherited poverty and high degree of under-

mis-development, with a lack of experienced administrators and the inevitable mistakes made, have created a situation that is exceedingly difficult.

It is a wonder how the Nicaraguan economy keeps functioning and how the society can continue to adapt. Both long-time foreign residents and Nicaraguans will remark to the visitor that material conditions are now worse, and economic indicators are generally worse than before the 1979 revolution. There is what people call "a culture of complaints," because there is so much to complain about. You hear it more in Managua, because it is there that the "middle class" is fairly large in number and quite visible, and their standard of living is hurting in many cases. The poor majority, in a sense, can adapt better to a deterioration, because they have always been poor, and also because, as best it can, the state directs scarce services and essential goods to them. They complain when it appears that not all social sectors are making equal sacrifices.

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AM EXCHANGE SCHOLARSHIPS WITH FRANCE

Open
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Each year the University of Alberta recommends to the Government of France three graduating students for positions as "Assistants" in either secondary or post-secondary French educational institutions. The students participate in this cultural exchange for nine months (October-June). The rate of pay is subsistence level, often lodging and meals can be obtained at a reduced rate. Proficiency in written and oral French is required. The applicant must be a Canadian citizen under 30 years of age and a resident of Alberta for the past five years.

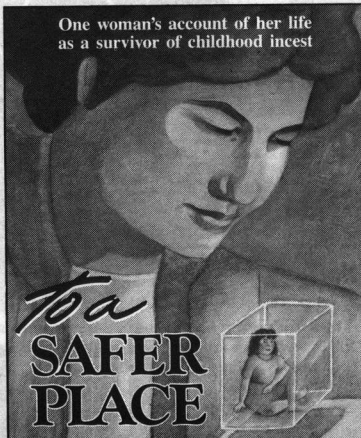
The Killam General Endowment Fund and the Government of France.

Director of Student Awards by December 1.

THE AILEEN CHARLOTTE DRISCOLL SCHOLARSHIP

FIELD OF STUDY: Education
 NUMBER: 1
 VALUE: \$3,000.00
 CONDITIONS: Awarded to a deserving honors student graduating with a degree of Bachelor of Education to allow the recipient to continue his or her studies of French in France. A condition of the award is that each recipient will subsequently teach at least one year in the Province of Alberta.
 DONOR: Endowed by the late Aileen Charlotte Driscoll of Edmonton
 APPLY: Letter to Director of Student Awards by December 1 of the year prior to when the award is to be held.

One woman's account of her life as a survivor of childhood incest



Alberta Premiere Nov. 25 8:00 p.m.
 Provincial Museum Auditorium 12845-102 Avenue
 Free Admission Open to the public

A discussion will follow. The filmmaker and Shirley Turcotte, the subject of the film, will be present.

A film directed by Beverly Shaffer
 Produced by Studio D
 National Film Board of Canada

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