

# Opinion

## U.S. wants Marcos despite overt house hunting

Former Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos is searching for a home after being shot down by Panama.

**Scott Sutherland**  
Guest Columnist

As one administration official put it, Marcos had all the right credentials for residency in Panama — a hefty bank account. What's the beef? Why would a country that had no qualms about providing a home for the famous Shah of Iran balk at Marcos?

It's possible that Panama, while being pressured on the one hand to take the deposed kleptocrat also may have been pressured to refuse him. The Reagan administration's speaking with a forked tongue was justified. With more and more evidence of Marcos' thievery pouring in everyday, the Reagan administration had good reason to keep Marcos here.

The Panamanians cited public unrest at the suggestion of bringing Marcos as their major reason for not accepting the "world's political garbage." But when the deposed Shah was running from the bloodthirsty followers of the Ayatollah, Panama didn't even flinch at the thought of the public unrest that might ensue. Nor did they mind playing the role of trash receptacle.

Philippines Senator Jovito R. Salonga, the self-proclaimed Marcos buster, has already discovered that Marcos stole millions from the Filipino government. Marcos allegedly used some of the loot to garner real estate, homes, boats, businesses, rare books, paintings, flowers and thousands of shoes for Imelda.

Apparently, a great deal of the booty came from bribes or kickbacks that Marcos forced from American companies wanting to do business in the Philippines. But the majority of the dough came directly from the Philippines treasury.

Now the Aquino government wants it back.

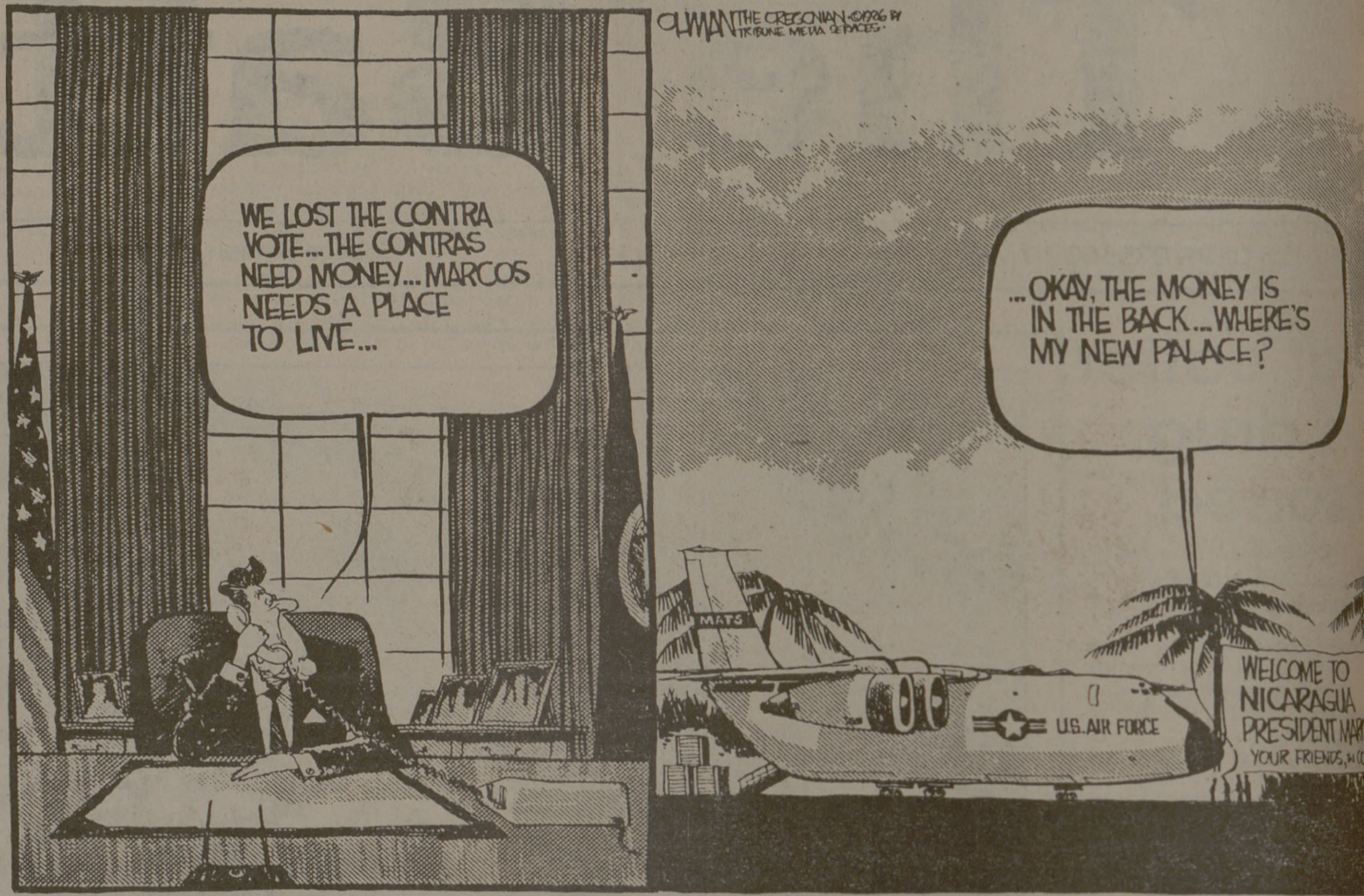
Unfortunately for the Philippines, when they let Marcos go they may have let him go for good. At the time of the revolution, Aquino just wanted to get rid of the creep and avoid violence. But the evidence of pilferage is increasing every day and Aquino would like to have him back. But the Philippines have a limited amount of extradition treaties. They don't even have one with the United States, much less Panama. If he stays in this country, Aquino can always rely on the possibility of the Reagan administration surrendering Marcos. Panama might not be as willing.

In addition to stealing the Philippines funds, Salonga charges that Marcos stole millions, maybe billions of dollars in U.S. aid.

This hoodwinkery was discovered after Salonga reviewed only 20 percent of the evidence against the former ruler. If the remaining evidence, believed to be lying in Swiss vaults, proves as damaging, Marcos will be in real trouble. It appears now that Salonga will have access to that evidence now that Swiss officials have announced a willingness to cooperate.

And as if allegations of theft and fraud weren't enough, reports of mass graves are surfacing. Should those graves turn out to be filled with former enemies of Marcos, then he may find himself in front of a judge pronto.

Marcos swiped his cash from U.S. bankers, businesses and taxpayers. And it was legislators who provided the funds that Marcos stole. No doubt as the results of inquiries come rolling in, American voters will get restless. Voters will want someone to be held responsible. If there is no Marcos to berate and parade across television screens, then attention may focus on congressmen.



For Reagan and other Republicans, this would not be a good thing. Especially since the Republicans in the Senate will be facing a run for their lives in 1986. Better to have Marcos close at hand just in case.

The chances that Marcos might end up in court aren't the long shot they once seemed. Although attorneys acknowledge that Iran's effort to recoup the Shah's losses fizzled, they admit that court obstacles can be overcome if the United States government takes the

right posture. Besides, American courts might be inclined to be more amiable to the friendly Aquino government than they were to the radical Ayatollah regime.

For now it seems the administration is keeping its options open. The Reagan administration wouldn't be comfortable asking a country to take Marcos and then two weeks later having to ask for him back. It would greatly impugn any country's dignity if first it had to look like a pawn for acquiescing and accepting

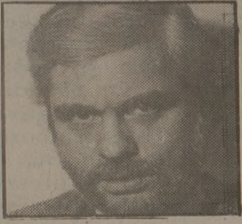
Marcos, only to have to turn around and look foolish giving him back.

Just how long Marcos will be able to avoid a day in court is hard to say. But becomes ever clearer that the administration overtly will keep up appearances by searching for a home for Marcos. Surely they may like him just where he is, slipping Mai Tai's on U.S. soil.

**Scott Sutherland is a senior journalism major and assistant city editor for The Battalion.**

## Administration's anti-porn effort epic hypocrisy

Behold the most recent issue of *Penthouse* Magazine and a gamey one it is. There is a partially clad wench on the cover, a story about "North Carolina's Holy War on Sex," something about Sikh terrorists being trained in the United States and, in this magazine so dirty that it has been condemned by the government's commission on pornography, a book excerpt written by, of all people, William F. Buckley Jr.



**Richard Cohen**

Yes, William F. Buckley. The conservative columnist. The novelist. The host of "Firing Line." The editor of *The National Review* and, along with his wife, Pat, a close friend of Nancy and Ronald Reagan and a frequent visitor to the White House. That William F. Buckley.

And, yes, that *Penthouse*. The same magazine cited on page 9 of the draft report prepared by the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography — the part dealing with soft-core pornography. In the draft, the commission states that 7-Eleven stores "are the leading retailers of soft-core porn magazines in America" and "the single most important outlet" for *Penthouse*. "Profits made by 7-Eleven on porn run into the millions." In case you don't get the commission's drift, *Penthouse* is porn.

But is it? The truth is that I don't know. I know it is what we used to call dirty because, to paraphrase Justice Potter Stewart, I know dirty when I see it — and I see it all over this particular issue of *Penthouse*. The letters are pornographic, the photos of naked woman are lewd and the cartoons are just plain dumb. Yet there is also fiction by Buckley — an excerpt from his latest novel. Whatever it is, it is not pornographic and neither, for that matter, was Buckley's

July 1984, *Penthouse* piece on Jesse Jackson — although, truth be known, I'm just guessing there. I never read it.

It takes Buckley in his role as fellow traveler of porn (a Pornko) to point up both the absurdity of the Reagan administration's anti-porn effort and, if I may be so bold, its epic hypocrisy. Not only is the president's pal-cum-intellectual-mentor writing for a magazine his official censors consider pornographic, but so for that matter does his son. Young Ron now toils for *Playboy*. Like me and Saul Bellow, he is a writer.

Censors, though, are totally without subtlety. They don't realize that the president is not serious about pornography, otherwise, as day follows night, he would banish Buckley and his son from the White House — or make them both wear bags over their heads. Instead, the censors take both the president and Ed Meese at their word. They have made up their minds about *Penthouse*, *Playboy* and similar magazines. They have

already defined pornography as "a serious national problem" and have been up to their ears in smut trying to do something about it. They would dearly love to censor. Only the Constitution stands in their way. Darn!

But others have already been moved to action. In Washington, for instance, the two largest drug store chains have stopped selling *Playboy*, *Penthouse* and similar magazines. The result of all this misplaced moral piety is that you now can not buy either Bill Buckley or Ron Reagan in many a Washington drugstore. That might not seem too serious a blow. But if the present rules were in effect in September 1983, you would have had a difficult time finding the *Playboy* interview with members of the Nicaraguan junta — the same interview the president cited in his recent television speech to the nation. The same holds true for Jimmy Carter's famous lust-in-my-heart interview.

To all this, the president and his min-

ions turn away — saying nothing of half of the free flow of ideas. Meanwhile in Washington, the yahoos of the right prove once again that the First Amendment has no key on a drugstore register. The administration thumps family values and seeks, with a commission, to prove that pornography is damaging. Maybe. But what is inarguably damaging is censorship — clumsy attempts at it. That's been proven time and time again.

If I were William F. Buckley, filthy rich and world renowned, I'd be damned if I would let my writing appear in *Penthouse*. Instead, I might sit down and pen a letter to my friend the president, show him what happens when the government sic the dogs of censorship on the public's right to know: To read William F. Buckley, you have to go to a bookstore.

**Richard Cohen is a columnist for the Washington Post Writers Group.**

## Mail Call

### Texas before God?

EDITOR:

In the following rhetoric, I do not wish to make a "mountain out of a mole hill." I simply wish to raise a question that I have been pondering. I realize that behind every argument is someone's ignorance; therefore, the point I am trying to make may seem ignorant or even ridiculous to some — oh well.

On April 21, Texas A&M will take a day off to celebrate the Texas Sesquicentennial. However, classes will not be cancelled to celebrate Good Friday. Therefore it could appear to some, that in the eyes of the higher-ups at this University, Texas is more important than God.

Couldn't this be taking "state pride" just a bit too far?

**Brad Weir**  
Class of '86

### Tooting our own horns

EDITOR:

When I first read Carl Krieger's letter in Monday's *Battalion*, I thought that he was engaged in satirical writing, but on a second reading, I believe that he was actually serious. Krieger implies that the rights of multinational corporations are more important than the civil rights of black South Africans. He goes on to state that black a takeover in South Africa would result in total chaos, and that blacks are incapable of inventing so much as a written language. He concludes that blacks in fact "... owe the white minority a huge cultural debt and should at least have the courtesy to wait for the abolition of apartheid."

As a white who lived and worked in Africa for a year, I want to state that the author of this letter is, among other things, grossly misinformed. Africans indeed have their own written languages. His assumption that South Africa would plunge into absolute chaos is ludicrous. Zimbabwe, formerly the nation of Rhodesia, underwent successful transition from white minority rule to black majority rule.

Neither South African blacks nor blacks anywhere owe the white man a "huge cultural debt." Jane Jacqz, in her review of Dr. Joyce Mook's book,

"Understanding Households and Farming Systems," indicates that poor approaches by international donor projects have contributed to the problem of, rather than the solution to, hunger in Africa. The famines that plague Africa regularly hardly existed before European colonial interference. Colonialists were responsible for destroying African rural culture and nomadic lifestyles in favor of developing cash crop economies. Today Africa finds itself increasingly dependent on foreign aid for its very survival. And for this, the blacks owe us a cultural debt?

**John Wendt**  
Graduate Student  
Soil and Crop Sciences

### Best of 'Police Beat'

EDITOR:

With all the negative letters being written to *The Battalion*, I feel it is time for me to speak out in support of Texas A&M's fine newspaper.

I particularly enjoy the continuing adventure of "Police Beat." What student can keep a straight face while reading "Police Beat's" immortal classics?

Classics such as:

- That footloose yet hardened criminal himself, the "nude man in Hensel Park."
- The wretched resident of Schuhmacher Hall who has "been scheduled for termination."
- The dastardly incident in which three male hoodlums, devoid of clothing, terrorized the MSC, even "knocking over checkcashing signs."
- "Police Beat" is truly a highpoint of my day and so is your newspaper. Carry on!

**Paul Hatley**

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

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Opinions expressed in *The Battalion* are those of the Editorial Board or the author and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDowell Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.