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AND GO FORWARD

# filipino

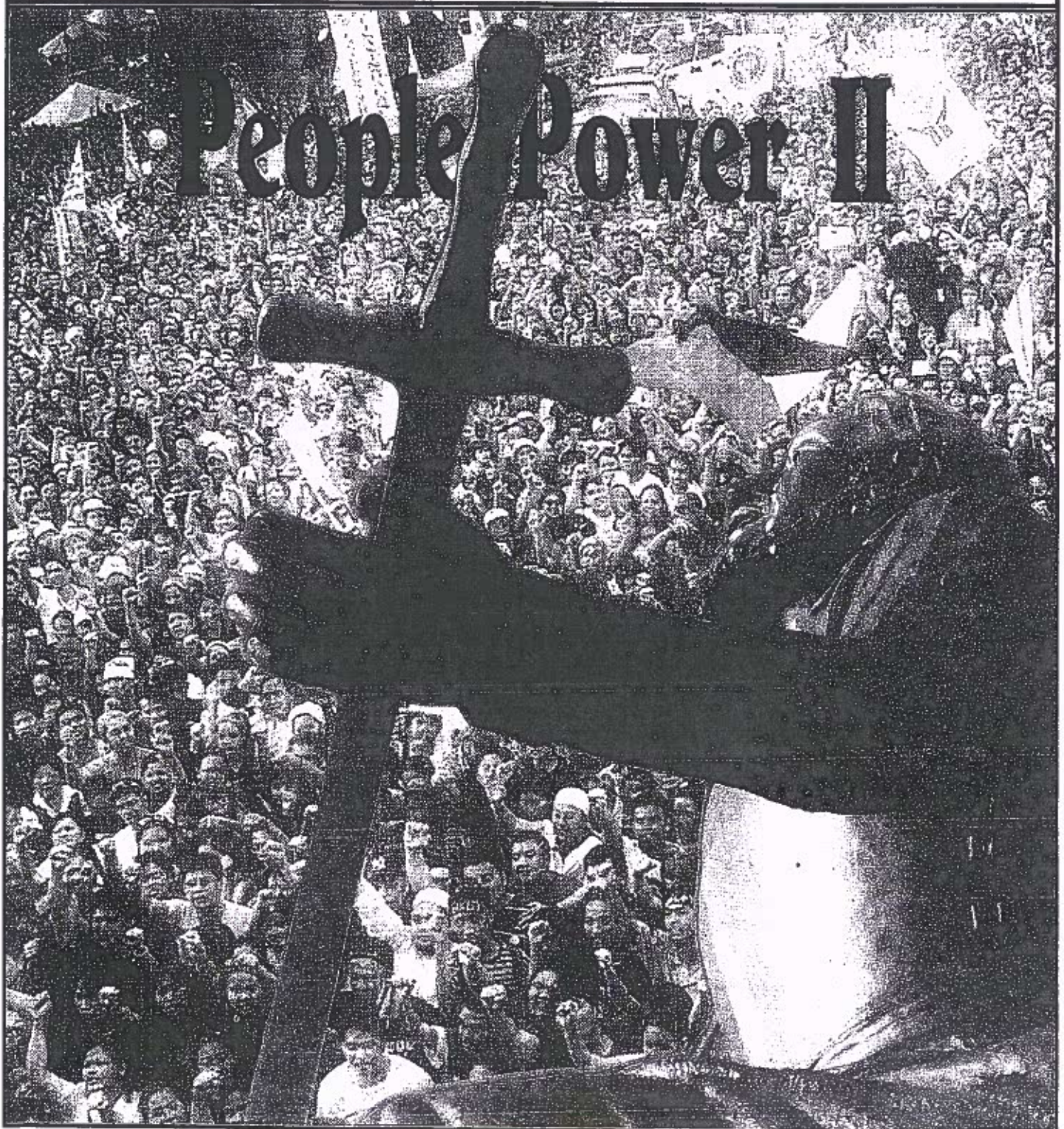
# mirror

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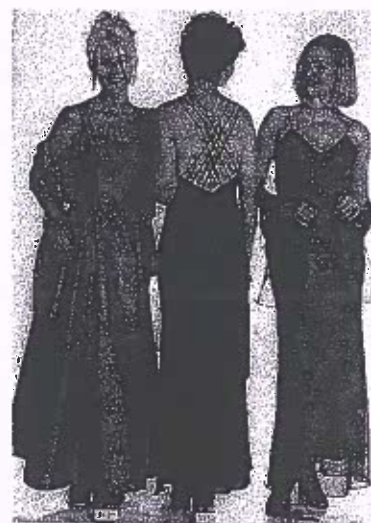
March 2001




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## From the Editor



Deng A. Valera-Larsen

## A letter to a granddaughter

My dearest Julia,

We have won, dear child. Finally, the man in Malacañang has fled in disgrace. Your Lola made sure of that by marching to Mendiola with thousands of others to drive away once and for all the evil spirit that inhabited that place. I wasn't as brave as your Lola; she thought nothing of the hired goons of Joseph Estrada who had camped all over Mendiola. I stayed behind at Nagtahan, peering across the barbed wire set up by a friendly police and occasionally going to Wendy's for a drink.

Unlike your Lola, I did not have the patience to wait for Estrada to make his humiliating exit, so I decided to go back to the Edsa Shrine where it all began. I came just in time to witness the passage into the future of our nation under Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, our brand-new President.

I wanted so much to bring you with us this morning. I thought that like the young Filipinos who formed the core of the Edsa 2 demonstrators from Day One, you should experience what it means to be a part of history in the making. But you are too young to join millennium parties like these. Since you are just slightly over a month old, you would have been squashed by the dancing throng.

I felt envious of the parents and grandparents who could bring their children and grandchildren to the Edsa Shrine. They took photos of their young ones against the panoramic background of a revolution in progress. They held their children up in the air like flower offerings to a great nation waiting to achieve itself. Their expectant faces brought tears to my eyes, and I could only think of you.

For the second time in our short history as a nation, we have rescued our society from the pits of demoralization. Once again we have shown the world that we could find our way out of the most difficult crises, armed with nothing more than an inexhaustible faith that goodness always wins in the end. Who could have known that the impeachment trial against Estrada, that seemed custom-made as a mechanism of presidential vindication, would lead us to another People Power Revolution?

I never entertained the idea that we could actually remove a powerful President by impeaching him. My position was always for resignation, even if I knew that Estrada would never resign. What I really meant was the imperative of ouster, but then I could never imagine the means for doing this without worrying about the dire consequences.

But I should have reviewed the lessons from Edsa 1. After

Ninoy Aquino's assassination in 1983, we began to despair when we could not remove Marcos by the force of demonstrations. These rallies were good for letting off steam, but they seemed futile for getting rid of a dictator. So when he called for a snap election in early 1986, all the more did we believe that we were being set up for an exercise we could not possibly win. But we had a candidate who was everything that Marcos was not - decent, pure and politically inexperienced. And my generation thought that was a good start.

The rest, as they say, is history. Marcos stole the elections and, despite massive protests, had himself proclaimed as re-elected president by a submissive legislature. I foresaw the fraudulent outcome of the voting, but I completely overlooked the importance of investing even in a doomed exercise. I now think that ironically this is where we find our courage and draw the spirit of citizenship. As things turned out, the failure of the snap election produced the peculiar combination of a passive military mutiny and an active non-violent civilian uprising. This is what the world has come to know as the Filipino People Power Revolution.

The impeachment trial of Estrada is the analogue for the 1986 snap election. In order to defuse the resign movement, the Estrada forces invoked the constitutional mechanism of presidential impeachment. From the start, they were sure they had the numbers. They needed only eight senator-judges to frustrate a verdict of conviction, and they had a loyal core of eleven. Ensuring an acquittal, however, was not the problem. The problem was how to make the public trust the impeachment process. So many of the senators who would judge the President were known mercenaries or sycophants. They could not be compelled to judge solely on the strength of the evidence. The whole thing was a set-up that only the naive would trust.

But, against all conventional wisdom, we got into the impeachment trial the way we did in the snap election. We took it seriously and gave it the legitimacy it did not deserve. In the process, we discovered the wisdom and decency of the presiding officer, Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide, Jr. But more important, we discovered the tenacity and honesty of simple folk, the substance of citizenship. The impeachment court became the site of our people's self-definition, and every afternoon, we marveled at the courage of their convictions. Without you realizing it, this was the anvil on which Edsa 2 was being forged.

From the President's Desk  
Sharing a sad experience

Hello Marc,  
Puwede bang ipaabot natin sa karamihan ang malungkot na karanasang ito na sangkot ang isa nating kababayan? Humihingi ito ng katarungan.

Salamat,  
Jun

From: Lars Wenner  
To: tine.andersson@advolaw.dk; TOM MEYER; Annelise Rasmussen; Daniel Malveda  
Subject: Fw: En faders systemanklage. Lettere omskrevet af min Storebror. Klar til at blive sendt til medierne.

"De kommunale forvaltninger har ødelagt min familie."

Min forlovede gennem syv år har været nødt til at forlade landet med vores to børn for at undgå børnene blev tvangsfjernet. Som forældre prøver man vel altid at gøre det bedste for sine børn og hvis man træder lidt udenfor normerne og det kommunale system får nys herom, kan man risikere at blive mishandlet, misforstået, og svinet til. Dette burde ikke kunne foregå i et fornuftigt retssamfund som det danske - men det gør det.

Min historie tager udgangspunkt i dette faktum samt at vi igennem ca. et år og tre måneder har været tromlet gennem den kommunale skærsild hvilket blot gør at vi føler os trådt på, underkendt, og nedslået som forældre.

Sagen startede da vi flyttede fra Jylland til Sjælland p.g.a. min forlovedes graviditet og et godt jobtilbud for mit eget vedkommende.

Hun fødte os en pragtfuld datter, men var efterfølgende meget afkræftet, da hun havde mistet en del blod ved opståede komplikationer under fødslen.

Vores sundhedsplejerske var ikke sen til at bruge hendes efterfølgende afkræftethed til at skabe tvivl om hendes omsorgskapacitet og da hun samtidig forsøgte at følge vores skolepligtige dreng i skole om

*My sweet little Julia, you belong to a great nation, a nation that is just beginning to wake up to the magic of its gifts. I had felt a deep sadness on the day you were born. What kind of country were we leaving you, I asked myself. I know I should have had more faith. Mark this day. Today, your mother's generation drove away a thoughtless President that they, a thinking generation, did not deserve. Take care of this legacy, a precious gift from your ancestors. Do not be afraid to use it. Never lose hope.*

With all my love,  
Lolo

Adapted from Randy David's Public Lives, Opinion, Philippine Daily Inquirer

morgenen men ofte kom nogle minutter for sent, blev de begge skældt hæder og ære fra. Dette på trods af at hun på bedste vis prøvede at forklare grunden til forsinkelsen.

Da vi efter en periode flyttede til et lille lokalsamfund i Nordsjælland begyndte tingene for alvor at gå galt. Vores dreng kom i en klasse hvor der det foregående skoleår havde været problemer med mobning af en af drengene. Disse problemer fortsatte og vor dreng forsøgte i stor udstrækning at mægle mellem de konfliktskabende parter, men blev gang på gang gjort til syndebuk af lærerne.

Skolen forsøgte diverse tiltag for at splitte drengene op, og vi forældre gik ofte til møder om aftenen, for at løse problemerne. Det lykkedes i en vis udstrækning, men angiveligt var dette ikke nok for alle forældre. Nogle mente der skulle yderligere fokus på os (hvilket ville bortlede opmærksomheden fra dem selv), og de foretog sig noget af det mest nederdrægtige man kan gøre i sådan en situation. "Anonyme" henvendelser til skole og kommune, der indikerede at vores børn var udsat for omsorgssvigt samt fysisk straf. Skolen forsøgte diverse tiltag for at splitte drengene op, og vi forældre gik ofte til møder om aftenen, for at løse problemerne. Det lykkedes i en vis udstrækning, men angiveligt var dette ikke nok for alle forældre. Nogle mente der skulle yderligere fokus på os (hvilket ville bortlede opmærksomheden fra dem selv), og de foretog sig noget af det mest nederdrægtige man kan gøre i sådan en situation. "Anonyme" henvendelser til skole og kommune, der indikerede at vores børn var udsat for omsorgssvigt samt fysisk straf.

Kommunen tager naturligvis sådanne henvendelser alvorligt, og begynder at køre kanonerne i stilling. "I skal modtage familierådgivning (en psykolog og en socialrådgiver), ellers vil vi få jeres børn undersøgt ved tvang" var det ultimatum vi hurtigt fik stillet.

Man havde nu fået smag for at der lå et godt sladder potentiale i det lille lokalsamfund, og flere "anonyme" henvendelser fulgte. Yderligere var sagen ekstra interessant idet min forlovede er fra Filippinerne, og den deraf følgende danske usikkerhed gjorde sit til at det lille samfund vurderede forældrerollen ud fra meget lokale normer.

Efter tre møder med familierådgivningen i Skævinge Kommune, mente man ikke der kunne gøres mere for os, hvorfor der blev koblet to "hjemme-hos pædagoger" på sagen. Demæst udfærdigedes en handlingsplan som blev trukket ned over hovedet på os. Valget var "underskriv denne eller vi tvangsfjerner børnene." De to pædagoger havde utvivlsomt intet kendskab til den Filippinske kultur og baggrund hvilket afspejlede i den lidet naturlige optræden der udvistes i vores hjem. De første rapporter var dog meget forskellige. A skrev en generelt negativ rapport, mens B's rapport var meget positiv.

Hvad gør en ukyndig sagsbehandler i den situation?

Fjerner B fra sagen hvilket betød der ikke kunne herske tvivl om hvorvidt vi ville blive fremstillet som dårlige forældre. I handlingsplanen indgik også at vores datter på 2 år skulle undersøges på sygehuset for "at imødegå indberetninger om fysisk overgreb".

Da lægerne efter undersøgelser og røntgen, ikke fandt nogle tegn på fysisk overlast blev denne del af "anklagen" dog hurtigt forkastet.

Der blev en anderledes tilfredsstillende da de myndighederne modtog rapporten fra den "børnekyndige" psykolog i amtet. Hun formåede nemlig, efter en preliminær drøftelse om hele sagen med kommunen,