

# U.S. role in Philippine election sparks a variety of comments

By Amy Moss

Of the Emerald

Ferdinand Marcos declared himself winner of the Feb. 7 presidential elections in the Philippines on Saturday. The announcement means that Marcos, already in power for the last 20 years, will serve another six years.

His opponent, Corazon Aquino, accuses Marcos of stealing the election and held a rally Sunday at which her supporters endorsed her as the winner.

President Reagan denounced the election Saturday, saying that "...the elections were marred by widespread fraud and violence perpetrated largely by the ruling party." Previously, Reagan declared there was no strong evidence of fraud, despite findings by the 20-member team sent to observe the election that fraud had occurred in favor of Marcos.

Campus-area students have differing opinions regarding what actions the U.S. should take on reports of the fraudulent election.

Andrew Morehouse, a senior studying pre-med, believes preventative action in the form of observers possibly would have prevented fraud.

## Streetwise

"Maybe they could hold another election and have more observers of the ballot boxes if that's what it takes to have a fair election," Morehouse said.

"We should confront Marcos," said Dominic O'Dierno, a freshman studying music. "We should threaten to stop aid and put some pressure on Marcos."

Bonnie Plant, a junior studying psychology, believes that while the election presents a difficult situation, Reagan should take responsibility for his statements of wanting a fair election. But Plant believes involvement by the United States should not go too far.

"I don't think we should step in and legislate democracy," Plant said. "If (the Filipino people) don't want Marcos, they should kick him out themselves."

"Economic action is probably one of our only choices," said Ian Barrett, a junior studying telecommunications. Barrett believes reports of a fraudulent election should be met with reduced aid in certain areas, but he adds that "whoever won, the loser would say it isn't fair."

Brian Chilcote, a senior studying geography, sympathizes with the difficult position the U.S. government is in.

"I think they are handling it as well as they can by publicly denouncing it. It's tough to go in there and say let's do it over, especially with the Philippines being so strategic," Chilcote said. He added that the U.S. should let the Philippines have some autonomy.

Idrus Shahab, a senior studying philosophy, agrees with letting the Philippines have independence by not becoming involved.

"Exploitation of the Third World by the U.S. has already

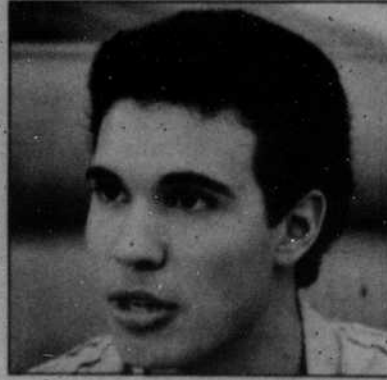


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been too much," he said. "It's very strange for me to see that the Americans sent a committee to observe the elections," said T.Y. Yoon, who is seeking his masters in business. He believes the United States does not have any intent to help the Philippines move towards democracy. "The more basic intent (of the United States) is for

their own interests," Yoon said. Bill Ullman asked whether the United States should support a regime that is "totally inept." He believes the United States should cut economic aid. "From the reports brought back it would appear that it's a dictatorship. It's hypocritical to send a watchdog over there and then not use it."



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