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Speaker: Nicaraguan hopes tempered

By Laurie Moses

"Working in Nicaragua in literacy campaigns in 1980 was one of the happiest times of my life," Beverly Treumann said. "We taught 85,000 people in Nicaragua, went to every part of Nicaragua and lived with rural families. In the end,

450,000 people passed the literacy courses."

Beverly Treumann has been working in Latin America for the past three years with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

"It worked so well because before the revolution, people lived under

Somoza's rule for 45 years. Our work came on the heels of triumph. Somoza was an easy man to hate. Almost every group was against him, and all that was needed was coordination of the groups. They were against the way he handled business and the mixed economy. They feel that he sold out to the bourgeoisie," Treumann said.

Treumann spoke Monday night at the Nebraska Union. The talk was sponsored by the Latin American Solidarity Committee.

"I don't know what shape the government is in now. No one knows what kind of government it is. Some think it's Socialist, but I'm not sure," she said.

Situation worse

Treumann said she was told to be careful, that things weren't what they were going to be in the future. In 1981 she returned while new challenges were

being felt in Nicaragua. "At first there was a feeling of hope, now hopes have been tempered," Treumann said.

The UUSC is a small organization which works on projects around the world. Treumann was accepted into the organization and she has been to Latin America three times. Countries she has visited include Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

"The Reagan administration feels that these revolutions are a threat to the United States and these governments must be replaced. They back this up with real threats. They want to destabilize Nicaragua by giving Nicaragua \$19 million for covert operations," Treumann said.

"The CIA went to Nicaragua and has introduced a lot of distrust in the Nicaraguan people. Some of the people who would speak out against the government are afraid to because they don't want to be lined up with the CIA," Treumann said.

Help from the church

In 1973 the UUSC worked through the Archbishop of El Salvador to see what could be done there.

"There is a new trend in El Salvador — new to Americans anyway — which is liberal theology. The idea is that God is on the side of the oppressed. People feel that in the Bible the people struggled, and that Christ helped the poor," Treumann said. "This challenged the status quo, this became the revolutionary content of liberal theology."

In Guatemala the combat areas have been abandoned by non-military visitors and the Catholic church is closed there.

"I went to one town with a population of about 500. The military was using the church as an outpost, the soldiers slept there," she said.

"The people in the United States have changed their views, and Reagan is limited in what he can do because of it," Treumann said.

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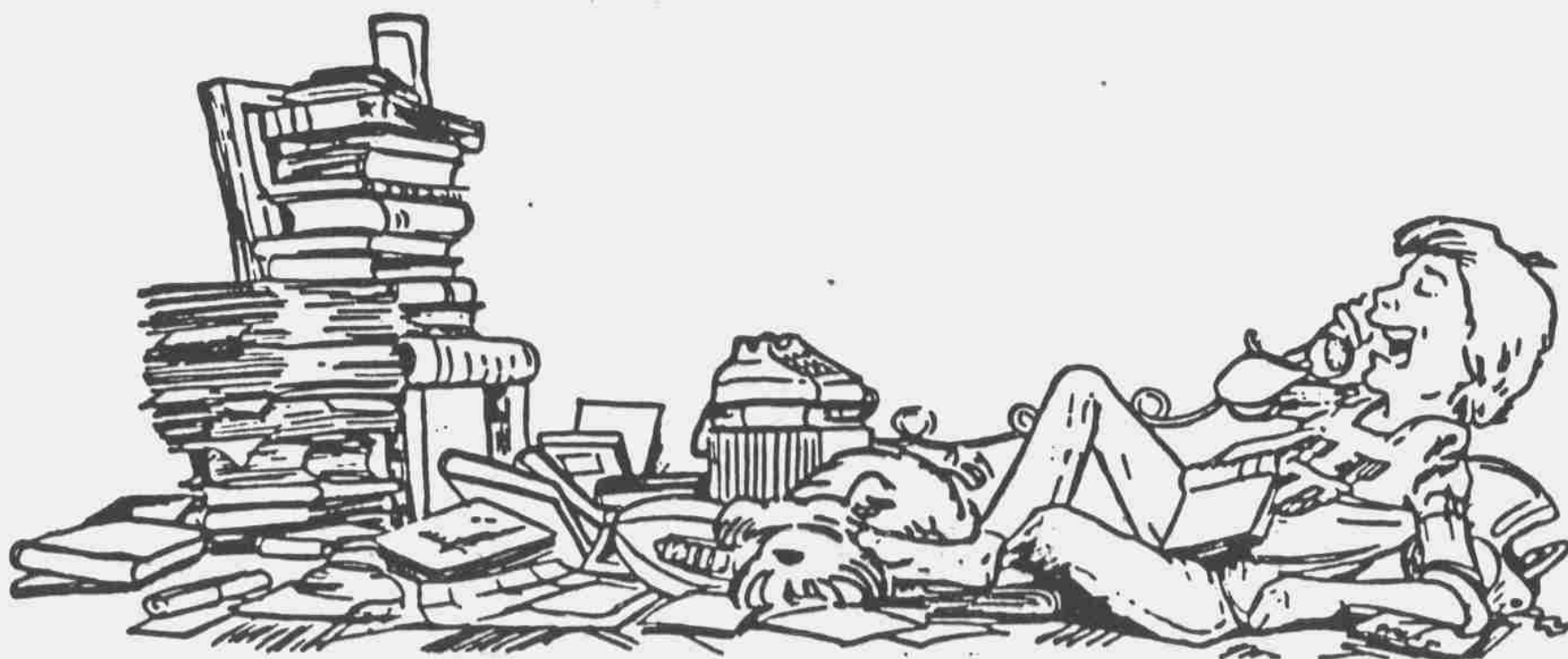
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