

## Contra victim mourned

by Pat Mandin

"My feeling of peace comes from what is happening around me," quoted Mirion Linder from her dead brother's last letter.

Ben Linder, Mirion's brother, was killed this April in the Nicaraguan civil war by the US backed contras.

"Here the letter ends," said Mirion Linder. "It could have gone on."

Ben Linder's letter was a description of his life in a remote northern area of Nicaragua where he employed his skills as a professional engineer towards small scale development projects.

Mirion Linder and Elisabeth Linder, Ben's mother, were speaking and presenting slides last Sunday at the Centennial Library.

The presentation was the end of an exhaustive speaking tour that had raised nearly \$200,000 towards the Ben Linder Memorial Fund.

This fund furthers the developmental projects in the area in which Ben Linder was working.

**Why are there so few oxen? Are people so much cheaper than animals, especially women?**

The Edmonton event was sponsored by the Canadian organization, Farmers for Peace.

Mirion Linder described her 27 year old brother, considered by the contras as a "legitimate target", as a



Ben Linder and Nicaraguan friends

"wonderful person who lived his wonderfulness in all facets of his life and work."

Ben Linder supported the measles inoculation campaign for children by performing juggling and unicycle stunts. He had worked on developmental projects in Nicaragua for three and a half years, prior to his death. He was also an innovator in designing appropriate technology for the impoverished population, said his mother.

Ben Linder's last correspondence was an attempt to explain to his sister his reasons for working in Nicaragua and sense of fulfillment.

The letter spoke of the historical circumstances of the population in the area. "For the cash [the people] desperately needed, they sold themselves to the coffee barons. Sold is the only word for this. To simply say worked would not describe the slave-like work or the sub-human conditions."

"This is the key," the letter continues, "in understanding the historical violence of under-develop-

ment. It is a deeper and more painful violence than guns and helicopters."

The letter described the quality of life for the poor in the area. It provided the daily imagery of overcrowding, lack of sanitation and malnutrition.

He wrote: "The little kids all have the distended stomachs from the parasites of malnutrition."

"But, it is more than health," the letter continued, "for hours each day women carry firewood and water. Why are there so few oxen? Are people so much cheaper than animals, especially women? Why were relatively well planned water systems put in for coffee processing but not for the people? Was coffee and the money it made so much more important than the lives of so many children."

"Education was not needed, neither was health care, nor shoes except for the men in the fields. Neither was a house for the basics of a dignified life."

"All that I write about is a part of a violence that year after year repeated itself. The effects are still deeply woven into many people's lives."

The letter also related the strange quality of the skirmish war in the northern mountains region that made constant caution and vigilance necessary.

Ben Linder died in the contra attack along with two others, Pablo Rosales and Sergio Hernandez, both Nicaraguans, on April 28. After being wounded by grenade shrapnel, he was shot in the head at point blank range.

The three killed and three others were starting a small dam construction at the time of the attack.

Local residents constructed a monument to Linder at the place of his death near the town of San Jose de Bocay. Translated from Spanish, his epitaph reads, "His work will continue."

## Sask. paper reopens

**SASKATOON (CUP)** — Funding to the University of Saskatchewan student newspaper, The Sheaf, was reinstated October 29, one week after the student council had decided to withhold student monies from the paper.

The council voted 21 to 1 in favour of reversing an earlier decision to withhold the Sheaf's budgeted quarterly funding of \$14,125. But the council voted unanimously in favour of forming a committee to identify possible areas of improvement for the paper and the means by which these can be implemented.

"This whole thing was a bad attempt to (sic) the USSU executive to undermine The Sheaf's editorial autonomy," said Richard Sandhurst, co-coordinator of The Sheaf.

Kevin Doherty, USSU president said the council had concerns over The Sheaf's business practices and advertising policy along with "a general dissatisfaction with the end product."

Doherty said he has heard complaints that The Sheaf does not cover enough on-campus activities and that there are "too many social issues of a non-educational nature (and that) The Sheaf is attempting to act as the students' social conscience."

"The fact the USSU executive did not pass on any complaints they may have heard about the paper to us is very disturbing, and comes close to a breach of their responsibility to students of this university," said Sandhurst.

"Personally (I am concerned) with the business practices of The Sheaf," said Doherty.

Sandhurst said The Sheaf is audited annually by Touche-Ross Accountants and that this audit has shown a surplus for the last three

years.

"Doherty disagrees with our ad policy and he wants editorial control," added Sandhurst.

Early in October The Sheaf staff collective decided against publishing a Place Riel Theatre ad they considered sexist. Later, Place Riel cancelled its advertising campaign with The Sheaf for the rest of the year.

"His (Doherty's) opinions of fiscal irresponsibility betray an ignorance of how newspapers operate," said Sandhurst. "Every paper has the right to refuse to run advertising. For example, the Globe and Mail refuses to run tobacco ads."

While both The Sheaf staff and the student council are in favour of the joint committee (which will include Sheaf staff and council members), the paper's staff is still concerned about the decision to pull the funding in the first place.

"That decision was made after council discussed the issue in a closed meeting on October 22. They voted 19 to 6 to withhold the Sheaf's regular quarterly grant without offering any explanation to the newspaper staff."

Students reacted to the move with letters of support for the Sheaf.

"The general consensus (of students) has been that they agree 100 per cent with our right to be autonomous from the student council and that the actions taken against us are wrong," said Sandhurst.

## DIE Board rulings

**DISCIPLINE, INTERPRETATION AND ENFORCEMENT (D.I.E.) BOARD DECISION:**  
Re: Request by David Oginski to Make Submissions to the Discipline, Interpretation and Enforcement Board In Regard to Meeting on 2 September 1987.

Mr. Oginski's request is denied. The Discipline, Interpretation and Enforcement (D.I.E.) Board finds that Mr. Oginski did not make an adequate attempt to inform the Board that he would not be present or to have someone appear on his behalf. In addition, Mr. Oginski did not respond to the Board's invitation to make a request until 19 October 1987. The Board finds this an unreasonable delay.

Respectfully submitted,  
THE DISCIPLINE, INTERPRETATION, AND ENFORCEMENT (D.I.E.) BOARD

Re: Request by Stephen Phillips and Don Davies For a Determination of the Validity of the Current Education Councilors' Seats on Students' Council.

The Discipline, Interpretation and Enforcement (D.I.E.) Board finds Dean Bittner, Derek Hatch, Gavin Heighon, Mark LaGrange and Paul Pallister are valid members of Students' Council for the 1987-88 term. The reasons set down in the Ruling by the Speaker of Students' Council (Students' Council Document SC 87-12.13), on pages 1-8 are adopted by the D.I.E. Board.

Respectfully submitted,  
DISCIPLINE, INTERPRETATION AND ENFORCEMENT (D.I.E.) BOARD

Mungo Hardwicke-Brown  
Chairperson (1987-88)

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