

Speaker relates visit to Nicaragua

By Peter Stanley
Emerald Contributor

The Nicaraguan Contra rebels have failed to accomplish anything constructive in eight years of war, said Witness for Peace volunteer Leone Bicchieri in a talk Tuesday evening.

Bicchieri, who recently returned from eight months in Nicaragua, related his experiences and observations on the Contra war to a group of sixty students.

Living and traveling in the north central region of the country, he met with Contra soldiers numerous times and observed their impact on the country.

"They have very little popular support," he said. "The Contras have never taken a village. They really try to avoid combat with the Sandinistas."

Bicchieri spent most of his time in Waslala, a farming community of about 5000, located within a major corridor of Contra activities. He worked with the Catholic church observing military abuses by either the Contras or the Sandinistas.

The Contra forces engage in kidnapping to recruit soldiers, but others join voluntarily for personal reasons, he said. Some hope to avoid their two-year duty in the Sandinista army. Others join because of relatives in the Contra army,

or because of complaints against the Sandinistas. "Some of these guys have been out here seven years. It's tough. It's very tough," Bicchieri said.

Many Contras have turned themselves in under the amnesty law established by the government, he said, but one Contra told Bicchieri, "We don't want to continue this way. But that's the way it is. We have to do this. We have to just keep killing each other."

"These are the Contras who make us think the war will go on," Bicchieri said. "Our government's created a situation where well-meaning people are on both sides of the battle, slaughtering each other."

Bicchieri contrasted the Contras to the Salvadoran FMLN rebels. The FMLN has massive popular support, and now holds part of the capital city, he said. In their heyday, the Contras were more numerous than the FMLN, and faced a less populated countryside. But still they never took any land, he said.

The Contras lie to villagers in the countryside to gain support, he added. They give false reports about the recent Central American peace talks and the Sandinistas.

Bicchieri said will return to Nicaragua in December to continue his work and observe the Nicaraguan elections.

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Board votes down cigarette sale ban

By Jolie Andrade
Emerald Reporter

At their meeting Wednesday night, the EMU Board of Directors turned down a proposal that would ban the sale of cigarettes from the EMU Main Desk.

The discussion about the cigarette ban took up much of the meeting, with the main focus being a debate between health hazards, and rights of smokers.

The EMU Board received a letter from the American College of Physics encouraging them to rid the EMU of all cigarette and tobacco distributions. The EMU has three vending

machines in use.

Mark Wiegler, EMU Board member, said that taking away the vending machines would result in a \$5,000 to \$8,000 decrease in main desk profits.

Scott Brown, EMU board member, agreed with Wiegler that the vending machines should be kept because profits from cigarette sales may allow the main desk to provide other items at lower cost.

The majority of the board agreed that it was an issue of rights, and consequently voted against the ban of cigarettes.

In other business, the board voted to accept the placing of a mural from MEChA, the His-

panic and Chicano student union, in the stairwell leading to the EMU Ballroom. The board voted to eliminate the numbers associated with Campus Copy, Photo I.D., and Club Sports, and use their names as reference to avoid confusion between rooms and suites with identical numbers.

The board also accepted a tree from the Alpha Lambda Delta/Phi Eta Sigma, a freshman honor society, with the stipulation that it be labeled a season tree and not be over 12 feet.

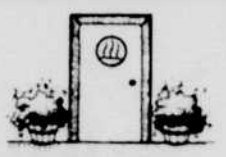
The board rejected a campus board proposal.



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