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"Gene Sharp: A Dictator's Worst Nightmare"

summarized by Matthew Martinez

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Article is a character bio of Gene Sharp and is itself a summary of his ideas around nonviolent conflict as they relate to revolutions and rebellions worldwide, including Arab Spring.

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**"198 methods of nonviolent action"**(no regime can survive without the support of its people)

#18 Displays of flags and symbolic colors

#7 Slogans, caricatures, and symbols

#20 Prayer and Worship

#37 Singing

#47 Assembling to protest

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**Life facts from article:**

* 84 yrs old as of June 25th, 2012
* Graduated college in 1951
* Arrested by FBI in 1953 for draft evasion during Korean War
* Approx 1953: wrote book on Gandhi with forward by Albert Einstein
* Joined Institute of Social Research in Oslo, where he studied Non-Violent Conflict, rather than Peace Studies
* Studied Political Science at The University of Oxford under Alan Bullock
* Wrote "The Politics of Non-Violence" in 1973
* Runs "Albert Einstein Institution", founded in 1983, out of home in Boston, with intent to spread non-violence as a means to democracy
* Wrote "From Dictatorship to Democracy: A Conceptual Framework from Liberation" in the 80's
* Director of Program for Nonviolent Sanctions at Center for International Affairs at Harvard, 1987
* Nominated for Nobel Peace Prize in 2009
* Has written 30 books and has 900-page guide to "self-liberation: on his website
* Gives speeches and lectures and workshops dedicated to his mission

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**World Events:**

Ukraine: 2004 Orange Revolution propelled opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko to triumph, then flooded Kiev's Independence Square with orange flags

Serbia: 2000 presidential elections. "Gotov Je!" "He's Finished!" stickers/t-shirts/posters ousted President Slobodan Milosevic

Egypt: 2011 Thousands sing, dance, pray at Tahrir Square, Cairo

Myanmar: Burmese stunned that there were alternatives to 20 yrs of killing, requested book

"From Dictatorship to Democracy" spread from Myanmar, to Indonesia, to Serbia. Translated into over 30 languages.

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**Important Names:**

The Frontline Club- London's journalism hub

Albert Einstein- in addition to being a leading figure in science, was a strong proponent of Non-violence and wrote to Gene Sharp. Strong influence on Sharp.

Arne Næss- philosopher who invited Sharp to join Institute of Social Research in Oslo

Alan Bullock- Taught Sharp Political Science at Oxford. First biographer of Adolf Hitler

Ruaridh Arrow- Journalist/filmmaker who made documentary "How to Start a Revolution" about Sharp's work. In Egypt during Arab Spring.

Robert Helvey- Met sharp in 1987, Korean War Vet, sympathetic to rebel groups in Myanmar, helped connect Sharp to Burmese rebels.

Jamila Raqib- Executive Director of Albert Einstein Institute, "organizing influence, watchdog, second brain when Sharp's memory fails him."

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**Discuss:**

1. How have his ideas changed world, helped various uprisings?

2. Is non-violent conflict better than violent?

3. Is there a real distinction between research on non-violent conflict and peace research?

4. Why is a bio included in this collection? is it to inspire? Or just for background info?