

Marcos presidency absolute mockery

Just when you think the world cannot get any more foolish, something comes along to sink politics to an all-new moronic level.

Imelda Marcos, the woman who single-handedly kept shoe manufacturers in the black for years, announced Monday she wants to run for president of the Philippines.

You gotta be kidding.

The word audacity comes to mind. So does idiocy. A Marcos candidacy is a perverse example of Andrew Jackson's "anybody can be president" ideal.

Since she and her husband Ferdinand were ousted from power in 1986, Marcos has lived in exile. She returned to the Philippines to face charges that she helped bilk the country for billions.

The 21-year Marcos legacy bankrupted the country. In her speech, Marcos said she was running because

Corazon Aquino's administration had ignored the suffering of the country's downtrodden. What she conveniently ignored is that her husband's regime created the suffering of the poor.

And unbelievably, Marcos has support in her homeland. Nobody is declaring her a lock for the presidency, or even the front-runner, but in the sordid world of Filipino politics, where voting blocks are bought and sold as on a stock market, anything can happen.

Simply put, if Marcos wins, the United Nations should erect a naval blockade around the islands until the country comes to its collective senses. Ferdinand and Imelda were eerily similar to Louis XIV and Marie Antoinette. Revolution felled both regimes — in part caused by Imelda's and Marie's "let them eat cake" attitudes.

Just like Louisiana shunned (eventually) David Duke, the Philippines needs to send Imelda and her 1,200 pairs of shoes packing, again.

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OPINION

Mario and Godot: kissin' cousins



THE FINE PRINT

BY DON PETERS

Face it folks. He ain't comin'. Not then. Not now. Probably not ever.

Mario Cuomo, the five-year Godot of the Democratic party, isn't going to show up for the '92 rat race. He wouldn't join the crowd in 1988. Don't look for him in 1996.

But no matter how many times Mario says no, people don't believe him.

"I'm not running," Mario says.

"Yeah, sure babe, whatever," says constituent wearing "Cuomo 88-92-96" campaign button.

"No, really," Mario says.

"We believe you," constituent answers, just before running off to a Draft Cuomo rally.

He bowed out last week, but fellow Democrats still won't leave him alone. Cuomo had to quash a favorite-son movement Monday, and formally take his name off New York's primary ballot.

Enough already. Forget it. He's history.

Since his 1984 speech at the Democratic national convention, Cuomo has been the party's heir apparent. His personal charm, politically correct social views and speaking ability had party regulars frothing at the mouth and rival presidential hopefuls scared as hell.

Nobody can beat Mario in a

debate. Conventional thinking had Cuomo entering the race ('88 or '92 — whatever) and in the first televised debate, making the Six Dwarfs look like pre-pubescent morons with speech impediments.

But it was, after all, just one speech. His checkered political career has been largely ignored, lost in the savior-like glow of his magnetism.

The infatuation with Cuomo is not without historical precedent. In 1896, William Jennings

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Bryan titillated the crowd with his "cross of gold" speech. The Democrats, lost in the euphoria of the moment, proceeded to nominate him for president three out of the next four elections.

He bombed every time, falling to such notable Williams as McKinley (twice) and Taft — a

losing streak since matched only by the Denver Broncos. Bryan's only other historical contribution is getting clubbed by Clarence Darrow in the Scopes Monkey Trial.

Mario knows his history. One speech does not a career make. Eventually, the political success of the candidate enters the fray. And there, Mario falls short.

The economy, or lack thereof, is going to be the major issue of the '92 presidential campaign. There, the other candidates are laps ahead of Mario. Bob Kerry is a senator, Paul Tsongas and Jerry Brown have been out of politics for years, Douglas Wilder's state is doing OK, and Tom Harkin and Bill Clinton come from states (Iowa and Arkansas, respectively) which don't really have economies.

Unfortunately for the Democrats, New York does have an economy — and a bad one at that. The state is mired in debt and just had its bond rating lowered to a level which would excite Ivan Boskey.

Though it strikes as a little bit of arrogance born from insecurity, Bush campaign workers were actually sorry to see Mario go. George's economic prowess is sure to be thrown in his face, and Cuomo is the only candidate whose fiscal impairment is even worse than Bush's.

So end the Mario Watch. Cuomo ain't comin'. Democrats; suck it up and nominate somebody who really wants the job.

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