



Global Nonviolent Action Database

Published on *Global Nonviolent Action Database* (<https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu>)

Nonviolent intervention in Philippines during military clash, 1986

- Asian Democracy Campaigns (1980s)

February 22,
1986

to: February 24,
1986

Country: Philippines

Location City/State/Province: Manila

Goals:

To provide protection from loyalist Marcos troops to the minister of defense Juan Ponce Enrile and vice chief of staff Fidel Ramos at Camp Crame.

Methods

Methods in 1st segment:

- 011. Records, radio, and television
- 020. Prayer and worship
- 033. Fraternalization
- 037. Singing › The protest song Bayan Ko (My Homeland)
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 171. Nonviolent interjection
- 172. Nonviolent obstruction

Methods in 2nd segment:

- 020. Prayer and worship
- 033. Fraternalization
- 037. Singing › The protest song Bayan Ko (My Homeland)
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 171. Nonviolent interjection
- 172. Nonviolent obstruction

Methods in 3rd segment:

- 020. Prayer and worship

- 033. Fraternization
- 037. Singing › The protest song Bayan Ko (My Homeland)
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents
- 171. Nonviolent interjection
- 172. Nonviolent obstruction

Methods in 4th segment:

- 037. Singing › The protest song Bayan Ko (My Homeland)
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents
- 171. Nonviolent interjection

Methods in 5th segment:

- 011. Records, radio, and television
- 037. Singing › The protest song Bayan Ko (My Homeland)
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 171. Nonviolent interjection

Methods in 6th segment:

- 011. Records, radio, and television
- 037. Singing › The protest song Bayan Ko (My Homeland)
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support

Classifications

Classification:

Third-party nonviolent intervention

Cluster:

Peace

Group characterization:

- citizens
- nuns
- priests
- rebel military officials

Leaders, partners, allies, elites

Leaders:

Corazon Aquino

Cardinal Jaime Sin

Partners:

Catholic Church

Radio Veritas

External allies:

Not Known

Involvement of social elites:

Cardinal Jaime Sin (Manila's Roman Catholic Church leader)

Joining/exiting order of social groups

Groups in 1st Segment:

- Catholic Church
- Filipino civilians

Groups in 2nd Segment:

Groups in 3rd Segment:

Groups in 4th Segment:

Groups in 5th Segment:

Groups in 6th Segment:

Additional notes on joining/exiting order:

More soldiers defected throughout the intervention

Segment Length: *Approximately 8 hours*

Opponent, Opponent Responses, and Violence

Opponents:

Marcos' loyal military force

Nonviolent responses of opponent:

Not Known

Campaigner violence:

Not Known. When the rebel army attacked the television station there was violence used against the loyalist troops defending the station, however, the unarmed civilians intervened nonviolently and used their people power to force the loyalists to surrender.

Repressive Violence:

The Marcos troops used riot police to break through the crowds defending Camp Aguinaldo.

Success Outcome

Success in achieving specific demands/goals:

6 points out of 6 points

Survival:

1 point out of 1 points

Growth:

3 points out of 3 points

Notes on outcomes:

The military officials were not attacked. Loyalist Marcos troops approached the large crowd of people, were met with citizens linking arms and praying in front of tanks, the soldiers turned around and went away.

The campaign lasted two days and survived the resistance of Marcos' loyal military force.

At one point a crowd of people protecting rebels grew to over 1 million people from 50,000; the growth was impressive.

The third party nonviolent intervention during the People Power revolution came about as a result of the turbulent political situation in the Philippines in 1986. After the assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino, Jr. in 1983, there were major protests throughout the Philippines attacking the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos (see "Filipinos campaign to overthrow dictator (People Power), 1983-1986"). These protests, combined with pressure from external forces forced Marcos to call for presidential elections on February 7, 1986. Marcos planned to use the outcome of this election to prove his legitimacy to all those who doubted his rule.

Feeling the significance of this opportunity, the opposition parties rallied together to form a united front behind their leader Corazon Aquino, the widow of the assassinated Benigno Aquino, Jr. After a terror filled campaign, in which 70 opposition supporters were killed and rampant vote buying occurred, the election was held. The election mirrored the campaign as opposition poll watchers witnessed constant ballot stuffing and the falsification of returns. In a show of resistance against the regime, many vote counters walked out without performing their duty as the television reporters caught the act on film. Obviously, Marcos claimed victory, but Corazon Aquino would not concede. On February 13, 1986, 350 opposition leaders met with Aquino and she convinced them to move ahead with a nonviolent campaign with the theme "people power". This campaign included multiple planned events: a memorial service on the day of Marcos' "inauguration" to commemorate the victims during the election campaign, a one-day general strike the next day, a delayed payment of utility bills, a boycott of all the businesses that Marcos and his associates owned, and the drawing up of a plan for neighborhoods and communities to encourage organized protest on the local level.

Unfortunately, the nonviolent campaign was headed off by a separate violent campaign. The Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and other reform-minded army officers planned to stage a coup d'etat against Marcos, but their plan was uncovered by the Marcos regime and the Defense Minister and his troops had to hide out on February 22, 1986, in two military camps, Aguinaldo and Crame. Accompanying the rebel officers were the Vice Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos and 300 more troops.

The night of February 22 brought about a press conference shown nationwide on television by the rebels inside the military camps, during which Enrile and Ramos resigned from the government, refused to support Marcos any longer, and vouched for Aquino as the rightful winner of the presidential election. They asked for support and the Roman Catholic Church responded when leader Cardinal Jaime Sin spoke nationally on Radio Veritas calling for people to travel to the military camps to prevent violence against the rebels. That very night at midnight there were about 50,000 people outside the camps and within two days the supporters grew to one million.

Meanwhile, the military rebels inside created a three-pronged plan to utilize the people power. First, they would prepare a localized military defense of Camp Crame, then they would use the nonviolent protest of the citizenry as a shield around the camps to stop artillery from being used at close range, and finally, the rebels would try and convince as many other military officers to turn on Marcos as possible. The people power was used to barricade roads and distract the Marcos military. For example, just after 2 pm on February 23, Marcos' army moved ahead with tanks and armored vehicles to attack the rebels, but more than a million people confronted them far away from the camps. Nuns, priests, and citizens climbed on tanks and began praying the rosary. The protesters reached out to Marcos' soldiers making friends and offering them candy and cigarettes. The loyalist troops were compelled to retreat.

While Corazon Aquino called for the protection to continue, however, Marcos was also hard at work trying to convince Enrile and Ramos to surrender. But the two rebels had newly found confidence in the people power surrounding them and refused to back down in the face of weaponry. In the morning on February 24, the crowds had dispersed significantly and only a few thousand remained, but overtime all of the rebels had moved from Camp Aguinaldo to Camp Crame, leaving the first camp

empty. Marcos tried another invasion and was able to use riot police to scatter some crowds, his troops took over Camp Aguinaldo and filled it with all sorts of weaponry including mortars, howitzers, machine guns, rocket launchers, and 1,000 rifles, all aimed at Camp Crame.

That same morning, Colonel Braulio Balbas, the marine commander of Marcos' troops at Camp Aguinaldo, had orders to fire at Camp Crame, which housed the rebel troops. Colonel Balbas stalled and waited knowing that if he were to order the troops to fire many civilians outside the camps would be killed in addition to the troops inside each of the camps. The colonel ordered the troops to return to their base and they issued a statement announcing that the troops would not execute any more military operations that could result in harm to unarmed civilians.

Then, at midday on February 24, the rebel leaders Enrile and Ramos declared that about ninety percent of the military had sided with the rebels. Quickly, the rebel army used helicopter gunships to destroy Marcos' aircrafts, preventing possible bombing attacks on Camp Crame. After placing rockets and a frigate within range of the National Palace, the rebels took over a government television station and following 15 minutes of fighting that wounded one loyalist soldier, the people power prevailed once again as thousands of civilians took the station completely. The rebels could now use the station to get their own message to the population.

Finally, in the late afternoon and evening on February 24, the Marcos troops were planning one last effort to maintain power, but the US intervened telling Marcos to step down and the assault never took place. The following day the success of the people was made official when Corazon Aquino became the President of the Philippines and Marcos fled from the country.

Research Notes

Sources:

Izano, Lolita (1988). Flower in a Gun Barrel: The Untold Story of the EDSA Revolution. Retrieved on 2 December 2007.

Mercado, Monina A. , ed. People Power: The Philippine Revolution of 1986. Manila: The James B. Reuter, S.J., Foundation.

Sharp, Gene. Waging Nonviolent Struggle: 20th Century Practice and 21st Century Potential. Boston: Extending Horizons Books, 2005.

Additional Notes:

For more information on the entire People Power campaign to overthrow Marcos, see "Filipinos campaign to overthrow dictator (People Power), 1983-1986"

Edited by Max Rennebohm (02/06/2011)

Name of researcher, and date dd/mm/yyyy:

Anthony Phalen, 08/01/2010

A project of Swarthmore College, including Peace and Conflict Studies, the Peace Collection, and the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility.

Copyright Swarthmore College.



Global Nonviolent Action Database is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/).

Original website design and artwork created by [Daniel Hunter](#).

Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at <http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu>.

Registered users can [login](#) to the website.

Source URL (retrieved on 02/22/2020 - 10:37): <https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/nonviolent-intervention-philippines-during-military-clash-1986>

Links:

[1] <https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/category/wave-campaigns/asian-democracy-campaigns-1980s>