

FOREWORD

For the Philippine Political Science Association, "going regional" provided not only a convenient strategy for organizing the regional chapters but also an appropriate and timely forum for the ventilation of the grievances and tensions that grip a society undergoing change. All too often, sagas of a nation-in-the-making or one that is struggling to get on in its efforts at development present a glorified picture of the social process, preferring to gloss over the seamier side of the situation.

The papers presented at the Northern and Central Luzon Regional Conference, which make up the bulk of this issue, articulate the perceptions, desires, and attitudes of the target populations of official efforts at development. They constitute graphic evidence that it takes more than catchy slogans to galvanize the different sectors of society to unified action towards a certain goal. Above all, it signals the need for government officials — planners and program implementors alike — to understand the positions of these population sectors so that they may either pay heed to the petition of the people to stay as they are or to more amicably convince them of the wisdom of participating in the dramatic social change that has been mapped out for them. The outcome might ultimately demonstrate whether or not there is really such a thing as "people power" or even "the power of the poor" and what form it takes.

In the meantime, this new catch-phrase, "the power of the poor," is analyzed from a different angle — international relations — in the feature article in this issue. That rounds up the different perspectives from which this concept may be viewed.

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