

PEOPLE POWER

Introduction by Stan Morris

Wednesday, 25 February 2009 was the 23rd anniversary of the first Nonviolent "People Power" Revolution in the Philippines (1986). And Bobet Corral, in her own words, "was there in those four glorious, glorious days!!" Bobet is newsletter editor and publisher for the AKKAPKA Foundation and AKKAPKA is a member of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR).

Bobet recently visited the IFOR Secretariat in Alkmaar, the Netherlands, where I had an opportunity to sit down with her and learn about this courageous movement. I had asked Bobet to tell us about her story, so we all could learn more about nonviolent activism and host her successful peace efforts on the IFOR website at <http://ifor.org/>.

A few days after Bobet arrive back home, she sent me this historical perspective on the use of nonviolence in activism, simply called "People Power..."

[From an email]

The people's movement towards active nonviolence (Alay Dangkal) in the Philippines had its beginnings in 1984 – or during the social turmoil which resulted after the assassination of Ninoy Aquino – through a series of seminars conducted by Jean Goss and Hildegard Goss-Mayr. The couple, Jean and Hilde, are well-known personalities in the methods of active nonviolence that effected social and political change through nonviolent means in Europe, South America and Africa. They are affiliated with Netherlands- based International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR).

In the early 80's after the assassination of Ninoy Aquino, AKKAPKA trained hundreds of individuals from different sectors of society including politicians, business people, religious, squatter communities, media people, professionals, students, labour unions, and many more. AKKAPKA with a staff of nine set to work building base communities and giving in-depth seminars on active nonviolence.

In 1985, the movement grew in strength with Bishops from the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) also participating in the seminars and reflecting on the Christian and humanistic response to the violence that marked the unjust and dictatorial rule of the late President Ferdinand Marcos. The CBCP would later issue pastoral letters calling for active nonviolence and civil disobedience to seek an end to the Marcos dictatorship.

As the movement grew in strength and numbers, many leaders of cause-oriented groups, the clergy and ordinary Filipino citizens heeded the call of Cory Aquino and the Catholic Bishops for nonviolent protests which culminated in the peaceful EDSA People Power revolution in 1986. This fateful event happened because like Ninoy in 1983, Martin Luther King in the US in the 1960s, Mahatma Gandhi in India in the 1930-40s, and Jesus two thousand years ago, hundreds of thousands of Filipinos for one shining moment in their history took a stand and offered their lives in the struggle to restore justice, peace and democracy to the Filipino nation.

In Peace and Reminiscing EDSA,

Bobet Corral

More on AKKAPKA's role in the 1st People Power Nonviolent Revolution:

Darkness to dawn: Collected writings, 1983-1986, by José C Blanco, SJ Published by AKKAPKA (1987) <http://www.amazon.co.uk/>

The Precarious Road: Nonviolence in the Philippines, Commonweal 113, 12 (June 20, 1986): 364-67, by Peggy Rosenthal <http://www.peacedocs.com/Site/Welcome.html>

"Peace and Politics" (p 308), The Church emerging from Vatican II - A popular approach to contemporary Catholicism, by Dennis Doyle, 1992 <http://books.google.com/>

“The Origins of People Power in the Philippines” (pp 129-157), *Nonviolent Social Movements: A Geographical Perspective*, by Stephen Zunes, Lester R. Kurtz, Sarah Beth Asher, 1999
<http://books.google.com/>

“Active Nonviolence: The Only Viable Alternative” by Dr. Adrian A. Helleman, University of Jos
<http://www.awhelleman.com/>

“The Philippines Nonviolent Revolution of 1986” (pp 306-308), *Catholic Social Teaching and Movements*, by Marvin L. Krier Mich <http://books.google.com/>

Prolegomenon (pp 55, 163)

<http://www.adzu.edu.ph/tmoreno/wp-content/uploads/2007/09/admu-press-book.pdf>



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