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How to Start a Revolution

By Ruaridh Arrow

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In 2011, the Arab Spring Revolutions swept across the Middle East; from Tunisia to Egypt, Bahrain, and Syria. For more than 50 years, a quiet American scholar has been helping people bring down their dictators. His tactics of nonviolent resistance have been used in revolutions from Serbia to Ukraine and Iran. To be counted as a threat to a tyrant is a matter of pride, I would say. It means were effective. It means were relevant. This is the story of the power of people to change their world, the modern revolution, and the man behind it all. Gene Sharps tactics and theories are being practiced on the streets of Syria as we speak now. My name is Gene Sharp, and this is the work I do. How To Start A Revolution Boston, Massachusetts

- What do you do?
How would you describe your work?
- Oh, thats always a problem, describing my work. Primarily, I try to understand the nature and potential of nonviolent forms of struggle to undermine dictatorships. This is a technique of combat. It is a substitute for war, and other violence. His handbook to revolution From Dictatorship to Democracy has been smuggled across borders and downloaded hundreds of thousands of times. We dont know quite how its read, but it certainly did into 30 some languages in different parts of the world, on all continents except Antarctica. The hallmarks of Gene Sharp's work can be seen in revolutions all over the world.

Colors and symbols
signs in English
civil disobedience
and commitment to nonviolent action
Gene's books contain a list of 198
nonviolent methods of resistance.
Oh, the famous 198 methods.
There seems to have been
an extraordinary response.
That's simply the 198 specific methods.
These specific forms of
abstract are economic boycott,
are civil disobedience,
are protests.
Exactly the counterpart of military,
different kinds of military guns or bombs,
any military struggle.
Unless they have something
instead of violence and war,
they will go back with violence and war
every time.
In 1983, Gene Sharp founded the
Albert Einstein Institution
to spread the knowledge
of nonviolent struggle.
For years, people living under dictatorships
have been coming here to East Boston for help.
Jamila Raqib has worked for
Gene for more than 10 years.
I began learning about the
work at a very basic level.
I did most of my reading and learning as
soon as I started working at the institution
and I was hooked.
I didn't start out to do this.
I had a religious background that
led me to want to leave the world in a bit
of a better place and better condition
than when I came here,
and how to do that was always a problem.
Korean war, 1950-1953
In 1953, Gene was sent to jail for refusing
conscription to fight in the Korean War.
I had a two-year sentence.

I did nine months and ten days.
In those days you counted the
days as well as the month,
but I dont think that my action
there did any good whatsoever.
It was just to keep my sense of my own integrity
so I would carry on in the work that
I thought was really important.
I never met Einstein,
but I wrote to him.
I dont know how I got his address.

I said:

such and such and go to prison,
but by the way Ive written this book on Gandhi
three quite different cases from each other
about Gandhis using nonviolent
struggle for a greater freedom
through just nonviolent means.
And he wrote back that he was very
much hoped, but couldnt know
that he would have made the same decision I did
and he would be willing to look at the manuscript
which I had sent to him, and he did so and
wrote a very kind introduction to the book.
Oxford University
While studying at Oxford,
Gene had his Eureka moment
a new analysis of the power of
people to bring down a tyrant.
If you can identify the sources
of a governments power,
such as legitimacy,
such as popular support,
such as the institutional support,
and then you know on what that
dictatorship depends for its existence.
And since all those sources of power
are dependent upon the good will
co-operation, obedience, and
help of people and institutions,
then your job becomes fairly simple.
All you have to do is shrink that support,
and that legitimacy,

that co-operation, that obedience,
and the regime will be weakened,
and if you can take those sources far away,
the regime will fall.

- And how did you feel at that point?

- At the point, that Eureka point?

- Yeah.

- Oh, greatly relieved.

- Greatly relieved,

because thats what made it all reality.

Harvard University

While teaching his theories at Harvard, Gene was
about to meet an unlikely champion of his work
Vietnam War hero, Colonel Bob Helvey.

I first met Gene Sharp
at Harvard University.

I was an Army Senior Fellow
up there for a year,

and one day I saw a notice on the bulletin board
about a program for nonviolent sanctions
at two oclock this afternoon.

So I had nothing to do, so I went
to see who these peace necks were
and to confirm my preconceived notion
that they probably had rings
in their noses and ears
and dirty.

And so I went up there just to see them
and surprisingly they werent there.

I saw regular looking people there.

And a few minutes after we all sat down
this little short, soft-spoken gentleman
comes to the front of the room and says:

"My name is Gene Sharp
and were here today to discuss
how to seize political power
and deny it to others.

I say nonviolent struggle is armed struggle,
and we have to take back that term
from those advocates of violence
who try to justify with pretty words
that kind of combat.

Only with this type of struggle,
one fights with psychological weapons,

social weapons, economic weapons,
and political weapons,
and this is ultimately more
powerful against oppression,
injustice, and tyranny than is violence.

That got my attention.

This is the flag of the 5th Battalion,
7th United States Cavalry.

The 7th Cav, as you know,
was the Regiment of General Armstrong Custer,
who fought and died at the
battle of Little Big Horn.

Thats me in my younger days.

A full head of hair.

This is the award for the Distinguished
Service Cross, that I got in Vietnam.

Vietnam, 1968

In 1968, Bob was deployed in Vietnam.

He was decorated for bravery
during a Vietcong ambush.

But his experiences there would change his
views on the way conflicts should be waged.

I think Vietnam influenced my view about
the importance of nonviolent struggle,
and particularly the importance of getting Gene
Sharps ideas out to the rest of the world,
because we must have an alternative.

Vietnam convinced me that we need to
have an alternative to killing people.

Burma, 1992

As a US defense official in Burma,
Bob had seen the military dictatorship there,
persecute the minority Karen people.

After leaving the army,

Bob traveled back to the rebel camps to teach the
Karen Gene's lessons in nonviolent resistance.

I was talking to one of the Karen Commandos

and he says:

has this information been?

Weve been fighting and killing people for 20 years.

How come we didnt know this?

Some of the Burmese came up to him and asked
if he would write something for the Burmese on

how to move from a dictatorship to a democracy.
That's the origin of why the book was written:
the Burmese.

I couldn't write about Burma honestly,
because I didn't know Burma well,
and he said not to write about something
you don't know anything about,
so I had to write generically.

If there was a movement that wanted
to bring a dictatorship to an end,
how could they do it?

And so I wrote those theories,
and they were serialized there,
and published in English and in Burmese,
and I thought that was it.

In 1989, Gene traveled to China at the height
of the demonstrations in Tiananmen Square.

Tiananmen Square, 1989

It would shape his views about the
importance of planning and strategy.

Lesson 1:

It'd gone to Beijing
after the Tiananmen Square
protests were well underway.
That whole event, which it should be remembered,
was not just in Beijing
but reportedly in 350 other cities of China,
similar protests were going on.

But they were not planned.

They were not prepared.

There was no strategic decision.

There was no advanced decision how long you
stay in the square and when you leave.

The students had no plan.

They were improvising all the way through,
and later on we know that many of those
Chinese people who were out on the streets,
in another day, were shot and killed.

The attitude that you simply improvise
and improvisation will bring you
greater success is nonsense.

Exactly the opposite.

That if you don't know what you're doing,

you're likely to get into big trouble.

Serbia, 2000

The government of Slobodan Milosevic, in Serbia, presided over years of crimes against humanity and brutal internal repression.

The regime fueled the creation of new democracy groups in the country fighting, for his removal.

I went to Budapest at the request of the International Republican Institute, which was providing support to the Serbian Opposition Movement, and one particular part of that opposition movement was Otpor.

That's a Serbian word for resistance.

He's a retired colonel, and he has this type of military approach, and the way he speaks is really something that creates a strange impression with a bunch of student leaders.

We talked for a while, and I said:

Well, there's something missing here.

We haven't talked about whose leader of this organization.

Who is the leader?

And then one guy said: We don't have a leader.

And I said:

I did not fall off the turnip truck coming over here.

Somebody has to lead an organization that has mobilized the entire Serbian society.

So we spent probably one hour

fooling him about some stuff,

and the reason for this was that we were not

very comfortable about giving the details

about the organization to the foreigner.

And then they explained to me,

why there's no quote leader.

To keep it away from the government.

The government doesn't know whose in charge.

And I later found out I was talking to the leader,

Srdja Popovic.

Belgrade

Bob began teaching Gene Sharp's lessons

to the new Serbian revolutionaries.

When Bob Helvey gave us the Gene Sharps politics of nonviolent action, we were quite amazed. Partly I was ashamed that I didnt know about such a book before, even if there was a translation of From Dictatorship to Democracy in Serbian, but I had never seen it. And seeing the knowledge of how power operates, and pillars of the support operates, and all this stuff, we needed to learn the hard way throughout our experience written systematically on one place was quite an amazing thing. One of Otpors first tasks was to create a symbol of resistance to help unify the people. Its obvious that we are a majority. If we can just recognize all of those who are against Milosevic by saluting each other with a fist, he would probably be over within a few years.

Lesson 2:

Atomisation is when a regime attempts to make every individual in this society an isolated unit. Its one of the main ways that took over their systems, seek to control their populations, make them all fear each other, fearing to speak out and to act together, never telling your neighbor or even sometimes a family member what you really think. By seeing the example of the demonstration and bravery by other people: Now its "we", now its "we", and we can do something that I alone could not. During the 96-97, we were walking day after day after day, and the police was walking streets, and our numbers would start falling because it was obviously too boring for the people to demonstrate every day in harsh winter.

So we said:

try to make noise from our balconies.
We were doing it from 7:30 until 8:00 pm,
as a response to the state TV news.
That was the answer...
we dont watch your crap.
We do our own thing.
From the pots and pans to doing the stickers,
so the stickers can be doing in every building,
and also the things like,
Will you go and prosecute the
kids for wearing Otpor t-shirts
when there is not one single law which
bans wearing anything on a t-shirt?
So for the policemen, getting inside high schools
and arresting high school kids only
because they were wearing the t-shirt,
and then going home and talking to their wife
whose friend was complaining
because her son was arrested.
Getting a dialogue of your kids
was coming now from his school
where nobody wants to spend time with him or her
because their father is now beating
kids from my neighborhood.
And now, this systemic oppression doesnt work.

Lesson 3:

These pillars are holding up the government,
like my fingers are holding up this book,
and I developed a strategy to
undermine each of those pillars:
the police,
the [???], the religious
institutions, the workers,
whatever, every organization.
And as they weaken and start to
collapse, the government will collapse
when those pillars are broken.
Ideally we want those pillars not destroyed,
but transferred over to the democratic movement.
If you want these pillars to shift sides,
you need to co-opt people.
Its exactly what Otpor has done.
We were telling the police that we

are both victims of the same system.
There is no reason to have war
between victims and victims.
One of the victims wear blue uniforms,
Other victims wear blue jeans,
but there is no reason for this conflict.
And this worked, really worked.
And it worked in Georgia.
It worked in Ukraine.
It worked in many other places in the world.
This is the way you do.
You go and co-opt from this course of pillars.
You dont throw stones at the police.

Lesson 4:

The many people in conflict situations
that would like to use violence,
but their opponents really have more
military weapons and weapons of violence,
usually physical weapons,
than the potential resistors have,
the resistors choose to fight with violence.
Their opponent has all the advantages in that
situation because youre choosing to fight
with your opponents best weapons.
But you can choose to fight with a totally different
kind of weapon in these nonviolent forms,
which are much more
difficult for the opponent to counteract.
Big concentration tactics are
very difficult to control.
You have 20,000 peaceful demonstrators
and one idiot breaking out a window.
These people got all the media.
So this is the message which can
efficiently undermine your movement.
You would go on a march and there is a
risk of the people getting arrested,
so what would you normally do?
Instead of putting the big guys in front,
you will put the girls in front,
you will put the grandmas in front,
you will put the military veterans in front.
So the police is now faced with the friendly faces.

And these people are actually carrying the flowers and the banners and smiling, so you make the situation less threatening, so you make the possibility of a violent outcome very small. October the 5th should be seen in the context of successful strategy, and that was not the day like many spectators or media, like CNN. They just see it as a big bunch of people, revolution, boom, and its all over. It was, first of all, ten years of attempts and failures, and two years of resistance of Otpor, five different campaigns, and we were setting the victory on the elections.

Serbian National Election
September 2000

In September 2000, Serbia went to the polls. But Otpor expected Milosevic would fix the election. We knew that Milosevic will lose, and we knew that he will not accept the fact that he has lost. So around 3 pm, you hear like two to 300,000 people on the square, and there was a nonviolent takeover of the physically of this building. And this is where the people who broke into the building, on October the 5th, found many leaflets pre-marked for Milosevic. So this is where, actually the physical cheat was taking place on the second floor of this building. It was more like a symbolic takeover, because what was the real takeover was that Milosevic lost power that day, because police disobeyed, because he ordered the military to get through the barracks after 3 pm and they disobeyed. This is where he lost the power. What you are looking at on the TV and physical overtaking of the building, was just a symbol of him, losing authority that day. I think what we learned from Bob and what comes

and derives from Gene Sharp thinking and writing,
influenced the way we think,
and also made our struggle more
efficient in a very important point
when we were preparing for a resistive struggle.
And yes, I think what Bob and Gene are
doing are precious around the world,
and we strongly believe that the nonviolent
revolutions cannot be exported or imported,
but the knowledge on how to successfully
implement nonviolent struggle
can and is transferred from one
group to another as we speak.
Well, I felt good that here was a
revolution that occurred non-violently.
There was no violence on the part
of the democratic opposition,
and it shows that what Gene was
talking a bout year after year after year,
There are realistic alternatives to violent conflict.
Well, I mean, after Serbia, we were working with
Georgians and Ukrainians and Lebanese and Maldivians
and Iranians and Zimbabweans and Colombians
and Guatemalans and West Papuans
and the groups from places in the world
I couldnt literally find on a map.

Georgia, 2003

Then, from Serbia, the news spread to Georgia,
which was under a very repressive regime,
and then to Ukraine, which again had
problems, and it spread there,
and then to a series of other countries in the
southern tier of the former Soviet Union.

Ukraine, 2004

Vlodymyr Viatrovich was a leader
of Ukraine's Orange Revolution.
He used Gene's book to convince activists that
there was a powerful alternative to violence.
The protester community had
various schools of thought.
In particular, there were people
ready to use some kind of force.
The book in question
is Gene sharp's book, From Dictatorship to Democracy

The central concept of that book,
fighting dictators non-violently,
was very pertinent for us.
That was the idea that pretty
much shaped the protest
that led to the Orange Revolution of 2004.
We're united, we're many...
I think that tens of thousands of people, no more,
ever received Sharp's ideas directly from his book.
But the ideas themselves,
no longer linked to Gene Sharp,
reached hundreds of thousands of
people in the Orange Revolution.
We're united, we're many,
we won't be conquered!
So if we're to speak of his ideas,
even if the people didn't know they were Sharp's,
they were still widespread and influential.
Yushchenko! Yushchenko!
On the top floor of Gene's
home is his orchid house,
a refuge from the work below.
They take quite a bit of work.
They became very important because
it was something I could treat,
as they needed to be treated,
and not expecting miracles,
but if you dont treat orchids right or anything
else in life, then its not going to thrive.
- How did it feel watching your work spread?
- Oh, that spread was really quite remarkable,
I always think.
Im still amazed.
Im still amazed.
To have this piece that I
regarded as very introductory,
I think its maybe 70 or 80 pages,
to take off like that was a confirmation that
the analysis was more or less accurate.
It didnt spread because of good propaganda,
or some sales pitch.
It spread because people found it usable.
They found it important.
The books are there.

The literature is there.
Its online. Its in peoples homes
and peoples hard-drives,
and its being disseminated at a level where
that cannot stop, and it cannot be stopped.
People go to great lengths to discredit this work,
and there was one case where President
Chavez had referred to our staff as
the bunch of gringos at the Albert Einstein
Institution dont understand Venezuela,

and I thought:

fully understand the situation in Venezuela.
Its probably quite complex,
but Im not a gringo.
Gene Sharp, George Bush,
and the ideologues of this
soft coup with a slow fuse
Gentlemen, you can forget this
plan of yours in Venezuela.
In 2008, the Iranian government
broadcast a propaganda video
accusing Gene of working for the CIA.
The White House,
Washington D.C.
Gene Sharp, the theoretician of civil disobedience
and velvet revolutions,
who has published treatises on this subject.
He is one of the CIA agents
in charge of America's
infiltration of other countries.
Well, youve seen our office.
You can see how well funded we are
In a way, I was impressed that we were on the radar,
that they had Gene Sharp sitting at the
White House, and in a way, I thought
I wish those in the White House would listen to us,
I wish they would request a meeting with us,
but they dont.
We sit here.
We operate out of our Tourem office.
We have no connection with the White House.
It just didnt happen.
We dont do that.

We are absolutely not a CIA front organization,
and its really ironic because
we see this charge in the press
and among various groups quite often,
and we always wonder, where is this coming from?
After the Iranian elections in 2009,
opposition groups declared the result was a fix.
Iran, 2009

There are thousands upon thousands of people
streaming down through the main boulevard,
all heading in the same direction.

Its quite something.

Theyre waving green flags.

People are hanging out of cars
giving the V for victory sign.

I was not sure people would
turn up given the warning,
and Im wrong.

Thousands of protesters exploded
onto the streets of Tehran.

The government response was brutal.

During the uprising, a young Iranian student, Neda
Agha-Soltan, was shot by a government sniper.

Her image would become a
rallying call for the opposition.

Lesson 5:

When people are slaughtered,
when they are beaten,
this produces a process
I call Political Ju -Jitsu,
in which the opponents supposed strength
is used to undermine the opponent
by alienating more people
from supporting that regime,
mobilizing more people into the act of resistance.
Its a kind of backlash effect.

If the regime is so brutal, and instead of
intimidating people which the regime intends,
it causes other population groups and institutions
to withdraw their cooperation and their obedience
and that loss of power and control that
more people are joining the resistance.

Iason Athanasiadis was arrested by Iranian

Intelligence while reporting the Green uprising.
When I went to see the Chief Prosecutor
on the second day that I was in prison,
he looked at me when I took off my
blindfold, sitting in his office,

and he said:

And I said:

Ive just been arrested two nights ago,

and he said:

serious accusation against you.

And I said:

And he said:

"Espionage."

The interrogator kind of patted his laptop and said:

You know, this laptop contains

a Persian language translation

of Gene Sharps "From Dictatorship To Democracy"

which is a handbook for insurrectionists,

and it gives them several dozen easy ways by which,

if they only follow these ways,

they can overthrow a government

a legitimate government, any kind of government.

And I have read this book,

and so have my colleagues."

When the organizers of the uprising were arrested,

they were charged with using over

100 of Gene Sharps 198 methods.

What this work does is show people that they

themselves can be responsible for their own future,

for their own liberation.

People are beginning to liberate themselves,

They dont have to depend on an outside power.

This is Srdja, my cat,

named after Srdja Popovic.

But they dont have to depend on an outside power.

They can do it themselves.

And can you imagine how good

that makes a country feel?

That we did it ourselves.

And thats why its so important that we transfer this skill and knowledge. Theres no reason for the United States to be occupying anybody. Were not good at occupying anybody. Neither was the Soviet Union good at occupying people. Let the people alone. Give them the power to change their government if they want it changed. To be counted as a threat to a tyrant is a matter of pride, I would say. It means were effective. It means were relevant. It means, out of this very small office, we produce work that threatens regimes, and I think thats pretty cool. Yeah.

Tahrir Square, Cairo, 2011

This was the beginning of the Egyptian Revolution. The uprising was spontaneous, but Egyptian democracy groups had been working on the strategy for years. Egyptian democracy group Kefaya first visited Gene in Boston in 2006. Five years later, former Serbian revolutionaries were training new groups on the outskirts of Cairo. Egypts Muslim brotherhood posted Gene's work in Arabic on their website. When the moment came, these groups were ready to guide the revolution. Well, lets go live to Tahrir Liberation Square. We can speak to a freelance journalist who joins us on the line now, Ruairidh, we were hearing about those heightened security measures today around Tahrir Square. Is there a different atmosphere here compared with say yesterday and the day before? Ah, yes. Its an incredible atmosphere today. That cross section of Egyptian society that left Tahrir Square yesterday is back in force now. Theyve managed to re-energize the protesters. Theres very young children, women, older men here. People are singing and dancing. There are many instruments in the square,

and its more full here than it has been in days.
Ahmed Maher was a leader of Egypt's
April 6th democracy group.
We waited for an incident,
the spark,
that would move all the people.
There were many reasons to act,
but we were waiting for the spark.
And that was Tunisia.
Tunisia, 2011
In fact it was...
There has always been rivalry in soccer
between Egypt and Tunisia.
So maybe we started before Tunisia
but Tunisia beat us and started
the revolution, so why not us?
People saw on the web "The answer is Tunisia".
Leave! Leave!
Of course there was a strong influence
from Gene Sharp's writings, articles and books.
We got them from the internet, read them
and we learned quickly
and understood the essence of non-violence.
We also saw many documentaries on the internet
about the experiences of
people applying non-violence.
The idea itself was very inspiring
whether it came from the documentaries or the books.
As the peaceful protest grew in Tahrir Square,
President Hosni Mubarak intimidated
them with weapons of war.
Our experience may be slightly different to Otpor.
Before the revolution, they won the
army and police over to their side.
It was different with us.
We had a very big battle with the police
and the army was always neutral
but eventually intervened on our side.
The experience is different to an extent
between us and Otpor in Serbia.
Even after violent clashes with police, the
revolutionary leaders restored nonviolent discipline
in the face of overwhelming force.
The protesters faced brutal attacks

from police and security forces,
but they held their ground.
Of course, technology played a big role
in faster communication,
in delivering the message to the
people and mobilizing them.
Also, technology played a role
in the internal organization.
You have groups in various governments
and need to be in constant contact with them
so instead of holding a meeting every fortnight
you can, through a secret group on Facebook,
via conference on yahoo, Skype or Abouttalk
via any program, constantly communicate.
All those helped so much in spreading ideas.
As Muslims and Christians guarded
each other while they prayed,
the leaders of the revolution were persuading
the army to support the protesters.
I believe the army eventually helped us
because the army is of the people.
The army conscripts come from the people,
and the army has a big patriotic role.
The police may have fixed
elections, protected the corrupt,
they've been involved for many years
and were protecting their interests and existence.
I was returning to Tahrir Square,
just entering the square through
the permanent search gate.
There was a cafe which had the TV on very loud.
In the name of God the Merciful.
Citizens,
in these difficult circumstances
that the country is going through
President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak has decided
to step down as President of the Republic.
It took him a while to step down.
I just went crazy when I heard the speech.
I started crying, thinking that at last
the dream we've had for years
and endured so much for
has come true.
It was a really tough moment.

I then ran screaming into the square.
Everyone was just crying, screaming,
laughing, dancing, singing...
It was a historic moment.
I just couldn't believe it.
For a few days I wondered if it was possible.
But somebody knew what they were doing,
and we dont need anyone claiming
credit for us or me or anyone,
if its not deserved and if its not documented.
Syria, 2011
Massacre in Juma, 15 so far killed.
Ausama Monajed is a communications expert and
one of the leaders of the Syrian Uprising.
This is a video of a kid thatd been shot at.
One boy was shouting: My brother, my brother!
He co-ordinates a network of secret
cameras all over the country.
Its just a basic HD camera
linked to a satellite modem,
and we upload it on streaming websites
where we can get the live feed,
and we managed to get this Al Jazeera today.
Gene Sharps tactics and theories are being
practiced on the streets of Syria as we speak now.
What we did is promote these tactics and explain them
to people through the Facebook pages that we have
and also the YouTube channels.
This is how theyre applied,
from putting flowers on the spots
where fallen heroes fell and frustrations
from the campaign while you marched,
from cleaning streets and
making it nicer and better
because we can do something even better than the
regime can do in terms of services, so yeah.
From Dictatorship To Democracy gives
you the inspiration, the assurances
that this could really be achieved
and this can really happen.
In Summer 2011, after a brutal
onslaught by the Syrian military,
Ausama traveled to Boston to meet Gene.
- When were you last here?

- I cant remember exactly. Was it 2007 or 2006?

Yeah, years ago,

when it was only a few people thinking about nonviolent resistance scenario in Syria, and only quite a few believed this can really happen in a country like Syria.

Ok. All set.

- Gene.

- Hello.

- Hi.

- How are you?

- Hi, good to see you again.

Good to see you. Good to see you.

- Good to see you.

- Good to see you too. How are you doing?

- Not too bad.

- Im happy to see you. It was so good you have time in your schedule to come to say, Hello.

- Well, the pleasure is mine.

I was really delighted, and I can tell you theres a lot to talk about.

- This is new territory for us.

- Yeah.

- Weve never been there personally.

The cases weve studied dont exactly match.

Hes so humble and down to earth to a limit that you feel how amazing this is, like all these great writings coming from a very tiny little office in Old Boston.

Its rather interesting.

Maybe theres one thing thats been learned in quotation mark, may become Tunisia and Egypt which I think is a mistake, a major mistake. And that is that the existing ruler has to resign.

He doesnt have to resign.

You take all the supports from out from under him, he falls, no matter what he wants to do.

This is the distinction in the analyses between nonviolent coercion, in which he has to resign but hes forced into it, and disintegration, when the regime simply falls apart.

Theres nobody left with enough power to resign.

If Einstein was the genius in physics,
so Gene Sharp is the genius in freedoms,
and how to achieve freedoms.

Lesson 6:

I feel good in a way that were spreading the word,
and if people follow Genes advice
on how to think about waging an unbalanced struggle,
sooner or later theyll win.

See, the advantage that we have using this form
of struggle, the people against the tyrant.

As long as we dont surrender, we never lose,
and thats a key.

As long as you havent given up, you havent lost.

I think, in the long term,

Gene Sharp will be a household name.

I think his books will be in

every library in the world,

and they will be translated into most languages.

Can we survive until then?

Can this institution survive until then?

Well, we certainly hope so.

Politically significant nonviolent action has
occurred in at least the following countries:

Guatemala, Australia, Thailand,

Burma, China, Japan,

Georgia, Iran, Kurdistan, Russia,

Serbia, Ukraine, Venezuela, Vietnam, Zimbabwe,

and theres bound to be a couple more.

I think theres the father-daughter
relationship developing there.

They can sit down and talk,
and theyre on the same wavelength.

She protects him,

and I think she loves him as a
daughter who loves a father.

Gene Sharp is someone who is,
of course, my personal mentor,

but I think he has served as that
role for multitudes of people.

He is someone who has dedicated his life
to providing the means by which oppressed
people can self-reliantly gain liberation,
and that is something which I

believe has changed the world
and will continue to do so in dramatic ways,
Its really personal stuff.
Sometimes people ask me what I really want.
Do I have a dream?
And I do.
I dream that the oppressed people of the world
will be able to learn from the available records
and new experiences that this
type of nonviolent struggle
can be used to liberate all oppression and
replace military and violent conflicts,
so that you wont have to carry on
struggles against terrorism anymore
because the people who might have become terrorists
have instead chosen to use this kind of
struggle to help out the oppressed people.
This can change the local
systems throughout the world.
My name is Gene Sharp,
and that is my dream.