

Editorial

Offering ex-leaders refuge a good move

The United States put its jets to good use this month. Both Ferdinand Marcos and Jean-Claude Duvalier gave up power with help from Uncle Sam.

Marcos stole the Philippine presidential election. Pressure from Corazon Aquino's grass-roots protest and a military rebellion swelled. The Reagan administration urged Marcos to step down and offered him asylum in exchange for a speedy and bloodless departure.

Wednesday, Philippine time, Marcos and his family fled the country aboard U.S. aircraft and are now sheltered in Guam, a U.S. territory. Marcos probably will receive permanent refuge in the United States.

And earlier this month, the United States engineered the flight of Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier from Haiti. Duvalier's ruthless regime ended as he and his wife boarded a U.S. plane to France.

Marcos and Duvalier are prominent human rights abusers. Certainly neither man deserved help from the United States. But consider the alternative:

Both leaders would have been ousted without U.S. involvement. But probably only after a long and bloody revolution. Civil war likely would have erupted in the Philippines.

Creative U.S. intervention prevented unnecessary bloodshed. It removed each country's target of hatred and diffused two volatile situations.

In addition, Haiti and the Philippines are now free to follow the leaders of their choice and pursue democratic governments. And both countries likely will reach a state of stability more rapidly.

Of course not every deposed leader should receive U.S. assistance. The United States must weigh the likely outcomes of such actions carefully. In the cases of Haiti and the Philippines, a good chance exists that better governments will develop. The countries stand to excel.

And U.S. intervention should be limited. Providing the means of escape in the face of a full-scale revolution is different from toppling a government or forcing a leader out.

One issue remains. Marcos was offered asylum in the United States and Duvalier was not. The United States should have opened its borders to Duvalier.

Why? As The New York Times editors aptly put it, if Duvalier had known beforehand that France would be unable to find a nation to accept him, he may not have fled.

Judge minimizes crime by trusting convicted rapist

A Benton County Circuit judge has trivialized the issue of rape.

Michael Lott, 19, was convicted of first-degree rape, first-degree sexual abuse and first-degree burglary in January. Circuit Judge Robert Gardner postponed sentencing and agreed to let Lott travel to Maryland for treatment at Johns Hopkins University Medical School in Baltimore. Lott will receive psychological testing at the school's sexual disorder clinic.

Allowing a first time offender to obtain treatment before sentencing is reasonable. However, Gardner originally told Lott to travel to Maryland unsupervised. Even after vehement protest from groups that fight sexual violence, Gardner modified his decision only to require Lott's father to accompany him.

Gardner even reduced Lott's bail by \$10,000 to help Lott's family pay for the two trips.

Apparently, Gardner doesn't think rape is a serious crime. Convicted rapists should not be allowed to travel across the country without the supervision of a professional security guard. Lott faces a maximum penalty of 45 years in prison and a \$300,000 fine — probably enough to encourage Lott to consider escape.

Gardner risked Lott's escape, and with it, the chance that he will rape again.

Worse, the incident traumatized Lott's victim. The victim's best interests should have governed Gardner's actions, not the perpetrator's.

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.



"IT'S FRANCE. THEY WANNA KNOW IF WE'LL ACCEPT 'BABY DOC' DUVALIER ..."

Letters

Parking supply

As any economics and non-economics major knows, there is a law of supply and demand — the trick is to achieve a happy medium. What I see, though, is the opposite — a limited amount of parking spaces for an even greater amount of students, especially at 8:30 a.m.

Don't say I should come earlier — if you say 6:30 a.m., I'll tell you some of us have to work then. Besides, who wants to arrive in the dark?

I received a citation while attending my 8:30 a.m. class — I never had a chance to move my car. I guess my priorities are wrong in that I should have spent another 30 minutes circling the campus before giving up desperately (never mind that cars could still go around my Rabbit).

The fact that I paid \$18 for a year's use frustrates me. As I live and work off-campus, I would like to be able to park my car near my classes in Gilbert Hall, especially when I'm on campus until dark. I don't think it's too much to ask, especially

when I use the bus the rest of the time (I know, the lot in Taylor's is open at 6 p.m., but who has time to move cars?).

I suggest we either create more spaces or increase the price of the permits. I like the latter, as it's in line with the theory of supply and demand. If you raise the price high enough, eventually you'll take care of the "problem" demand.

Margaret McKenney
Business

Misconception

Regarding Jon Wollander (ODE, Feb. 13) and his "endangered species... the pre-born human being" misconception:

Jon, you have less sense than the lemmings.

Kay Wells
Eugene

Frankenstein

I know, I know, it's hard to come up with a good, exciting, controversial subject to write an editorial about every day of the week. That was very evident in your attack on OSPIRC (ODE,

Feb. 7). I think you are trying to give life to a Frankenstein, dead on the table until some mad editor comes along to give it a jolt in the electrodes!

Sure, OSPIRC is important to students. But nobody was pulling out their hair for the last 15 years because OSPIRC has had a rent-free office in the EMU basement. This whole "controversy" came about through an arbitrary decision this year to discontinue rent-free status to groups based on whether the groups are incorporated or not. OSPIRC doesn't feel this is a valid basis upon which to discriminate, and so they appealed. Big deal.

One thing I don't appreciate is the way the editorial makes OSPIRC out to be some sort of sinister group, intent on ripping off the student body for every last penny they can get.

In point of fact, the \$1 each student pays to support OSPIRC is the same amount students paid 15 years ago! Inflation aside, if the group will have to begin to pay rent starting this year, as you suggest, that gives all the more validity to their request for additional funds.

Randy MacDonald
Eugene

Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday except during exam week and vacations by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices on the third floor of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

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News and Editorial: 686-5511
Display Advertising and Business: 686-3712
Classified Advertising: 686-4343
Production: 686-4381
Circulation: 686-5511