



Christopher L. Carrion

IN DEFENSE OF EDSA – A CALL TO UNITY

BY: CHRISTOPHER L. CARRION
Muntinlupa City, Philippines
22 August 2005

Irrefutably, EDSA-1 was a shining and glorious moment in our nation's history praiseworthy to be considered in the annals of world chronological record as a major significant event, exemplifying winds of change, culminating from the sacrifice and martyrdom of our hero Ninoy. His death was succeeded by nearly three years of steadfast participation from people of all walks of life on a macro scale to the community around them. EDSA-1 was God-centered, peaceful, unorchestrated, from rallies to volunteerism of election watchers, praised by world leaders and officially recorded in videotape entitled 'EDSA Remembered'. True people and prayer power as it was in EDSA-1 must have all these qualities and certainly not borne out of monetary considerations. It is motivated by a higher cause for the greater number of people, and not in favor of political personalities.

As founding chairman of the Spirit of EDSA Foundation, Inc. and a member of the EDSA People Power Commission, I find myself compelled to correct the many erroneous statements that in recent times have been carelessly and wrongfully made toward the aforementioned events. I stand steadfast with the torch now as I did nearly twenty years ago; in defense against prophets of negativism who always see a half empty glass and not a half full one, no matter what circumstance, who claim nothing has been derived from EDSA-1, and that our country remains the same.

Understandably, the process of change cannot happen overnight, particularly if people choose to look the other way from the lessons learned from EDSA. Love of country, above self-interest, should be the core value of human action after loving God. Reasonably, we are impatient for results, and continue to have the mistaken notion that a Democracy is separate from the responsibilities therein to uphold it. A Democracy is only as good as the quality of individual participation bestowed by its citizens. I would like to quote the former President of the United States, the late John F. Kennedy, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but rather what you can do for your country." And the Spirit of EDSA Foundation motto, "All that necessary for the forces of Evil to win in this World is for enough good men to do nothing."- (Burke).

Liberty is a God-given right, and should never be taken for granted or oppressed. It should not however be abused by any means, as it comes with certain social responsibilities. Our media, for example, is the freest to the point that it has been viewed by many as a co-equal branch of government. Technological advancements have reached such great levels of efficiency and accuracy that it may even inspire

socio-political events, as it occurred in “EDSA Dos”. It is incumbent for Media to make certain that it remains independent of biased interests if it wishes to continue to remain relevant because the recipients of information are more knowledgeable and discerning than most people would like to think.

I am perplexed to constantly hear some people say that we have *not* gained anything from EDSA-1, because major issues like corruption are still prevalent. May I state that corruption has existed since Biblical times. Does that then, I ask, make our religion or faith insignificant? The government is shedding off graft and corruption slowly but surely. This is the first time in our history that a former president is in jail, facing charges of plunder. Is this not clear evidence of change?

Let us, remember that we have gained a free press exposing irregularities to the point that we have a congressman, a mayor, a general and numerous so-called “big fish” on trial or in jail. The infrastructures available today were not imaginable just a few years ago; yet now abound and are slowly flourishing.

Our Democracy is still evolving to become the final product that would be best suited to meet the intrinsic nature of our culture, and inherent divisive propensity as a nation with our regionalist thinking nature.

Success to me is correctly defined as the progressive realization of a worthy ideal. There are no quick-fix solutions that in the long term are sustainable as solutions to the problems faced by our country. EDSA-1 started this process. It cannot be imitated. The spontaneous progressive development of events brought about by individual actions of leadership and unity for a common good is something that all the money in the world cannot buy, for its sole power emanates from one’s conscience. This Power emanates from God and his goodness-something we all know cannot be wrongfully and maliciously duplicated.

This is something future generations must be made to remember and not abandoned to the dustbins of history. The Spirit of EDSA Foundation has thus embarked on the vision to construct a People Power Learning Center to perpetuate and institutionalize the true spirit of patriotism, as manifested during EDSA-1. To put in place a living memorial for future generations, that will house a Museum, a 360-degree light and sound theatre depicting the great events that triggered this great change in our nations political history: from Ninoy’s burial, snap elections, and rallies culminating to the four days that shocked the world.

People Power has also been abused and misused. EDSA-2 was a tolerated and accepted event. The gathering of people at EDSA, which some people call *EDSA-III*, definitely cannot be classified as genuine “EDSA.” As former president Fidel Ramos correctly emphasizes, the so-called EDSA III was not spontaneous nor was it inherently peaceful, and spiritually progressive. Its participants did not even spare a Red Cross vehicle, internationally recognized during actual war of violent action in a given adversarial situation. Such actions rightfully dispose us to assert instead that it was nothing but mob action.

Let us not smear or devalue such a great and historical event as EDSA-1. Also, just as for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, misusing EDSA is a dangerous proposition and a potentially chaotic habit.

As we reflect on “EDSA,” let us all contribute our own modest share in the common quest to make our nation great. Let us sever the actions of simply faultfinding; rather, think and act positive and not be prophets of negativity. We must also declassify

ourselves from being either pro-administration or opposition but pro-country, and think as one nation-Filipinos, instead of being regionalists.

To achieve prosperity, we must pursue peace and unity, be selfless and resolute as we stand in the four legs of truth, justice, love and forgiveness for one another. It is time to heal.

As we approach the 20th anniversary of the great historical milestone when we united to restore our Freedom and Democracy, the calling of the times is moral reflection and reformation for all- this task is not just on the shoulders of our leadership. The problem of corruption and drug trafficking could be better-eliminated, quality laws expeditiously promulgated and implemented in time to turn a new leaf for the future of our children, and the ultimate upliftment of life for the poor, if we are one and undivided. We are at a historical juncture where it is crucial that we unite as a people and rally to the flag, as we did in EDSA-1, lest we miss out on the opportunity to bring our country to its rightful birthright for greatness, as God Wills.

ISABUHAY AND TUNAY NA DIWA NG EDSA!!

**LET US ALL UNITE TO CELEBRATE THE PHILIPPINES' "CAMELOT"
DURING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1986 PEACEFUL PEOPLE
AND PRAYER POWER REVOLUTION!**