



# People Power in the Philippines

February 22-25, 1986

January 16-20, 2001

April 25-May 1, 2001



# The 1986 Philippines Uprising: People Power 1

- For five days in February 1986, hundreds of thousands of people gathered at the intersection of Ortigas Avenue and Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA). They helped overthrow Ferdinand Marcos, dictator for over 20 years.







# Ferdinand Marcos

- Ferdinand Marcos was the tenth president of the Philippines
- His term lasted from December 30, 1965 to February 25, 1986.
- To keep himself in power, he implemented martial law and built an authoritarian regime.





# Ferdinand Marcos

- President 1965-1986
- 1<sup>st</sup> president to be reelected
- 1972 Declares martial law
- 1983: had Ninoy Aquino  
assassinated
- 1985: pressured to have  
snap elections
- 1986: lost elections



# “Black Friday”

- Six people killed by police attack on protests near Malacañang presidential palace







**THE DEEDS  
OF  
MALACANANG**

**Under the Direct of Martial Law  
JAN. 25-30, 1970: STATE OF THE NATION**







# MARCOS & HITLER ARE ALIKE!

THE STREETS OF OUR COUNTRY ARE IN TURMOIL, THE UNIVERSITIES ARE FILLED WITH STUDENTS RIOTING AND REBELLING; COMMUNISTS ARE SEEKING TO DESTROY OUR COUNTRY . . . WE NEED LAW AND ORDER . . . YES, WITHOUT LAW AND ORDER . . . THE REPUBLIC WILL FALL. ELECT US AND WE SHALL RESTORE LAW AND ORDER.

— **ADOLF HITLER**  
(HAMBURG, 1932)



. . . LAWLESS ELEMENTS . . . HAVE ENTERED INTO CONSPIRACY AND HAVE IN FACT JOINED AND Banded THEIR FORCES TOGETHER . . . (TO) SUPPLANT OUR EXISTING POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND LEGAL ORDER . . . LAWLESS ELEMENTS HAVE CREATED A STATE OF LAWLESSNESS AND DISORDER AFFECTING *PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE SECURITY OF THE STATE* . . . PUBLIC SAFETY AND REQUIRES THAT IMMEDIATE AND EFFECTIVE ACTION BE TAKEN IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN PEACE AND ORDER . . .

— **FERDINAND E. MARCOS**  
(MALACAÑANG PALACE, AUGUST 21, 1971)

**Filipino People, Unite!**  
**Oppose the Puppet Clique of Marcos, Hitler**



# PAGLINGKURAN ANG SAMBAYANAN



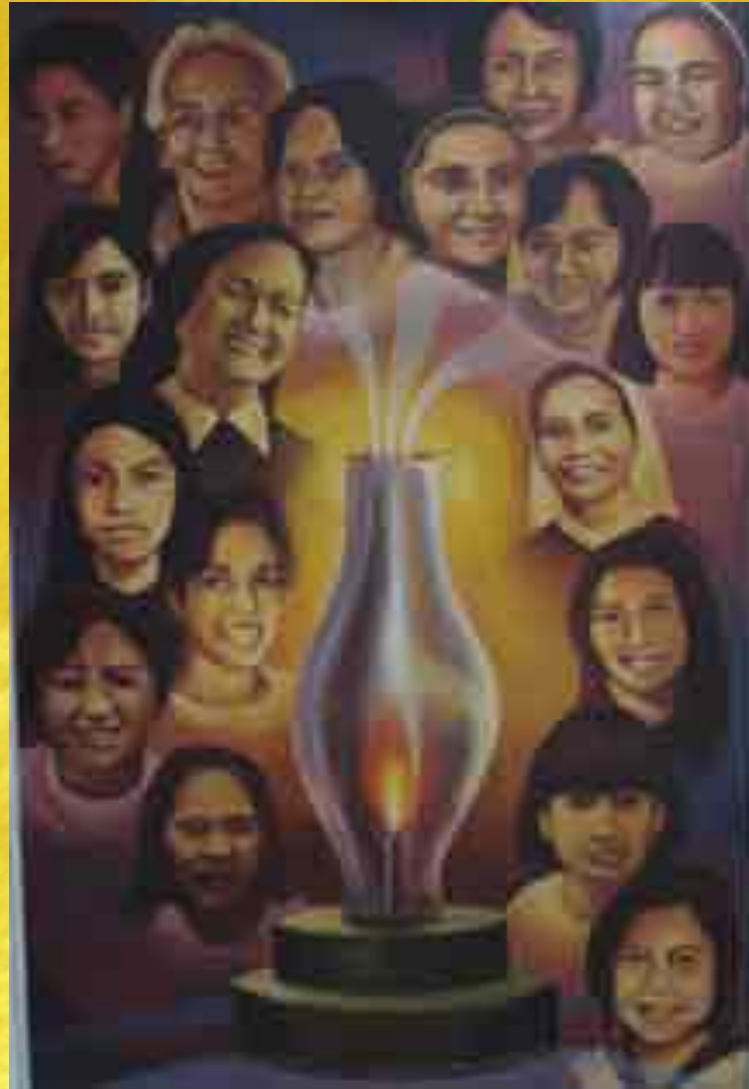
# Artists



One estimate put the number of theater groups at 400 by 1987.



# Martyrs



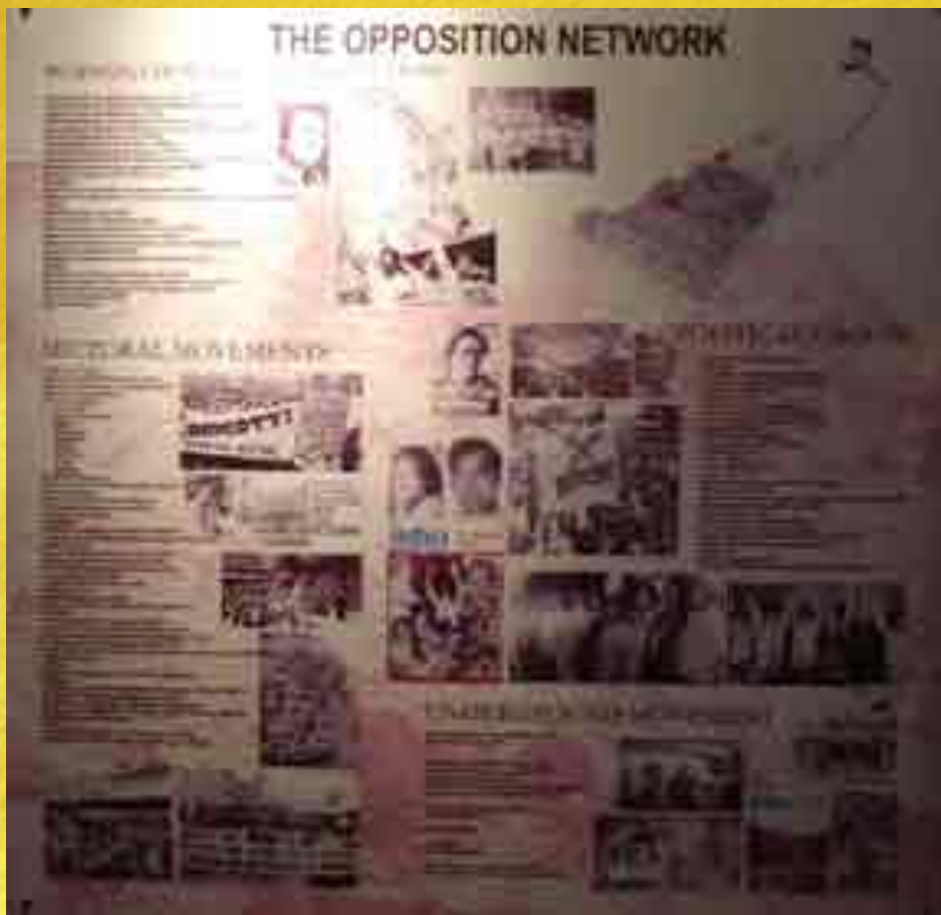




# Torture under Marcos





# The Opposition




Ferdinand Marcos' main opponent was Benigno Aquino. Known as "Ninoy" he was a leading opposition politician.



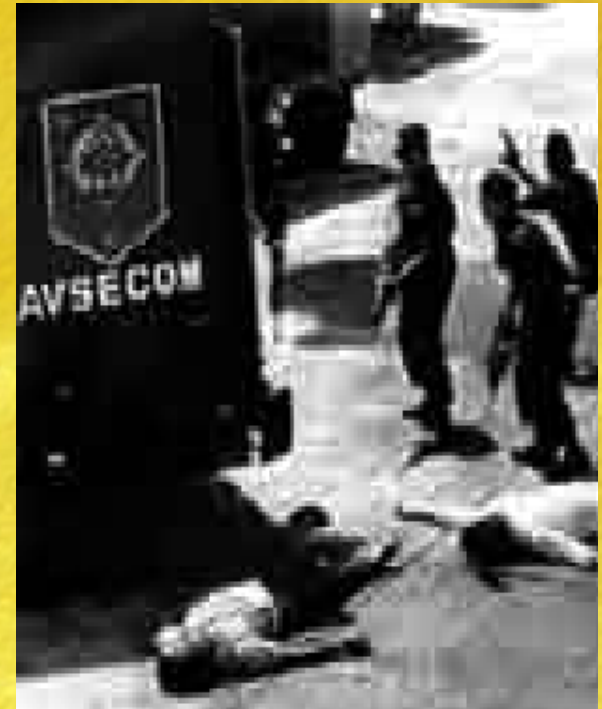


# Aquino in Newton, Massachusetts

- Ferdinand Marcos faced a growing problem. He had to find a way to suppress Benigno Aquino.
  - To get rid of Aquino, Marcos declared martial law in 1972 and imprisoned Aquino on murder charges.
  - In 1978, from his prison cell, Ninoy was allowed to take part in the elections for Interim Batasang Pambansa (Parliament).
  - Aquino was sentenced to death in 1977, but because of a heart problem he was sent into exile for medical treatment in the United States in 1980.
- 

# The Return

- After three years of exile in the US, Benigno Aquino made an attempt to enter the Philippines.
- The Marcos regime warned all international airlines who might carry Aquino that they would be sanctioned and forced to return if they flew him to the Philippines.
- On his arrival in the Philippines, Aquino was fatally shot in the head despite the presence of his own security guards and government troops on the tarmac. This took place on August 21, 1983.





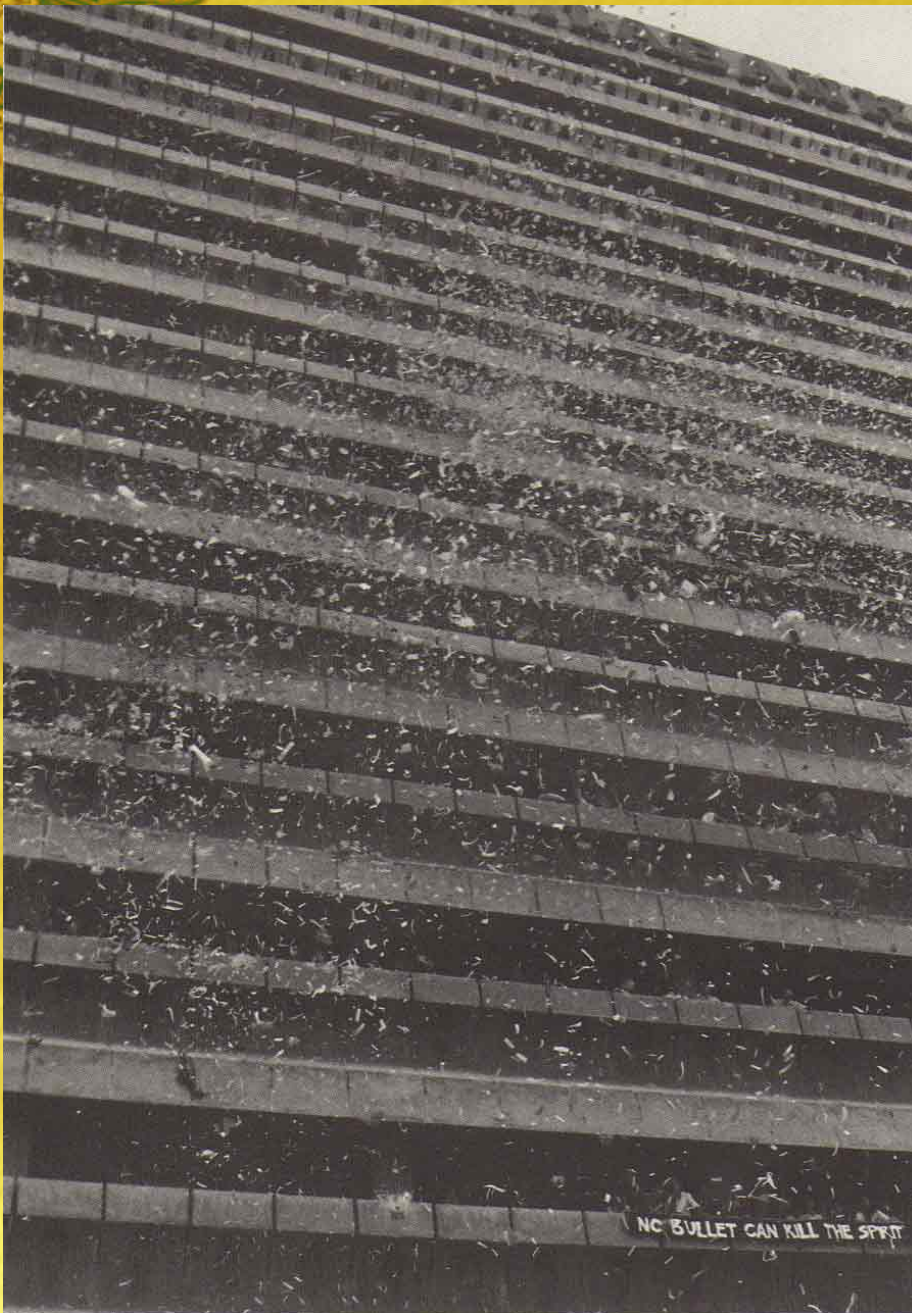
# Ninoy's Funeral

More than one million people (some say twice that number) attended his funeral procession, undeterred by torrential rain.

For the first time, office workers, business executives, housewives, and teachers joined protests normally confined to students, unions, and leftists.







At the forefront of opposition to Marcos stood the Makati Business Club, leaving little doubt that the nation's economic elite was perceived the murder of Aquino as the last straw in Marcos' total mismanagement of the nation.


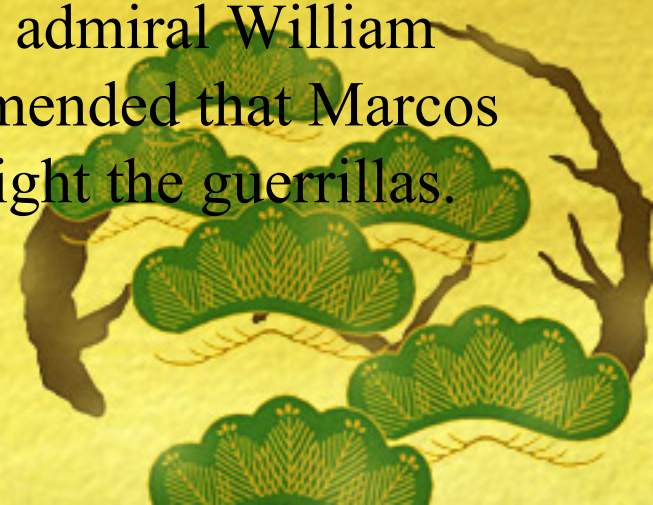

At an appointed hour every Wednesday and Friday, prominent businessmen ordered work stopped as tons of yellow confetti rained down from Makati's high rise buildings, a regular ritual that spread to other parts of Manila and as far south as Davao in Mindanao.



# Opposition Grows

Benigno Aquino's assassination caused massive unrest in the Philippines. The military was restive for many reasons. The Catholic Church opposed Marcos. Soon after Ninoy's assassination, his wife, Corazon Aquino (popularly known as Cory), arrived in Manila and continued her dead husband's campaign.





As early as June 1984, a secret study by the US Embassy blamed Marcos for the Communists' growing influence. After the assassination of Benigno Aquino in August 1983, Washington had become increasingly aloof. A secret NSC memo issued in November 1984 urged US intervention in Philippine politics: "we are urging revitalization of democratic institutions, dismantling of 'crony' monopoly capitalism and allowing the economy to respond to market forces." Using its Embassy staff as point men and women, Washington quietly and overtly began to undermine Marcos' rule. Marcos' incompetence was also noted in 1985 by US admiral William Crowe, chair of the joint chiefs, who recommended that Marcos be retired in order for the military to better fight the guerrillas.



# Economic Decline

Table : Foreign Direct Investments (US\$ millions)

	1980	1985	1990	1995	1997
Indonesia	<b>180</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>1,092</b>	<b>4,346</b>	<b>4,677</b>
Thailand	<b>189</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>2,562</b>	<b>2,068</b>	<b>3,626</b>
Philippines	<b>-106</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>1,459</b>	<b>1,249</b>

Source: UNCTAD as quoted in Dae-oup Chang, “Neoliberal Restructuring of Capital Relations in East and South-East Asia,” in *Neoliberalism: A Critical Reader* edited by Alfredo Saad-Filho and Deborah Johnston (London: Pluto Press, 2005) p. 254.



# Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM)

- RAM's secret network (conservatively estimated to include 5,000 of all 15,000 officers in the military) was organized by Gregorio Honasan and a few co-conspirators. They vowed to accept no personal rewards for their efforts. Instead they decided on a transitional government that included Cory Aquino, Cardinal Sin, Juan Ponce Enrile, and army chief of staff Fidel Ramos.
- During years of preparation for their historic task, RAM members studied Egyptian officers who overthrew King Farouk in 1952, reviewed the history of social movements in many countries, "in particular Gandhi's work and people's experiences in Czechoslovakia and Hungary," and contacted civil activists to organize "flower brigades" designed to block roads into Manila and thereby prevent troops loyal to Marcos from coming to his rescue.
- They modeled these flower brigades on "those the American youth movement of 1968 had used to disarm troops breaking up demonstrations against the Vietnam War." From humble beginnings as a beer-drinking discussion, the group's steering committee met regularly and openly in the headquarters of the national police. Colonel Jose Almonte contacted Cardinal Sin and informed him of their plan. When he asked for the church's support, Cardinal Sin told him, "Colonel, you do your duty, and I'll do mine!"



# Cory for President



- The death of Benigno Aquino outraged civilians, most of whom had by then lost confidence in Marcos' leadership. As the legitimacy of the Marcos government deteriorated, Marcos' health worsened.
- On Nov. 23, 1985 Marcos suddenly announced snap presidential elections after being pressured by the US.
- The growing opposition movement fielded Cory Aquino as their presidential candidate in December 1985.










**LABAN!**

**Struggle!**





The church mobilized to ensure the election's fairness. Tens of thousands of volunteers for the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) were officially accredited as election observers. Created by the CIA in 1953, NAMFREL, a non-partisan volunteer organization with over 200,000 members from non-government groups, was formally re-organized in 1983 in preparation for congressional elections. Central to the group's mission were the "NAMFREL Marines," Cardinal Sin's elite "strike force" of 600 nuns who could be sent into the field at a moment's notice. Vincente Paterno, NAMFREL chairman for Metro Manila recalled: "I thought 300 people in 25 strike forces would be enough. And we fielded 600 nuns—the NAMFREL Marines....we had the strike forces; we probably had about 30,000 volunteers. We had an army."





# Contested Results

- The elections were held on Feb. 7, 1986.
- The electoral exercise was tainted by widespread reports of violence and tampering of results. The official election Commission on Elections declared Marcos the victor. Their final tally had Marcos winning with 10,807,197 votes to Aquino's 9,291,761 votes.
- The Free Elections party (NAMFREL), an accredited poll watcher, had Aquino winning with 7,835,070 votes to Marcos' 7,053,068 votes.



# February 22<sup>nd</sup> 1986

- Aquino was announced as the winner of the election.
- Enrile and Ramos barricaded themselves in two military camps.





# People Power: The EDSA Revolution

The EDSA Revolution started on February 22, 1986 when two key leaders of the military mutinied against Marcos. Minister of Defense Juan Ponce Enrile and the Vice Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces (and future president) Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos led their units to camps on opposite sides of EDSA.







As soon as Enrile arrived by helicopter at the camp, he called US ambassador Stephen Bosworth and Japanese ambassador Kioshi Somiya. Perhaps his most important call for support went to Manila Cardinal Sin. Speaking on Catholic Radio Veritas, Sin exhorted the people of Manila not to be alarmed and to stay home. When the rebels finished counting their forces, they totaled 320 armed officers and men, plus about 300 civilians organized into 12 teams.



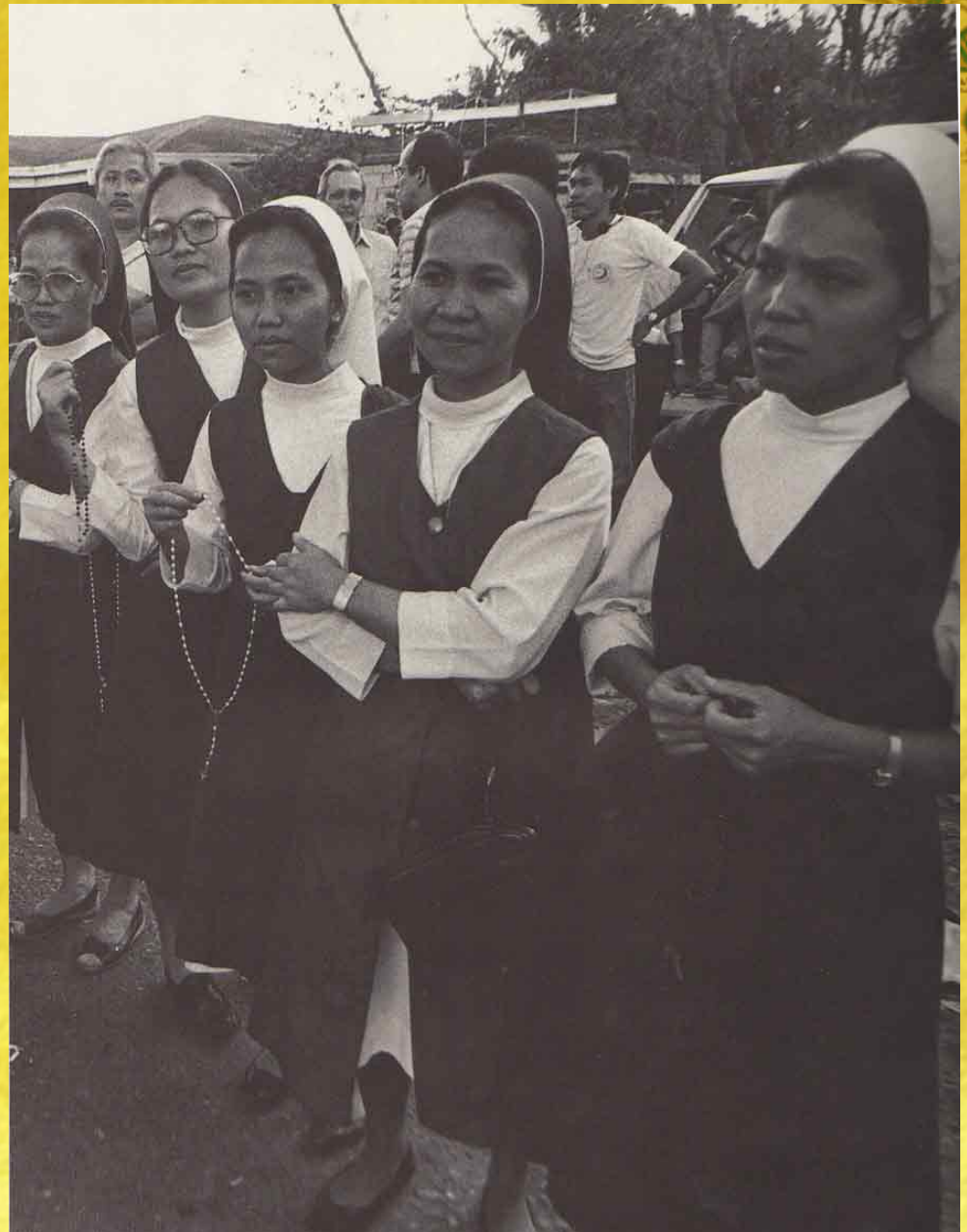
# The Church Calls for Help

Influential Archbishop of Manila, Jaime Cardinal Sin, exhorted Filipinos to come to the aid of the rebel leaders by going to EDSA between Camp Crame and Aguinaldo with emotional support, food and other supplies. Using the only non-government-controlled radio station, Radio Veritas, the Church sent out a call for action and millions of citizens answered.





# NAMFREL

## “Marines”








Around 9 p.m., Cardinal Sin again went on Radio Veritas and asked people to support “our two good friends.” From then on, Radio Veritas worked closely with the rebels, even helping them communicate with each other—“the first time in military history, anywhere in the world, that private broadcast media, run by concerned citizens, were used to transmit military orders or directives to military units in the field.”

Jesuit priest James Reuter was a key link in the entire operation. He was in continual direct contact with Ramos in Camp Crame, with Radio Veritas, and by telephone, with the US Embassy.

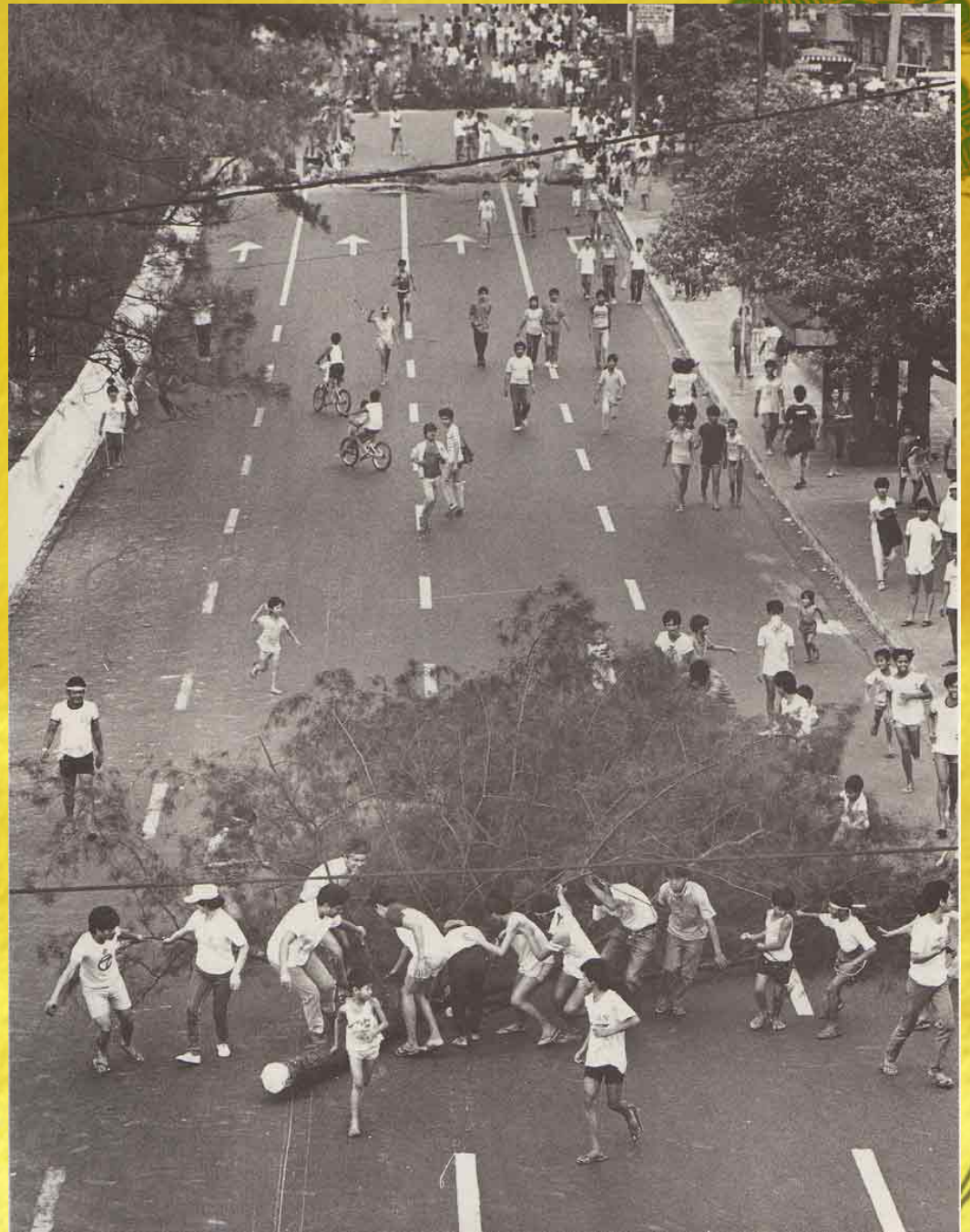
In a back office of the defense ministry, CIA agents informed Enrile and Ramos of “everything Ver did, and passed on all communications coming out of Malacañang. Enrile stayed in frequent contact with Ambassador Bosworth through this backroom CIA link.”

Ramos subsequently acknowledged he “was constantly in touch with US defense and air force attaché, Colonel Tom Halley, who was assigned as my counterpart by the US ambassador.” The US Seventh Fleet stood by in Philippine waters—further boosting rebel morale.



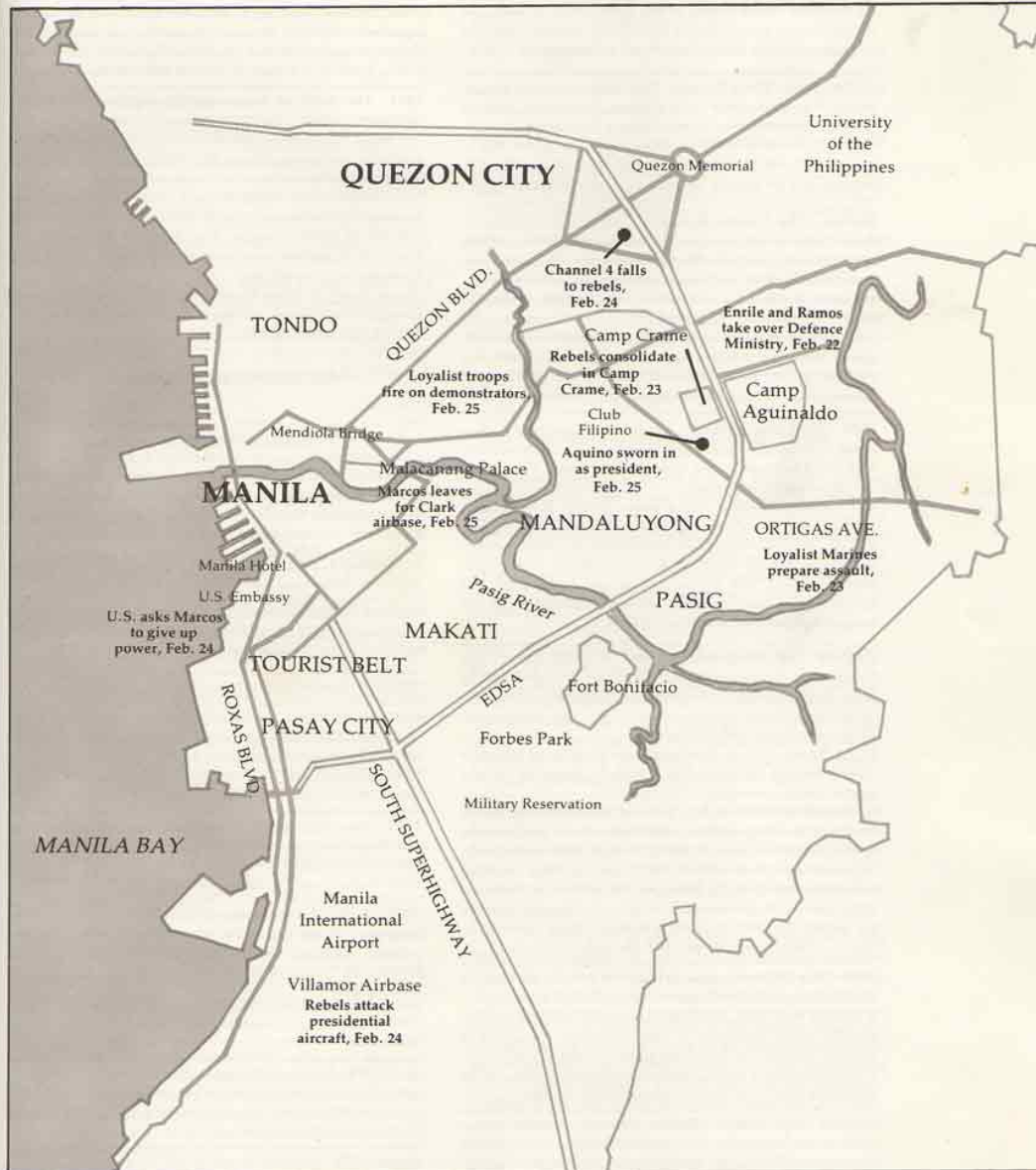


By lunchtime on the 23rd, hundreds of thousands of people were crowded around the rebel troops—some counted more than one million people at EDSA. To help defend themselves, people cut down trees and lampposts. City buses were commandeered to form barricades alongside Mercedes and private cars. Sandbags were quickly thrown onto the piles, and dozens of religious icons adorned them. When a large Marine force headed by tanks and APC's attempted to attack Camp Crame, nuns with rosaries faced them down. As the tanks edged forward, people refused to budge. So many people jammed the highways and streets around the rebel camps, military units loyal to Marcos could not use them.





# BATTLE ZONE METRO MANILA

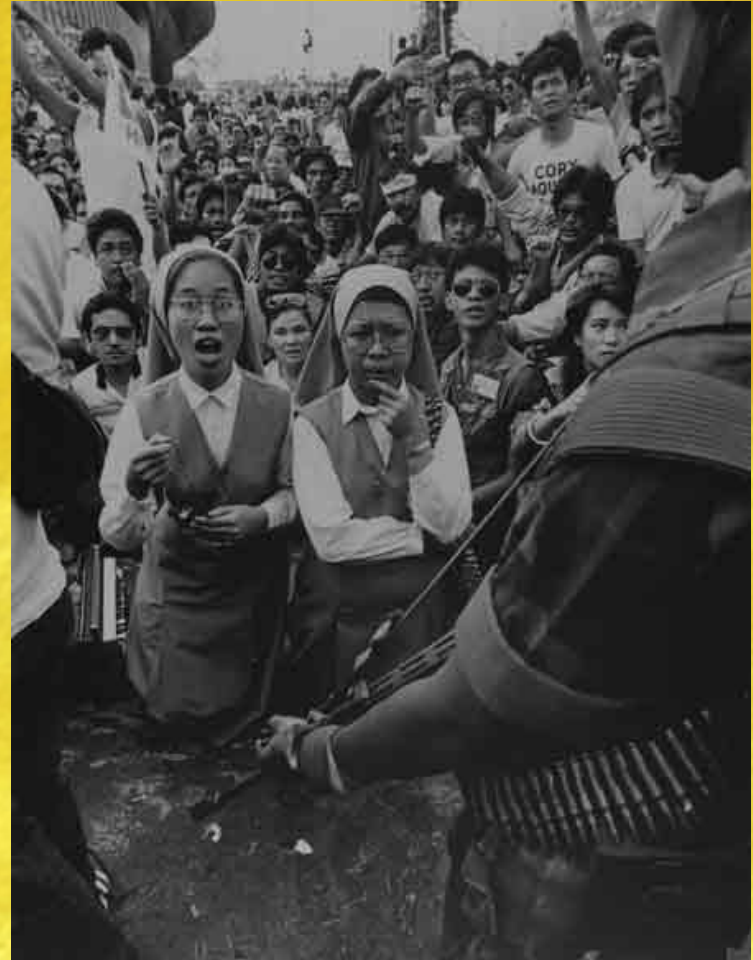


# People Power: Feb 23

Radio Veritas reported pro-Marcos Marines massing near the camps in the east and tanks approaching from the north and south. Tens of thousands of people stopped the Marines, their tanks and armored vans along Ortigas Avenue, about two kilometers from the camps.

Nuns holding rosaries knelt in front of the tanks and men and women linked arms together to block the troops. When violence was threatened, the crowds did not budge.

In the end, the troops were forced to retreat.









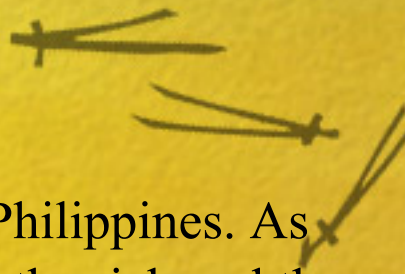
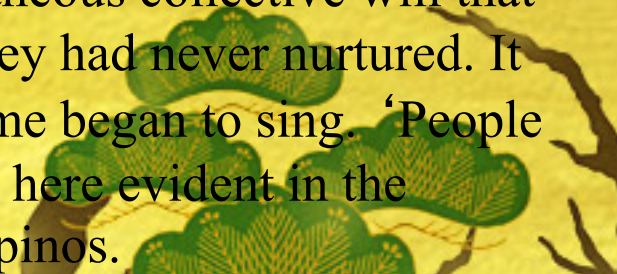



# Radio Veritas

- Radio Veritas 7:00 & 9:00PM messages
- February 23: transmitter was knocked down








People Power provided a new unity and sense of purpose to the Philippines. As the EDSA website remembers, “It’s about the people. It’s about the rich and the poor, the old and the young, the geek and the jock, losing their status, interlocking their arms, standing together in the long stretch of the highway, and for one moment, they were just Filipinos. All of them, one.” In itself, the movement forged a unified Filipino identity as strong as any since the US conquest. As is oft repeated, the US is a land of many nations united by a common belief in freedom; in 1986, the 3,000 islands on which Filipino people live with their 80 languages came together in the expression of national will called People Power that traveled around the world. As one writer expressed it: “Out of this confrontation, ordinary street Filipinos, Tondo people and faceless, joined with the middle class, and both discovered a kind of spontaneous collective will that they had never exerted before, and a common bond they had never nurtured. It electrified them. Tears streamed down their faces. Some began to sing. ‘People Power’ was born.” What I’ve called the eros effect is here evident in the emotions and actions of hundreds of thousands of Filipinos.





# February 24

As dawn broke on February 24, rebel soldiers inside Camp Crame embraced each other and said their final good byes. They fully expected an all-out assault in which they would sacrifice their lives. As the radio played the Philippine Military Academy song, all stood—many with tears in their eyes. A few minutes later, Marcos could be heard over the radio ordering General Ver to “wipe them out.” Behind a volley of tear gas, riot troops with clubs scattered people in their path. Simultaneously, hundreds of loyalist troops attacked the east side of Camp Aguinaldo, breaking through the wall facing Camp Crame.



# Hand of God?

- With the destiny of the country hanging in the balance, two events in the next few minutes decided the outcome of the battle.
- Almost miraculously in the eyes of those who witnessed it, a strong gust of wind blew the tear gas back in the direction of the loyalist forces that had fired it. Everyone paused—including the attacking soldiers, who suddenly crossed over to the side of insurgents amid hugs and cheers from the assembled throng.
- Almost at the same time, five helicopter gunships took to the air with orders to attack the mutineers, but all the pilots and crews—led by Colonel Antonio Sotelo—defected to the side of the rebels and landed their machines at Camp Crame. As the 16 aviators walked smartly to Ramos' war room, they were wildly cheered. Nuns offered them flowers.







# Crowd Grows

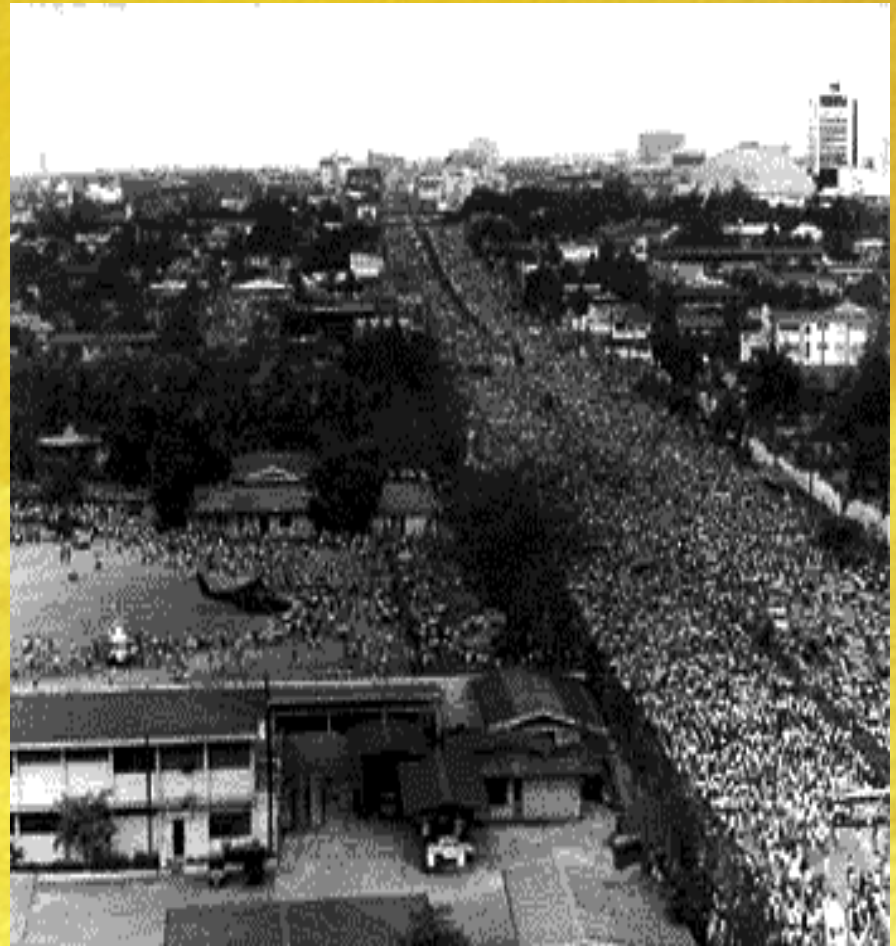
- February 24<sup>th</sup> 24 hour curfew
- White House calls for Marcos resignation
- Attack helicopters defected
- Crowd grows to 2 million people



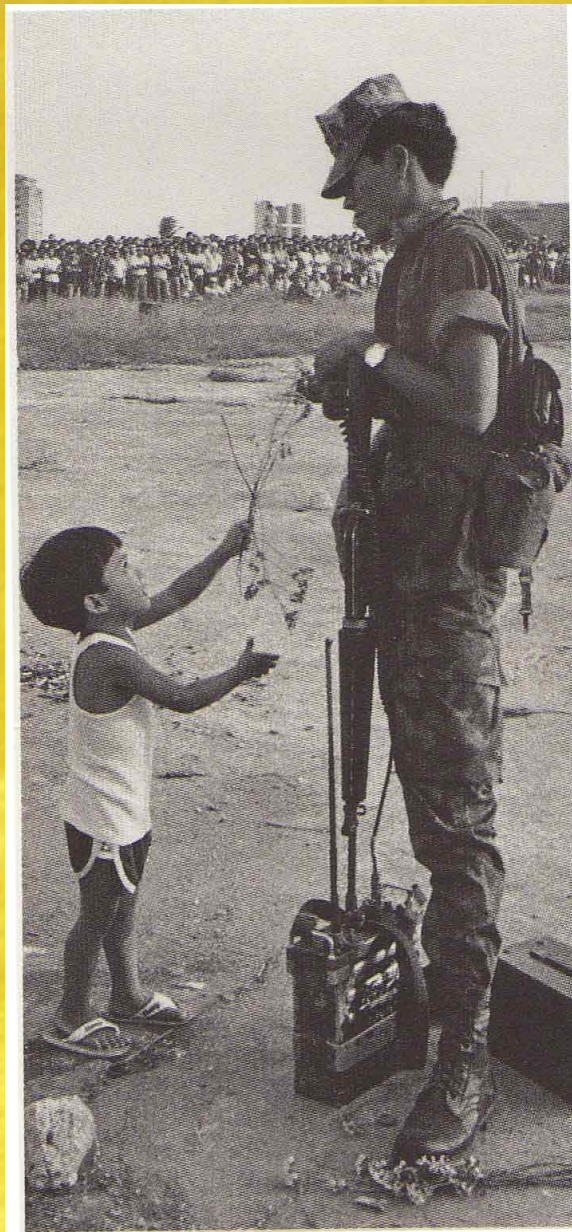


# People Power

- The total attendance ranged from the hundred of thousands to millions.
- “The mood in the street was actually very festive, with many bringing whole families.”











# The Last Straw


- After failed attempts by President Marcos to neutralize Camp Crane and Camp Aguinaldo (where the two Generals who pulled their support from Marcos organized their troops), he appeared on television on government-controlled Channel 4, declaring that he would not step down.
- Channel 4 was later then captured by rebel troops led by Col. Mariano Santiago. The rebels later put it back online with the statement “This is Channel 4, serving the people again.”
- Later that day, rebel helicopters attacked Villamor Air Base, destroying presidential vehicles. Another helicopter went to Malacanang, fired a rocket and caused minor damage. Later, most of the officers who had graduated from the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) defected; the majority of the Armed Forces had already changed sides.





# The Battle for Television

Inside Camp Crame, Enrile was also ready to hold a press conference. Hearing that Marcos had not left the country, he instructed Ramos to send troops to take over Channel 4. He also ordered a helicopter group armed with rockets to hit the area around the palace—but not the building itself. A few minutes passed before two truckloads of rebel soldiers surrounded Channel 4. Shots rang out as a sniper on the transmission tower defended the building. The rebels returned fire, killing the sniper. At 9:56 a.m. Marcos' image on Channel 4 blacked out. His 41 minutes of airtime failed to rally sufficient support for him to remain president.









# Helicopter missions


Two missions

- ⊙ Presidential vehicles
- ⊙ Presidential Palace






# The Straw That Broke the Camel's Back

- On Feb. 24, 1986, Marcos ordered tanks to EDSA.
  - Armed Forces Chief Gen. Fabian Ver was captured on TV repeatedly asking President Marcos to open fire on the crowds.
  - Marcos stood his ground and told Gen. Ver not to do such a thing.
- 






# Televised conversation Between Marcos and Gen. Fabian Ver

- Fabian Ver: We have to immobilize the helicopters they've got. We have two fighter planes flying now to strike at any time, sir.
  - Ferdinand Marcos: My order is not to attack.
  - Ver: They are massing civilians near our troops and we cannot keep on withdrawing. You asked me to withdraw yesterday.
  - Marcos (interrupting): My order is to disperse [them] without shooting them.
  - Ver: Fuck, we cannot withdraw all the time...
  - Marcos: No, no, no! Hold on. You disperse the crowds without shooting them. You may use any other weapon...
- 



# February 25

On the morning of February 25 at around 7 a.m., shots rang out from a fight between loyal government troops and the rebels. Snipers stationed atop the government-owned Channel 9 tower, near Channel 4, began shooting. Many rebel soldiers surged to the station.





25 February 1986, late morning: Passersby cower as reformists and Marcos loyalists shoot it out for the control of the Channel 9 transmitter, above. At this time, Channel 9 was the only channel carrying Mr. Marcos' live telecasts. The Marcos loyalists arrive and surround the transmitter, right. Three of them climbed the transmitter tower to gain a vantage point but were gunned down from a reformist helicopter. His shroud flapping in the wind, one of the Marcos troops is lowered from the transmitter girders, opposite page. The gunbattle took place in a quiet residential area of Quezon City, far from the human barricades around Camp Crame.








# Deadly Force

- Altogether about 12 people were killed during the uprising





# Cory' s Inauguration

- Later that same morning (February 25), Cory Aquino was inaugurated as the President of the Philippines in a simple ceremony at Club Filipino in Greenhills, about a kilometer from Camp Crame. She was sworn in as President by Senior Associate Justice Claudio Teehankee, and Laurel as Vice-President by Justice Vicente Abad Santos. The bible on which Aquino swore her oath was held by Aurora Aquino, the mother of Ninoy Aquino.
  - Marcos was inaugurated in a separate ceremony at one of his palaces, but without US support and with the military against him, he soon fled the country. Settling in Hawaii, he died a few years later.
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# February 25<sup>th</sup>

- Each candidate holds inauguration.
- 9:00 PM Marcos leaves the country.








# EDSA Shrine 2009







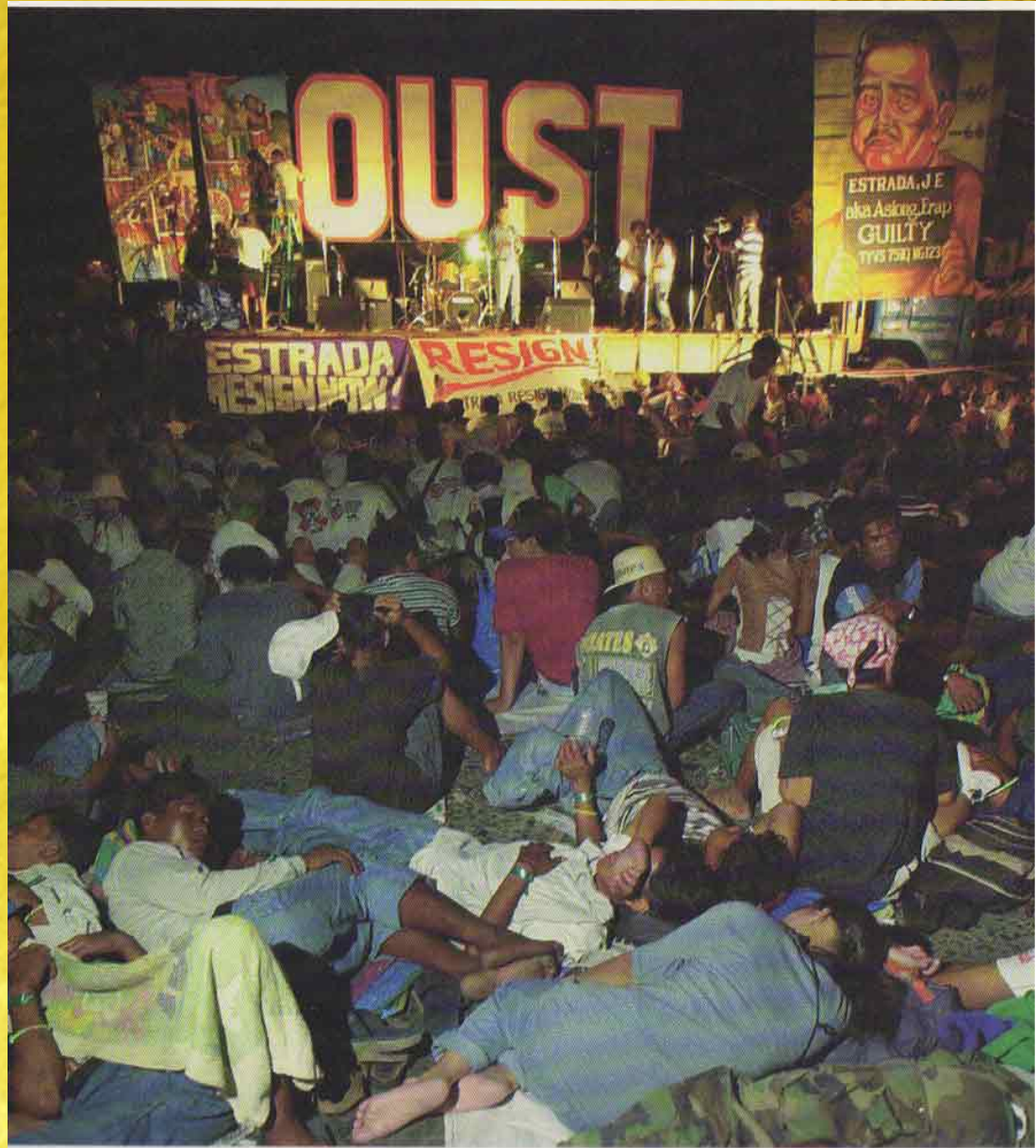
# EDSA 2

- January 16 - 20, 2001
  - People spontaneously began gathering at EDSA after President Joseph Estrada's impeachment trial ended
  - NGOs and activists were very well organized
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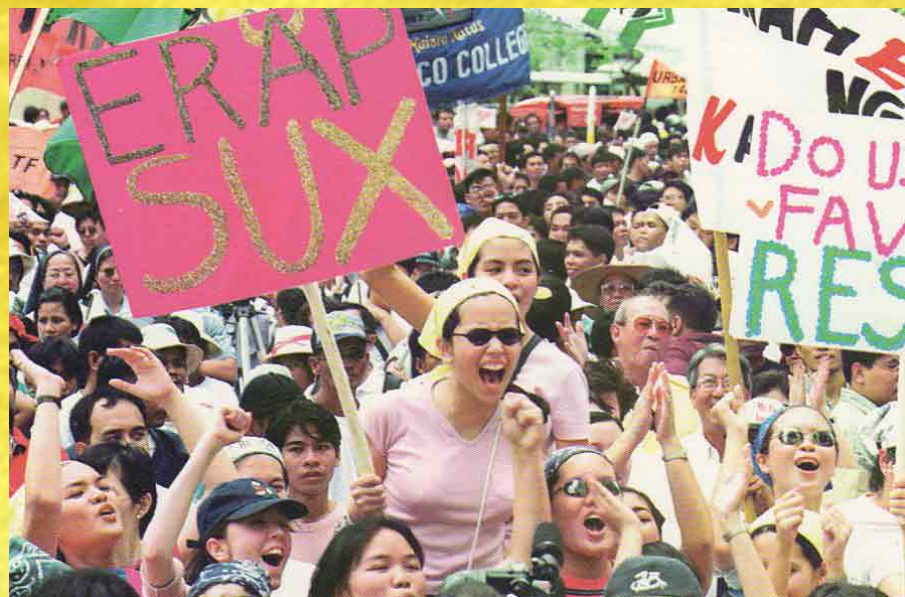




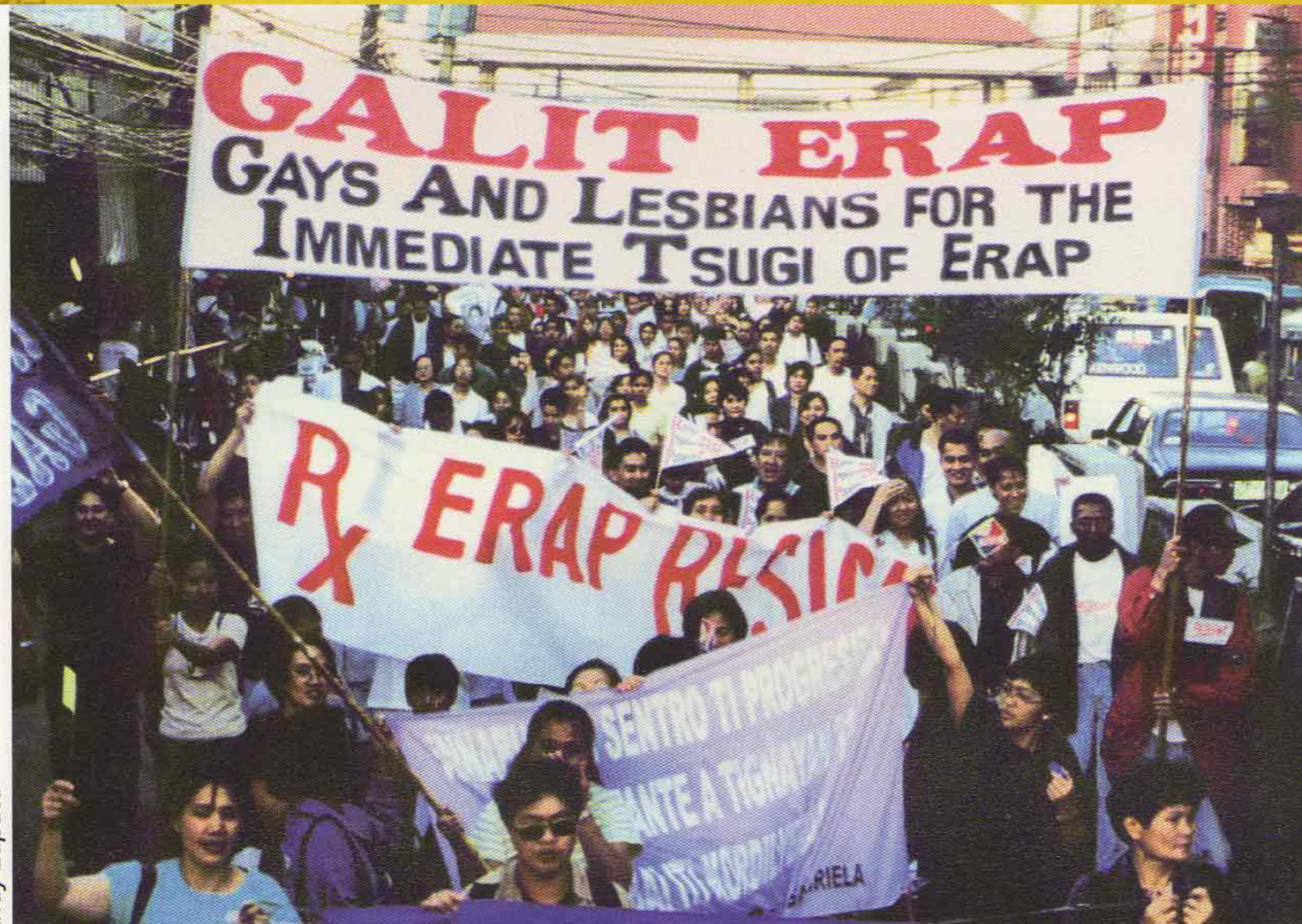
Luis Llanes



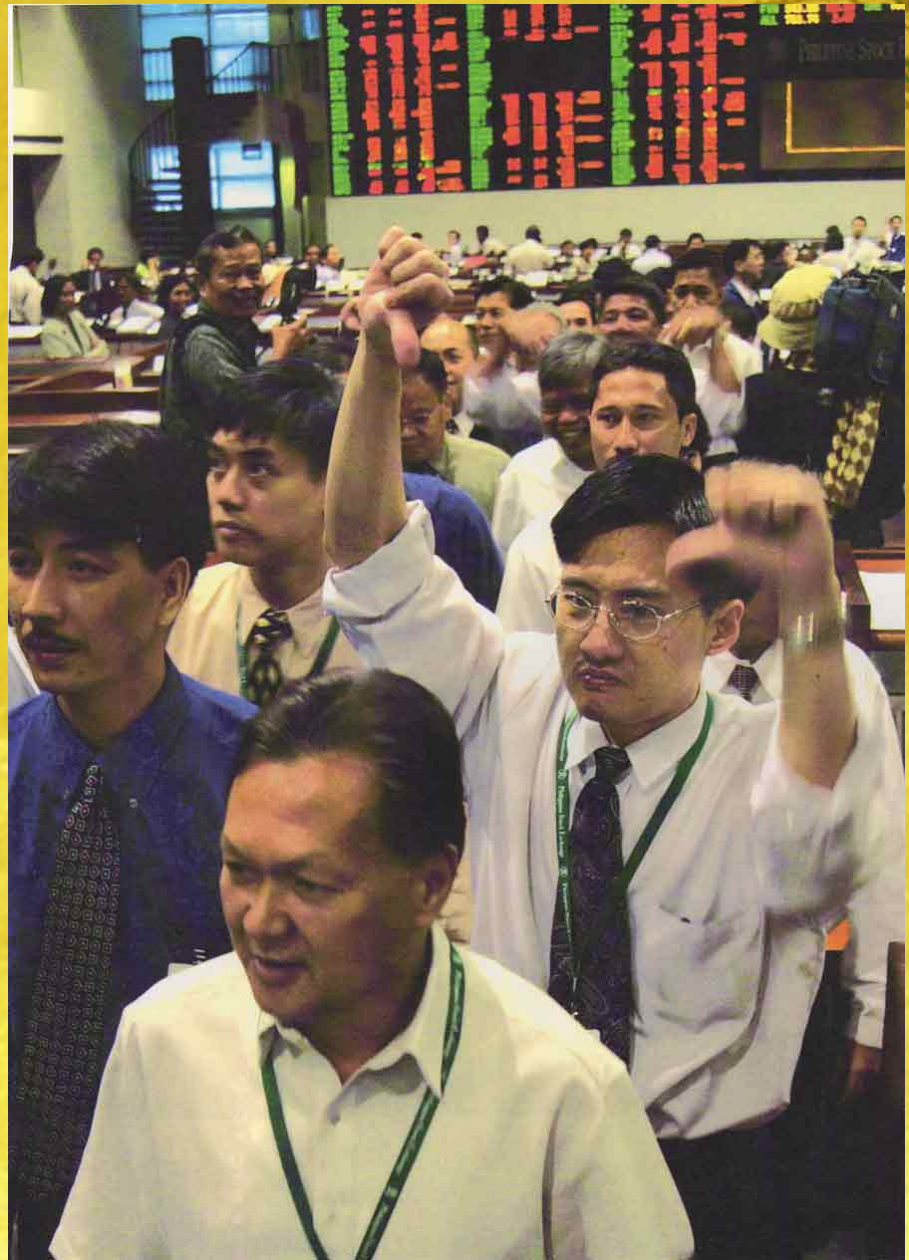




































# EDSA 3

- April 25, 2001 to May 1, 2001
  - “Poor People Power”
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JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA  
CC # 26558 25 April 2001















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