

The ICNC Role in the Arab Spring

Écrit par Dr Stuart Bramhall
Dimanche, 18 Mars 2012 00:00



ICNC Founder Peter Ackerman

(This is the last of five posts about the American godfather of nonviolent resistance, Gene Sharp, and the role of CIA and Pentagon-funded foundations and think tanks in funding and promoting nonviolent resistance)

In the Arab Spring revolutions of 2011, Sharp and the Albert Einstein Institution (AEI) seem to have handed the baton to his disciple Peter Ackerman. According to [Louis Proyect](#), the latter is a former AEI board member and founder (in 2002) of the International Center for Nonviolent Conflict (ICNC). It was the ICNC that offered nonviolence training sessions in Cairo for Egyptian and Tunisian activists.

As Proyect makes clear Ackerman, like Sharp and Zunes, is no progressive. A Wall Street financier and hedge fund manager (formerly number two in Michael Milken's junk bond empire), Ackerman is a member of the Council of Foreign Relations (CFR), as well as a former director of Freedom House, previously run by former CIA director James Woolsey. Ackerman also sits on the board of Spirit of America, a group that is "dedicated to spreading US influence worldwide, with a particular emphasis on covert cyber-intelligence measures." Ackerman is also on the advisory board of the ultraconservative Cato Institute's [Project on Social Security Choice](#), which proposes to privatize Social Security and allow younger workers to invest their Social Security taxes in private retirement accounts.

"Arab Spring" Neither Spontaneous Nor Indigenous

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As others have documented elsewhere, the 2011 uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa were neither spontaneous nor indigenous. Many of the individuals and groups who helped organize them had received training (at times in the US) sponsored by the State Department and CIA-linked foundations, such as the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The *New York Times*

makes this clear in a April 2011 article

[U.S. Groups Helped Nurture Arab Uprisings](#)

. It states specifically that “a number of the groups and individuals directly involved in the revolts and reforms sweeping the region, including the April 6 Youth Movement in Egypt, the Bahrain Center for Human Rights and grass-roots activists like Entsar Qadhi, a youth leader in Yemen, received training and financing from groups like the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute and Freedom House, a nonprofit human rights organization based in Washington.”

Likewise, as Canadian writers and analysts Ahmed Bensaada, Michael Chossudovsky and Tony Cartalucci have documented, leaders of the NED-funded Serbian resistance group OTPOR (now renamed CANVAS – Center for Applied Nonviolent Strategies) assisted in many of these trainings, often using Gene Sharp’s materials (see <http://landdestroyer.blogspot.co.nz/2011/11/soros-celebrates-fall-of-tunisia.html>).

Follow the Money

French Canadian author Ahmed Bensaada also discusses these relationships at length in his 2011 book [Arabesque Americaine](#), emphasizing the strong links between the two lead organizers in Egypt’s April 6th movement (Bassam Samir and Adel Mohamed), the US State Department, the NED and other CIA-funded foundations that financed the “color revolutions” in Eastern Europe. Bensaada also enumerates the pro-democracy organizations in other Arab countries (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, Yemen, and Syria) that received similar funding. In his appendix, he identifies specific pro-democracy groups by name and the exact amount each received (in 2009) from CIA-linked foundations.

Iran’s Failed Color Revolution

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According to Cartalucci, the destabilization campaign that culminated in the failed 2009 Green Revolution in Iran was drawn up by the corporate-funded Brookings Institution, as articulated in their 2009 report [Which Path to Persia?](#) . As Cartalucci notes [elsewhere](#) , the mechanics of organizing the Iranian opposition was subcontracted to organizations like the US-funded CANVAS. See also [I](#)

[he Color Revolution Fails in Iran](#)

and the 2007 BBC report

[Iran Shows New Scholars' Footage](#)

, linking George Soros to US efforts to destabilize Iran.

[Source](#)