

Youth encouraged to take a global view

ffering the effects of years of war and drought, Guatemala is now facing the destructive effects of an unregulated mining industry. In his broken English, Junay told the students that the social impacts of open-pit mining must be addressed. Access to arable land is shrinking and traditional knowledge of agricultural techniques in the region is disappearing as modern agricultural methods take their place.

During the morning session, students also examined other factors that influence global food supplies and some potential solutions. Trade relationships, climate conditions, political conflict and the increased push for agri-fuels have an influence on food supply, they learned. Fair trade and small-scale farming were seen as possible solutions.

In the afternoon, students participated in a number of creative workshops on theatre, digital photography, silk screening and movie-making.

MCIC staff member Zack Gross says the workshops are designed to help students promote things like fair trade in their communities. Gross pointed to Gimli High School's Social Justice Club's recent T-shirt campaign to raise funds for Haiti.

MCIC is a provincial government-created nonprofit organization that distrib-

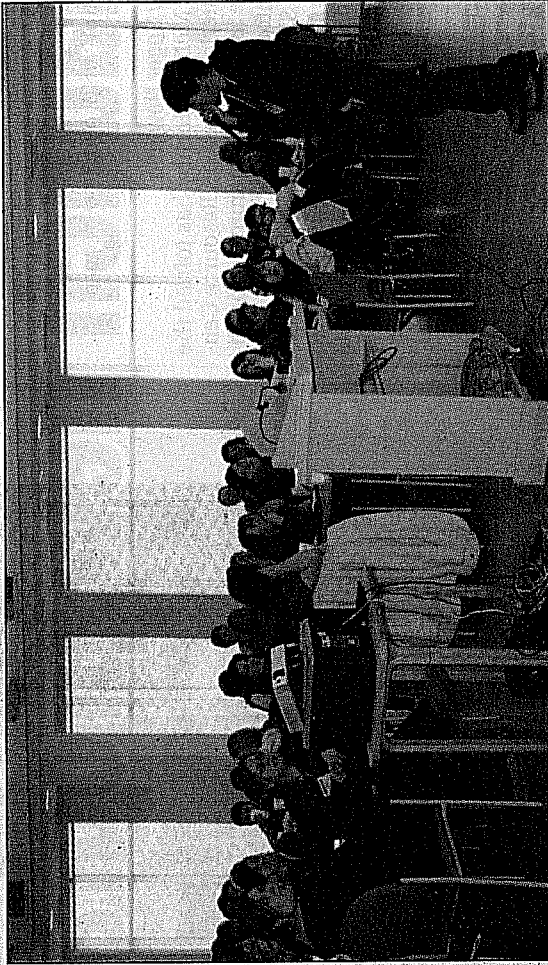
g the way for youth to tackle the problem of the looming global food crisis was the discussion for middle years students in Manitoba and the Interlake as they met in Gimli Jan. 28 to take part in Manitoba's Council for International Cooperation's Young Momentum Conference.

The conference, held at the Waterfront Conference Centre, focussed on the issues surrounding hunger and how students can take action on these issues in their communities.

"We are going to create a world without hunger. It is crucial to get youth involved in the process," MCIC executive director Janice Gross said.

"My young people are more aware of what is happening in the developing world and looking for ways to take action. We are encouraging them the skills and tools they need to succeed," she said.

Guest speaker, Guatemalan Juan Raul Junay brought firsthand knowledge of the struggles of the poor in his native Central America where the annual average family income is \$132. Open-pit mining in his country, he told the students, is having a negative effect on agriculture. After suf-



John Coward

Students listen as Juan Raul Junay tells of the hardships facing the Guatemalan people. Junay was guest speaker at the MCIC conference in Gimli.

ures government funds to a list of more than 41 organizations involved in international development. They also work within Mani-

toba, promoting understanding and engagement on international issues.