

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: H

Sent: 6/17/2011 9:53:06 PM +00:00

To: Oscar Flores

Subject: Fw: interesting

B6

Pls print.

----- Original Message -----

From: Diane Reynolds
Sent: Tuesday, June 14, 2011 01:52 PM
To: H
Subject: interesting

albeit incomplete and not completely coherent...

What we can do to bring down dictators

Faced with horrible repression in countries like Libya and Syria, it's easy to feel impotent. So how can outsiders actually help?

Traditionally, we tend to look to our own governments to act. As Gaddafi's repression of pro-democracy rebels mounted in Libya, campaigners demanded sanctions and, as the attacks intensified, military intervention. But both forms of government pressure have serious drawbacks and, too often, come very late in reaction to gross repression. In Darfur, for example, sanctions on Khartoum were not imposed until many thousands had died.

Thanks to the threat of a Russian and Chinese veto, the UN security council has yet to respond to the murder of the Syrian people by their government, although both the US and EU have imposed their own, limited, sanctions. And no amount of signatures on online petitions is likely to budge it.

Revolutionaries in Egypt and Tunisia shared advice (translated by the Atlantic) on nonviolent techniques to confront the authorities. This manual drew on Gene Sharp's brilliantly concise yet comprehensive list of nonviolent actions to defeat tyranny

(available as a downloadable pdf). And for an excellent scholarly review of civil resistance, Adam Roberts and Timothy Garton Ash have assembled a collection of fascinating essays analysing nonviolent action in many different countries, including Gandhi's campaign against imperial rule in India and the overthrow of Milosevic in Serbia. But these examples are about resistance inside the country concerned, not about what outsiders can do.

Are there other tools to assist those fighting for democracy? When the Libya crisis broke, I suggested ten nonviolent ways to stop Gaddafi. Former diplomat that I am, these suggestions, too, tended to ask for government action. That episode, however, and the feeling of horrible impotence watching Bashar al-Assad slaughter his own people in Syria, has set me wondering what else can be done beyond merely asking our governments to act.

So, here is an invitation for practical suggestions for nonviolent action to help those struggling against repression and dictatorship; please contribute ideas in the thread below. I will then try to edit them into a list to share in a later column. Meanwhile, here are some examples that I have come across:

Online, Access Now has created a "proxy cloud" to enable internet users in countries that limit internet access, like China, to reach sites that would otherwise be blocked – you can contribute your spare bandwidth to the effort. Likewise, Tor uses volunteers' computers to help users under authoritarian rule cover their tracks on the web. And when the Egyptian authorities shut down the internet, Avaaz.org smuggled in high-tech phones and portable satellite internet modems to maintain connections to the outside world – paid for by online donations.

At the more hardcore end of the spectrum, there are reports that the hacker collective Anonymous has been organising distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks on Syrian government websites. While, at the high end (expense-wise), the Sudan Sentinel project, started by George Clooney, rents a surveillance satellite to monitor potential flashpoints for violence between north and south Sudan in an attempt to deter the resumption of war (at the time of writing, sadly, it's not working too well).

Reaching back further for historical precedent, thousands offered refuge to Czech students after the Soviet invasion in 1968; humanitarian assistance also, carefully delivered, can sustain opposition as well as relieve suffering. Boycotts remain a powerful nonviolent tool. The Genocide Intervention Network lobbies companies to divest from countries whose governments kill their own people. The act of shunning those who support repression may seem slight but has a subtle power: I remember a white farmer in a newly-liberated Zimbabwe telling me that once the international boycott began of white minority-ruled Rhodesia, she knew that, sooner or later, it would have to end. Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi has advised tourists not to visit the country in order to isolate the ruling military junta and deny it foreign exchange.

This last example illustrates a vital point – those inside the country must take the lead. It is rarely the case today, with perhaps the tragic exception of North Korea, that the outside world has no idea what people inside a repressive country think. Liberals, as well as neocons, must beware of knowing what's best for others. Equally objectionable, though, is the argument that sovereign nations must be left to sort out their affairs undisturbed – an argument Rwandan Tutsis and Bosnian Muslims might have a thing or two to say about. The local view must be paramount: it is reasonably clear, for instance, that Syrian protesters


do not want western military intervention, just as Libyan rebels sought it. It is their battle, after all, and it is, of course, they who will do most to determine their own liberation.

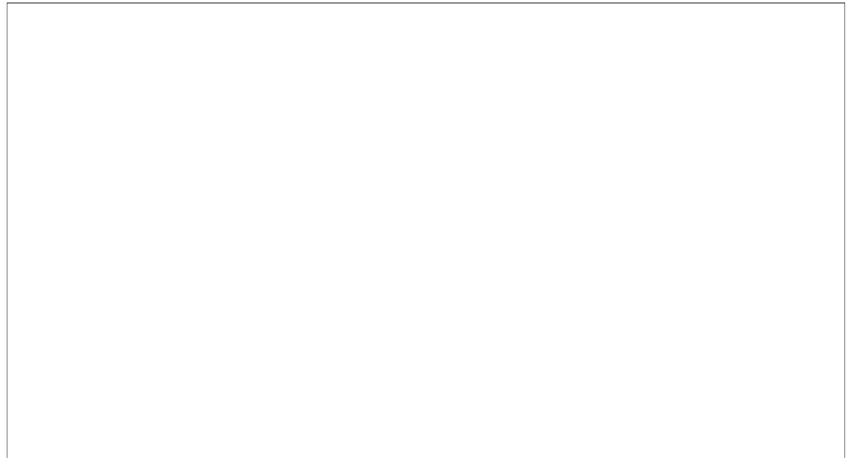
So, with that humbling proviso in mind, please post any ideas or examples below, including good online resources that, like this article, attempt to collect best practice (like Patrick Meier's excellent IRevolution blog). Well aware that circumstances differ, the intention is to create a menu of options, rather than a prescription. The goal is to create a list available to all, to share the knowledge and help maximise the effect of those who want to help.

Message Headers:



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From: H <HDR22@clintonemail.com>
To: Oscar Flores 
Date: Fri, 17 Jun 2011 17:53:06 -0400
Subject: Fw: interesting



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