

Reagan should not ignore team reports

President Reagan set the stage, but didn't plan for the surprise ending. And in efforts to regain his footing, he is making a bad situation worse.

The Reagan administration encouraged Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos to arrange a presidential election in order to demonstrate Philippine public support for his position. And ever since Marcos announced a presidential contest Nov. 3, the administration has called for a fair and honest election.

The United States organized a 20-member team to travel to the Philippines, observe the election and report abuses to the United States. Reagan even dangled a carrot in front of Marcos' nose in the form of a substantial aid-increase consideration bartered for an election perceived as honest.

But Reagan didn't plan for what happened next. Few, including the Emerald, expected presidential challenger Corazon Aquino to assume an early lead, or any lead for that matter, particularly one reported by the government's vote-counting commission.

To complicate matters, the American team and other observers reported flagrant election-day violations emanating from the Marcos camp including violence, vote buying, ballot-box stuffing and ballot-box theft. Sen. Richard Lugar, who headed the U.S. delegation, reported a "very disturbing pattern of incidents" and accused Marcos and his supporters of withholding ballots in an attempt to manipulate the election.

In addition, 30 workers in the government's vote-counting commission tearfully left their computer terminals, claiming the election results were being falsified to favor Marcos.

The Reagan administration thus found itself faced with a potentially sticky situation. After emphasizing the importance of a credible election, the administration faced a situation in which evidence could indicate an Aquino victory but Marcos could refuse to relinquish power.

So, in an attempt to avoid jeopardizing U.S. military bases, Reagan peered over the corpses of Aquino supporters and the reports of his own commission and said fraud occurred on both sides and that the American team didn't have any "hard evidence beyond that general appearance" of election fraud. He affirmed his desire to maintain diplomatic relations with the Philippine government regardless of the declared winner.

When questioned on his position, he said, "the election... is for the people of the Philippines to decide, and not for us to interfere."

But if Reagan believes it is not the United States' place to interfere, why did he send a U.S. delegation in the first place — particularly if he was prepared to ignore its reports?

And why didn't the administration consider the scenario beforehand? Admittedly, Aquino's success came as a surprise, but the possibility was not so remote as to remove it from consideration.

Understandably, Reagan is in a difficult position. It would be completely inappropriate for the United States to attempt to force Marcos to step down. And economic/diplomatic sanctions could jeopardize strategic military bases in the nation — a risk Reagan firmly disfavours.

But the administration should not trivialize reports of fraud. And if it appears Marcos stole the election from Aquino, the administration should not hesitate to protest — including slashing aid to the Philippines.

It appears Aquino accurately assessed the situation. Referring to the United States, she said, "Its only interest is in safeguarding its bases, not in restoring democracy."



Letters

False statement

This is in response to the letter "Fraternity rape" (ODE, Feb. 10).

The letter was one of many attacks that single out fraternities as the focus of a social problem. Date rape is an important issue, but to ignore the fact that other organizations and dorms have just as many documented cases is not giving justice to the matter.

Simply blaming the fraternity system for an individual matter is like saying the U of O is bad because there have been cases of rape in the dorms. Both statements are unfair.

As far as the problem being overlooked, the Greek system has set up seminars and has information available to its members specifically addressing the problem of "date rape."

Furthermore, there is no fraternities on campus that reprimands its pledges for not getting "laid" or for letting women leave early. As with so many letters written previously about fraternities, the people who submit these letters are misinformed and their statements are false.

It's a pity the media tend to focus on the negative aspects of

Greek life and not on all the positive events that take place. But that's life at the U of O.

Lisa Hastings
Delta Gamma

Doug White
Sigma Chi

Careless deed

On Friday, Jan. 31, shortly before 1:30 p.m., a bomb threat was called that forced the evacuation of Science I, including the Geology building. Two exams were scheduled for that hour in those buildings: Geology 102 and Chemistry 462 (Biochemistry).

The Geology 102 exam was postponed until Monday. Geology 102 is a split-section course, so the coordination of lectures is now disrupted. The Chemistry 462 exam was given in the EMU cafeteria. All normal operations in Science I and Geology ceased for about 45 minutes while the buildings were checked.

The students, staff and faculty listed below wish to express their displeasure at being inconvenienced due to the malicious and selfish actions of some individual who, evidently, has little or no respect for his or her "neighbors" in the University community.

Although it cannot be proved the person who made the threat was a student in either of the two courses, it is probable. This sort of action shows disregard for the rights of other students in those courses who were prepared and wanted to complete the examinations at the scheduled times and places.

The message we wish to send to the perpetrator of the bomb threat is simple: "We have no respect for anyone who would infringe in this way upon the rights of others."

Sarah L. Ulerick
Faculty

Joseph M. Greeley
Student

Marc Hirschmann
GTF

Janet Tansy
Student

M. Allen Kays
Faculty

Sheila Monroe
GTF

Bill Clingman
GTF

C.D. Hull
GTF

James W. Long
Faculty

Library reply

Regarding Blake Louis Sliter's letter to the editor (Feb. 6) concerning the loss of nickels in library photocopies:

Mr. Sliter, in a letter delivered to the University librarian's office, indicated he had lost 15 cents since the beginning of winter quarter. In a letter of response to Mr. Sliter, he was assured the library would gladly refund his money and be willing to discuss any other problems he might have had.

George Bynon
Director, University Library
Administrative Services

Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style. Letters to the editor should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300, EMU.

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