

Popular Uprising as a Means for Change

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Preface

The purpose of this report is to familiarize and inform the reader on the current global issue of popular uprisings/revolutions. In the past, Canada has even been host to numerous uprisings. The uprisings being referred to include: the October Crisis and the Oka Crisis. Recently uprisings have been most apparent in the Middle East, as well as the northern parts of Africa (see Appendices A), but they have taken place all over the world in the past.

Even though on the other side of the world, these conflicts have both a direct and an indirect affect on Canada; as you will discover later by reading further into this paper. Some of the revolutions of the past that have influenced present uprisings include The Cuban Revolution, where General Fulgencio Batista subjugated the current president of Cuba and took over the presidency position (later being forced to resign by Fidel Castro); The Chinese revolution, which was a series of protests in the attempt to abolish the Manchu Dynasty; as well as the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 which restored a parliament that ceased to exist for nearly 30 years.¹ As you can see, the type of uprisings and revolutions that are to be discussed in this paper focus mainly on over throwing regimes/dictatorships.

“Popular uprising is a refusal of obedience or order and is used to destroy an established authority such as the government.” This definition is fairly vague; however, it still defines the general idea of an uprising. Popular uprising is becoming more prevalent in both our society and foreign societies. Egypt and Libya are receiving the most media attention, but there are many other countries involved. Some of the Arab

states consist of Tunisia, Bahrain, Yemen, Algeria, Iraq and also Jordan. Just to name a few.

Many people have the general belief that an uprising and a revolution are the same thing. They are correct in one way; both involve a revolt and/or protest of some kind. The difference between the two is the outcome. Revolutions are hit and miss because almost half of the attempted ones fail. These unsuccessful revolutions are called “uprisings”.². Therefore the protests in Egypt should no longer be referred to as an uprising, but a successful revolution. After the reader has completed their reading of this report, it is expected that they will have come to the conclusion that popular uprisings, as well as revolutions, are in fact very ubiquitous in today’s societies and have either a direct or indirect affect on the rest of the world. They will also discover that if the necessary steps are taken to prevent popular uprisings and revolutions, the world will become a much more peaceful and democratic place.

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Summary

This report includes information gathered from various, reputable sources, which consist of interviews, online newspapers, numerous databases, encyclopedias and also a diverse group of websites. This report will discuss uprisings and revolutions from the past, as well as the present; and while analyzing them, will be taking into account experts views, who has control of the situation, roles of both NGO's and government organizations on the issue, and religious/spiritual influence. Numerous case studies will be mentioned and have been researched perpetually and also have been carefully picked apart piece by piece to obtain a better understanding and knowledge of the events.

This report will briefly discuss the advantages and disadvantages of a dictatorship as well as economic fluctuation caused by a democracy dominated world. Another topic that will be touched on is the issues that arise while regimes and dictatorships are in power.

Background

Uprisings and revolutions have been occurring for hundreds of years and it is unambiguous that they will continue to arise in the future. Over time these protests have grown and have begun to occur more frequently. They started with slaves revolting against their masters. One of the first notable revolutions in semi-recent history is the Haitian Revolution, which began on August 22, 1791; two-hundred and twenty years ago.

This rebellion was made up of the Saint Domingue slaves and was led by a high priest named Dutty Boukman. They revolted against their white plantation owners and soon the slaves took one third of the entire island. At this time the Haitian islands were colonized by France, so the French Legislative Assembly came to the conclusion that they must give the coloured man civil and political rights in order to protect themselves from the impending force.³

Uprisings gradually shifted from being predominately slaves revolting against their masters to civilians rebelling against government figures. A notable failed revolution was the Taiping Revolution which took place in China during the 1850's and 60's. The leader of this organized group of rebels was named Hong Xiuquan and he referred to himself as the Messiah.

Hong took over significant parts of China and referred to his followers and himself as the "Taiping Heavenly Kingdom". Fortunately, this rebellion failed because it did not

posses the ability to accommodate both foreign and Chinese ideas. Mao Zedong's revolution during the 20th century was successful because he did just that.

Following this, the type of uprisings that are most prevalent in today's society began to arise. These revolutions are against dictatorships as well as regimes. Less than a century ago these uprisings involved armed rebels, but the majority of current protests involve everyday, unarmed civilians. "A revolution is a struggle to the death between the future and the past." – Fidel Castro.⁴ Fidel Castro launched his first attack on the Cuban dictator named Fulgencio Batista during the summer of 1953. He lost this battle and was put on trial and sentenced to 15 years in prison.

Two years later Fidel was released from prison. He then fled the country, returning a year later with a strengthened group of rebels. The rebels were attacked numerous times while residing in the south eastern mountain ranges of Cuba and lost the majority of his force. In 1959 Fulgencio Batista fled Cuba for the Dominican Republic and Fidel took over as Prime minister for 17 years before he became president.⁵ Fidel Castro is a dictator, the exact thing he fought against during the revolution.

There are ways countries can help aid or destroy an uprising. They could lend their assistance financially, or by supplying troops, or also by establishing an embargo on trade like the United States did with arms trade during the Cuban Revolution.

These are simply three examples of major revolutions throughout history. Now it is time to elaborate more on the actual topic of the paper (the affect/effect on the rest of the world). Of course in the past, revolutions still gained media attention, but the present

issues of the world are receiving more than their predecessors; to be more specific, the conflict in the Middle East and Northern Africa are. The entire world is now aware of these conflicts, while only the minority are aware of the other conflicts in Asia as well as other continents. A positive to this is that the international community has responded very well to these uprisings, by providing aid to both rebels and to civilians in need, more effectively than expected.

The negative is that, the already minimal, attention given to other uprisings is now being converted over to the Middle Eastern revolts and Northern Africa's escalating conflicts. These "less important" conflicts will now take longer to be resolved and the people suffering from them will have less aid provided, which ultimately means the country will suffer for many more years to come.

If the media's attention is dispersed fairly between all the uprisings in the world (not just the most appealing ones) the rest of the world, including Canadians, will feel more obliged to "lend a helping hand" to everyone in need.

Expert #1

Online Interview with Olivia Ward, Foreign Affairs Writer at the Toronto Star (See Appendices B)

Expert #2

Aung San Suu Kyi was the leader of a political party called the National League of Democracy, which won over 80% of seats in the 1990 Burmese parliamentary elections. Unfortunately her party was not allowed to form a government because the military junta currently ruling deemed the party illegal and forced it to disband. Aung San Suu Kyi was recognized for her multiple attempts at bringing democracy to the country of Burma by being awarded with a Noble Peace Prize in 1991.⁶

The Burmese government feels she is so influential on the people of Burma that they have had her under house arrest for nearly 20 years. The grounds that she has been officially detained for are that the government is “Protecting peace and stability in their country”.⁷

Aung San Suu Kyi is an advocate for peaceful political change (without the use of violence), and is openly opposed to violent dictatorships like the one currently in power in her home country of Burma. She is recognized as a hero on a global scale, but especially to the people of Burma who are forced to deal with constant abuse of a military government and injustice. Another way she has been recognized for her accomplishments is by being given an honorary Canadian citizen status.⁸

Aung San Suu Kyi was released just a mere 6 days after the 2010 Burma elections were held, which gives the rest of the world a reason to speculate whether or not

her sentence was purposely prolonged so that she would not be able to participate in the election.

Aung San Suu Kyi is truly a courageous person who has put her self in danger in an attempt to better her country. She has had to sacrifice her family as well as her freedom (because she has been detained) in order to pursue her goal of bringing democracy to Burma. She and her feats will never be forgotten by the Burmese people and many other people across the world. There is much hope that she will be able to replace the current informal dictatorship with a fully functional democratic government system.

Aung San Suu Kyi was chosen as an expert for this paper because she directly relates to uprisings. She is the leader of both a political group and a revolt against a dictator. This case is very similar to the current situation in Ivory Coast. There the opposing party also won a presidential election, but the acting president refused to step down. The difference between the two situations is that when Aung San Suu Kyi fought for what was rightfully hers, but unfortunately did not have much support, and therefore lost the “battle”. With the Ivory Coast situation, the opposing party was backed by many followers and overwhelmed the president (while simultaneously creating a civil war).

Aung San Suu Kyi is the perfect example of an expert on the issue of popular uprisings. She is against violence, which is the same as many uprisings at the start. The majority of uprisings start as simple protests against the government, but more often than

not, turn violent once the government decides to intervene. If only the Aung San Suu Kyi had the support necessary to overpower the corrupt Burmese government, the country would be in much better shape and the world would also be closer to peace.

Control

Who has control during an uprising/revolution? The answer is neither party truly has control of the situation. There is constantly a power shift between the defenders (usually some form of government) and the aggressors (the civilians or militia protesting/rebelling). For the majority of the uprising, the aggressor will have the advantage and therefore the control because they are fighting for something they have some personal connection to and have passion behind their arguments; whereas the police and army are defending their leader because they have been ordered to. A police officer in Egypt was quoted saying, "I'm only here until my tour of duty is up, after that, I'll be on the other side of the demonstration"⁹

Here are some examples of how the group revolting have control, as seen in Egypt:

- Egyptian body of protestors share the same common goals.
- Egyptians suddenly burst into protests with such massive numbers that the regime was caught off guard.
- Was hard for Egyptian forces to disassemble large crowds because 97% of Egypt's population live on 3% of its land.

- Protestors showed solidity by not giving up even though some were injured if not killed.

The Government usually has some kind of control over the immense crowds, but only because they had to element of fear on their side because of their random violent outbursts. For example, as of February 16th, 2011 there had been over 365 deaths reported and thousands of injuries as a result of this violence (police brutality) in Egypt. Attempts were made to regulate and better control the Egyptian protests by imposing curfews, but these were disobeyed so frequently that the police and army did not even attempt to enforce the rule.¹⁰

Whoever has control over the situation for the longest time will be the group that succeeds in accomplishing their goals; either it be dismissing the uprising or overthrowing the government. Another thing that should be taken into account is how sheer numbers usually have an impact on who has control over the events.

Religion

Religion can have an extremely large affect/influence on a revolution. In every country in the world there are groups of people with different religious beliefs. It is not uncommon for different religions to question each other and even go to war because of it. The two groups will fight to prove that their god is the superior to the other. These holy wars or uprisings are never condemned, but more times than not, encouraged by the ministers and priests.

A great example of how religion was applied was with the American Revolution. Ministers would explain the soldiers how what they are doing is what god wants them to do and that the revolution is viewed as an honourable and righteous cause by the all-mighty. Quaker beliefs were one side of the war and the other group were puritans. The puritans were fighting to create a government because they felt they need to be governed and also believe that governments exist to “enforce the will of god”. The Quakers fought for freedom and believed there was no use being governed by any “institute of slavery”¹¹. It was also a lot easier for a colonist to identify with an issue if it somehow related to a bible story.

That is why this piece of art (see Appendices C) helped the men to understand the Boston Massacre of 1770. “The creator of the work saw Absalom as a patriot, rebelling against and suffering from the arbitrary rule of his father King David (symbolizing George III). The king, shown at the top left, is playing his harp, evidently oblivious to the anguish of his children in the American colonies. The figure executing Absalom--David's commander Joab in the Old Testament story--is dressed as a British red coat.”¹² This is a direct quote giving a detailed of the true meaning behind the piece of art work entitled “The Hanging of Absalom”.

Religion is very commonly associated with war and revolutions. There have been many uprisings and revolts due the argument of which religion is dominant in the past as well as present, and will most likely be common in the future.

Case Study #1 – Libya

Libya became an independent country in December of 1951. At this time it was under the rule of King Idris, but by September 1st, 1969, he was no-longer in power. A coup d'état was staged (overthrow or quick change in power) by a small military group led by a young officer who went by the name of Mu'ammr Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi (better known as Gaddafi). The king was then exiled to Egypt and the new regime (led by the Revolutionary Command Council) took control of the country.

Gaddafi resigned from his position as General Secretary of the General People's Committee in 1977, but still remained as the dictator of Libya because he had control of the Libyan Armed Forces. During the 1970's and 80's Gaddafi undertook quite a few military campaigns including the Chadian-Libyan Conflict, Gulf of Sidra Incident and the 1986 US bombing of Libya, just to name a few. After the US bombing, Gaddafi no longer endorsed terrorist attacks on western countries and began to "clean up" his image. He successfully established a "new image" for himself by the early 2000's and has maintained that image until just recently when conflict arose once again in his country.¹³

This internal conflict has been fueled by both the greed for money and the want for change in power. Libya has an extremely successful petroleum (contributes and estimated 58% of Libya's total GDP), but the "oil wealth" was only spread over a small population, also referred to as the elite, which didn't allow Libya's middle class to truly develop. By doing this, the Libyan government created a fairly large unemployment rate

of 21%. A large portion of this income has been taken wrongfully by Gaddafi. Also, this income has been spent on arms, as well as, funded terrorist acts around the world.

The people of Libya's human rights have also been violated in a large way. Gaddafi has put in place some horrible laws to ensure his stay in power and to prolong his 41 year reign of terror. One of the most grotesque one stating that any individual or group who attempts to fund an opposing political party will be executed. Some of these executions are publicly broadcasted and replayed over state television channels. Another law that is enforced is that if any persons choose to involve themselves in a political conversation with a foreigner can be imprisoned for up to 3 years. These are some of the main conflicts that have been the reason for the unrest/uprisings currently taking place in Libya.

The protests began to escalate on February 15th when protestors in front of the Benghazi police headquarters were forced to disperse violently, resulting in nearly 40 injuries. Similar protests and violence took place across the rest of the country. These protestors were given a "political face" when The National Transitional Council was formed. This council was not formed to replace the current government, but to give the protestors/rebels direction. This is the same opposition party that called for the no-fly zone, which the United Nations helped put in place (to help protect civilians). There is also a belief that members of the Al-Qaeda terrorist group are affiliated with the Libyan rebels, but there is not sufficient information to back these allegations.¹⁴

Gaddafi made an attempt to disrupt the rebels' organization by shutting down internet communication, blocking cell phone signals, as well as many land lines. He has also put a ban on any journalists from reporting on the current issue unless they are reporting in favor of his government. Many news crews have been detained and/or beaten, while others have been executed.

The Libyan rebels were fairly successful at the beginning of their campaign, defending themselves from the government troops (and hired mercenaries) and even advancing on them. This did not last for long as the Libyan Armed Forces began to use tanks, artillery and air strikes. It is believed that the rebels will not be able to hold off the advancing troops if the UN does not put "boots on the ground". Yes their air support has been extremely helpful, but there is a very strong need for the added ground support (which they will more than likely not receive).¹⁵

The moral of the Government controlled forces is being depleted slowly as the UN attacks combined with the rebel forces have bombarded many of the outposts and government controlled cities. The Gaddafi regime also felt the suffering as Khamis al-Gaddafi (President Gaddafi's son) was reported to have been killed after a suicide fighter plain crashed into the barracks where he resided. These reports are still yet to be confirmed though. Many government officials as well as generals have begun to resign from their positions and/or flee from the country. Some of these officials include the justice minister, the interior minister major general, along with the oil minister, just to

mention a few. Hopefully Gaddafi will feel that he must resign because of his lack of support and the rebels gaining of foreign support.

One possible solution to this civil war would be the division of the country. Although drastic, this solution has many positives, but also many negatives. With this solution the “green flag”, or the Gaddafi regime, could continue to rule one half of the country and the other party could adapt a westernized form of government for the other half. This solution would more than likely, not solve the actual violent aspect of the uprising. Rather than the civil war be over the changing of government, it will be adapted to a war for oil (as the pro-democracy side will have control the majority of the oil reserves). Therefore this solution is unrealistic and unlikely to actually occur. The only way it could be possible would be if the United Nations devoted a ridiculous amount of their resources to this cause and had a very large role in the negotiations between the two parties.¹⁶

Another possible solution would be for the UN to intervene and send in ground troops to support the rebel forces. By doing so, they would easily overthrow Muammar Gaddafi and remove him from power. This solution would cost a tremendous amount of money and will be the cause of much military, as well as, civilian casualties that could possibly be avoided. There is no realistic solution to Libyan uprising without the use of violence. Gaddafi and the rebels have attempted to solve their problems, but neither will compromise. Muammar Gaddafi will not step down from his position of power, and the rebel forces will not rest until he does so and a democratic government is successfully put

in place The Libyan government currently does have a parliament, but Gaddafi monitors opposing parties and dictates the country still.

Case Study #2 – Kyrgyzstan

The Kyrgyzstan Republic is one of six independent Turkic states. It is a land locked country that earned its independence during the year 1991. Before independence, Kyrgyzstan was first controlled by the Russians and then fell under Soviet rule. The Soviet's power was first established in 1919 and in 1936 Kyrgyzstan (called Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic at the time) was established as a “full republic of the Soviet Republic”.

Under the control of the Soviet Union Kyrgyzstan was improved in many ways. The literacy rate increased (and therefore the educational system) improved as well has both the country's culture and economy. As expected, Russian became the official “literary language”. The Soviet Union ruled this country fairly peacefully until protests began in 1986 when the native people (Kyrgyz) became fed up with the Soviet racism. They were protesting against the discriminatory policy, which attempted (and usually succeeded) to forcibly remove them from major cities so that members of other Soviet Republics' could occupy the area.¹⁷

Protests and riots became more and more prevalent in The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic; and soon the country would become independent officially on December 25th, 1991. The name of the country was changed once again to The Kyrgyz

Republic (which still remains today) around two years after independence had been declared.

Politics in The Kyrgyz Republic have always been unstable because of the influence of organized crime and assassinations becoming almost a regular occurrence in the twenty-first century. The citizens reached their breaking point with the government last April.

At the time of the uprising, the man occupying the presidential position was Kurmanbek Bakiyev. Bakiyev was appointed to presidency on March 24th, 2005, after the Tulip Revolution. This revolution's goal was to oust the current president (Askar Akayev) as well as his family and associates because they were believed to be corrupt and had slowly become more of an authoritarian and less democratic.

Kurmanbek Bakiyev's term was plagued by the murder of politicians and also prison riots; not to mention a poor economy. The protests did not just start in 2010, but were also present in 2007 when Bakiyev's opposition, along with its followers, forced him to sign amendments to relinquish some of his power. This power would then be transferred to the parliament and the prime minister. The protestors still remained (in a weak effort) to try and coax Bakiyev to resign, but he didn't budge and the revolt ended shortly after police became violent. Bakiyev's term ended, but he had grown strong bond with Russia who still has a tremendous influence on Kyrgyzstan. So when the next election was held, Kurmanbek Bekiyev was re-elected. ¹⁸

There were many factors that contributed to the 2010 April uprisings in the country's capital city (Bishkek) and also in Talas where protestors took control of a government office. One of the major contributors being the rolling blackouts experienced across the nation do to the massive increase in energy prices. These prices increased during February of 2010 because Kyrgyzstani was attempting to become less dependant on the Central Asian power system and was also trying to reduce energy dependence on Russia by building new/more efficient power lines. This was overseen by one of the current president's son's.

The increases reported were %400 for heat and %170 for electricity. This was not the only thing that outraged/fueled the citizens of Kyrgyzstani to revolt. Some other factors include the poor economy and the closure of media outlets. Russia had been backing the president just before the uprising, but sensed the unrest and began to run negative media campaign against Bakiyev (because they own and control most of the media outlets in the country).

This campaign associated the president and his family (specifically his son) with a known corrupt businessman who was the acting as the director of the consultant agency that was main advisor for Bakiyev's "development fund". This is when the government began to close media sources. They first started by shutting down two newspapers who were shedding negative light on the government on March 18th, 2010. Following this, another newspaper, a radio station, and also an independent website were all shut down (before March 31st).

Russia made Kurmanbek Bakiyev's life even more difficult when they enraged the citizens of Kyrgyzstani even more by imposing duties on their energy exports (referring back to the increase in heating and electricity prices). The protest then officially began on April 6th, 2010

Approximately 1000 members of the protests in Talas invaded and took control of a government office. They struggled at first, but persevered and took sole possession of the building. The uprisings (although only half the size) in Bishkek also began to form on this day. The next day the mass of people had grown noticeably larger. The crowd consisted of almost 5000 civilians. This day was filled with many acts of violence and disobedience from the rebellious protestors as well as news of the uprising spreading across the country into different regions. From April 8th until the 15th Bakiyev had no power, but still refused to relinquish his so called "authoritarian position".

The revolution was dubbed successful on April 15th, 2010 when the people had got what they had been fighting for and President Kurmanbek Bakiyev resigned from his presidency position. There were many people injured and even killed for this cause. There have been 88 reported deaths and more than one-thousand people injured. President Bakiyev then fled, which ultimately prevented a civil war from breaking out. Unfortunately he attempted to regain his power by explaining how he no longer recognized his hand written resignation letter and that he still wish to lead Kyrgyzstan. He was dismissed quickly and no one paid much attention to his cry for acceptance because Russia (who the people still feel loyal too) did not accept his plea.¹⁹

The UN, as well as the rest of the international community did not play a large role in this conflict at all. In fact it was solved almost entirely internally. The only source of foreign influence was Russia. Unfortunately these protests were not solved peacefully and the riot police was forced to resort to violence in order to keep order and “manage” there large gathering of people. Any bystander could have predicted the event as it was almost inevitable because of the lack of stability in the government. The Kyrgyzstani government must “clean up” their act by eliminating the close relation between politics and crime and improving their poor economy. President Bakiyev was attempting to improve his economy and help his country become more independent, but he tried to do so in haste, which raised energy prices and frustrated his people.

If the government takes steps to becoming “pure” and also takes good, strong, gradual steps to improving the poor economy; they will gain the acceptance and following of the people. This will strengthen the moral of Kyrgyzstan and improve the country as a whole.

Case Study #3

The protests in Thailand started back in March of 2008, but have been prolonged. The National United Front of Democracy Against Dictatorship or U.D.D. (and even more commonly referred to as the red-shirts) have been attempting to get the current government to materialize because they feel an election is much needed. Before the protests erupted, there were negotiations to set an election date, but unfortunately the two

parties were unable to do so. This is when the peaceful protest turned in a violent riot.

Nearly 80 members of the uprising were shot and killed, along with 6 soldiers by the 19th of May. Not to mention the thousands of civilians who were injured during the conflict.

More and more people began to oppose Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva over the next few years and then protests began once more in March of 2010. The main reason for these protests is that a large section of the population have grown to be discontent with the current government and there have been many rumors circulating that Prime Minister Vejjajiva and his followers have been attempting a military coup. Military coups are used to create dominance over a government; usually by using the force of military as intimidation. When a military coup fails it often results in a civil war. In Thailand's case, instead of a civil war there has been a massive uprising.²⁰

From March to May there were many protests held and a great number of civilians were injured and/or killed supporting their cause. The first large/significant protest of 2010 was held on March 14th. This protest was held in Thailand's capital city (Bangkok). There were around one-hundred-thousand participants in this exact uprising. This particular uprising was a large ten kilometer long caravan that moved throughout the city. The uprising gained more attention and grew stronger as time past, which began to frighten the government.

On April 8th Thailand issued a state of emergency. This enabled them to allow their military to detain any person they deemed a threat to national security, as well as monitor the media and forbid gatherings larger than five people (similar to the War

Measures Act during the October Crisis). After this state of emergency was declared, the violence continued and actually became more of a common occurrence.

The red-shirts grew weary of this violence and suggested a cease fire. They presented the option of dissolving the current government and holding an election within thirty days. The leaders of the red-shirts believed that this would bring back peace to the country of Thailand. This proposition was quickly dismissed by the Thai government as they did not believe it was in the best interest of the country, but merely the sole interest of the U.D.D.

By the beginning of the May, the rest of country was feeling the affects of the uprising. An estimated one-hundred-thousand people (no associated with either party in the conflict) had either lost their job or gone bankrupt. This was taken into account by the government so they proposed to hold elections on September 14th, 2010 if the uprising ended. The protests did not end and the offer was withdrawn as of the 13th.

Finally the uprising came to an end on May 19th, 2010. The army stormed the rebels' camp and killed 5 men. The leaders of the uprising then surrendered so that there would no longer be any more bloodshed; or so they thought. Many of the red-shirts continued to fight for their cause, but eventually the hatred and protests died down.²¹

All this violence could have easily been avoided if the two sides had agreed to one of the negotiations/offers. It is understandable that the government realized that had a clear advantage over their opposition, so their decision to not accept the first offer is understandable. What was surprising is that the red-shirts did not immediately comply

with governments demands when they offered to have the government dissolve and hold elections. The red-shirts seemed to become greedy now that they believed the dissolving of the government was inevitable; and requested more information about the proposal. If they had not done so, the rogue protestors would not have had the opportunity to shoot and kill two police officers and ultimately end all discussions between the two groups.

Peaceful protests are still held every year to commemorate the efforts of red-shirts fallen peers, and there has been no more violence demonstrated towards the.

NATO and the UN's Role

NATO has chosen a Canadian Lt.-Gen Charles Bouchard to serve as the head of operations in Libya. General Bouchard will head the air campaign in Libya while also running/coordinating the naval efforts. He and the other NATO officials will conduct air missions, destroying heavy machinery and also attacking government ground troops. Bombing of government controlled air fields has commenced. Also, there are many foreign naval vessels in the Mediterranean awaiting commands. These efforts have been extremely successful and have had a large role in the recent rebel success. Without the enforcement of the "no-fly zone" and the air support provided, it is very likely that the rebel forces would have already been overrun and the campaign been terminated.

The UN has said that they will be taking all possible and necessary measures to ensuring the no-fly zone is to be respected. Either the UK or France are assumed to take the lead of this operation, but USA has also voiced that they are willing to help out. It is

more likely that there will be a conjoined effort of the three allied forces.²² The UN is also giving aid to the civilians and rebel forces within Libya, although it is extremely difficult to do so. They have sent 5000 blankets and 5000 sleeping mats for the rebels camping out across Benghazi and have sent 11 tons of lintels (plants) and 1500 tons of food into eastern Libya from Egypt. Also, the UN and NATO are evacuating peoples from the countries who are suffering from political unrest (mainly Libya). These international organizations are playing an important role in Libya and are currently and will continue to be successful.

Non-Government Organizations Role

The Red Cross had been originally providing aid to the rebels in Benghazi, but were forced to evacuate once they felt the threat of government troops to be growing too strong. Fortunately the no-fly zone was put into place and they were able to return. They have been supplying the hospitals with much needed medical supplies, while still providing essential house hold items to help the peoples of Libya who require them. The International Committee of The Red Cross has launched an appeal for 26 million dollars to be used to help the people affected by the crisis' in both Libya, Tunisia, Egypt and the other countries in that area suffering from unrest . Another thing that has been sent into Libya is large tents to act as mobile medical centers and shelters.

During the political unrest in Egypt, the Red Cross was also flying in much needed medical supplies along with setting up a provisional refugee camp to hold 10,000

people, which as overflowed and now holds an estimated 30,000. Although all this effort has been put worth, there are still shortages of food and other supplies and there are a lot of other things that still need to be done (larger refugee camps and medical centers).²³

Without the help of foreign aid, the Middle East and Northern Africa would be a disaster zone. The vast majority of people would be living under the poverty line with not assistance at all. Disease would spread even quicker because of the lack of medical assistance and thousands of people would be homeless. Hunger/starvation would also become prevalent and thousands of people would die everyday.

Still there are things that both the UN and these charitable organizations can do to better aid those in need. The United Nations could invest more resources into the conflicts into the revolutions across the world, but specifically in the Middle East and Northern Africa. By doing this, the conflicts could be solved quicker and the moral of the rebels would be boosted immensely.

It is obvious that right now, the countries suffering from these uprisings and revolutions are in need of aid more so than many other parts of the world. That is why both N.G.O.'s should also begin to shift there resources from other parts of the world (temporarily of course) to the countries suffering in the Middle East and Northern Africa. If this is done, the events/conflicts will move along much quicker, while providing less stress on the citizens of the countries who are not directly involved.

How is Canada Affected Internally

Oka Crisis

There have been many cases in Canada that resemble the current uprisings in the Middle East and in Africa; one of the most notable ones being the Oka Crisis. This conflict was a land dispute between the Mohawk community of Kanésatake and the people of Oka, Quebec. This conflict started in the summer of 1990 and lasted for 2 and a half months. The crisis began when the people of Oka revealed plans for a golf course which would be developed on the land used by the Mohawk as an ancient Burial ground. A land claim had already been filed by the Mohawk people, but was rejected.²⁴

The conflict escalated once the Mohawk erected a barrier between what they believed to be their land, and the Oka Township. Both the police force and Mohawk were armed with weapons and once tear gas and flash bangs were projected at the barricade, a gun battle broke out (eventually ending when the police force retreated). This gun fight resulted in one casualty. The government bought the section of land being disputed over for \$5.3 million dollars, but this did not solve the problem. Instead of the Mohawk inheriting the land they thought to be theirs, it moved from a municipal government to the federal one.²²

Both soldiers and the RCMP were brought into the conflict when the government felt it had had enough. After 78 days of conflict, the aboriginal peoples of Kanésatake surrendered, throwing their dismantled guns into a fire. The golf course plans were cancelled and there were no further conflicts. This event also led to First Nations Policing

Policy. This police was developed to provide funds for policing services for the natives' communities of Canada that are "dedicated, culturally appropriate, and accountable to the communities they serve."²⁵

As you can see, this is very similar to the unrest in the Middle East, in particular, the civil war in Libya. This is because in both cases, there are a group of civilians taking up arms against their government. One is for a change and government and one is to gain ownership of land, but both are conflicts fought for what the people believe they deserve. The Mohawks believe they deserve the land of their ancestors the Libyans believe they have the right to a democratic government.

October Crisis

The October Crisis can be viewed in two different ways; it depends on how you look at the situation. The most common conclusion is that it was a terrorist group called the Front de libération du Québec, or F.L.Q., who terrorized Quebec during 1970 by kidnapping prominent people in the province. If you look deeper into the conflict you can see that these events can also be perceived as an uprising.

Front de libération du Québec was a revolutionary movement that was dedicated to the emergence of an independent Quebec. This movement first began in 1963, but became more prominent during the October crisis in 1970. The crisis was triggered by the kidnapping of James Cross and Pierre Laporte.²⁶ After this, Canada put the War Measures Act in place. This act shall only be put in place during times of war, invasion or

insurrection. In this case, the cause for this act to be issued was insurrection. According to the definition on <http://dictionary.reference.com>, insurrection refers to, “An act or instance of rising in revolt, rebellion, or resistance against civil authority or an established government.”. Therefore the October crisis had to be considered an uprising for the War Measures Act to be put in place.²⁷

The F.L.Q.’s actions continued to escalate. The day after the War Measures act was put in place, one of the men held hostage (Pierre Laporte) was found dead in the trunk of a car. He had been murdered. 2 months later James Cross was found alive and the government negotiated with the Front de libération du Québec for his release. The kidnapers and some family members bargained for safe passage to Cuba in return for their captive. Another group of F.L.Q. members were apprehended shortly after and put on trial. They were convicted of both kidnapping and murder. After the trial the War Measures Act was lifted, but regulations under public order remained. Eventually life in Quebec turned back to normal. At the end of the terror, over 3000 raids were conducted, and hundreds of people were detained and questioned. The October Crisis was and still is an important event in Canada’s history and the terror across Quebec and the nation will not be forgotten.²⁸

Canada’s Role in the Middle East

Canada has committed a naval ship to the conflict (which is currently floating in the Mediterranean awaiting instructions). Air support is being provided, which also

means 100 – 200 air crew would also be deployed. These planes will carry out bombing campaigns and airstrikes. As stated above, a Canadian general is also heading these NATO air missions as well as coordinating awaiting the naval forces. It is almost ironic that Canada is playing such a big role in ensuring the no-fly zone (which was put in place by the UN) is being respected when it was not elected into the UN's Security Council.

These military efforts are costing Canada a great amount of money, which the Harper government chooses not to disclose; but could be estimated to be in the 100 of millions range because our neighbour to the south has committed 400 million – 1 billion dollars in their military efforts. Canada has also offered to help with elections when they are called upon and development aid. The Canadian Red Cross is also contributing to the uprising by supporting the Rebel forces with food and medical supplies. Another thing that should be taken into account is the cost of evacuating Canadian's from the Middle Eastern countries when the violence spreads²⁹.

There are a few critics that believe us Canadian's should not be spending our money helping the United Nations in Libya after the snuffed us by not giving us a seat in their security council. All in all, the Canadians efforts have been recognized and greatly appreciated by the rest of the world. The United Nations realize that we are a very important aspect to maintaining world peace and will not make the mistake of not including us in the Security Council again.

Possible Solutions

The possible solutions to popular uprisings and revolutions are few and also extremely hard to be implemented in all actuality. Still, if these solutions were attempted and people had faith in them, there is a strong possibility that the world could become a much more peaceful and democratic place. For all solutions there are obvious positives, but there are also negatives that come along with a few.

The first solution would be for the UN, other international groups and countries to do nothing. Simply let the country “figure out” their problem internally with no influence from the rest of the international community. This means no aid would be provided, not refugees would be taken in by bordering countries, literally no help, in any way, would be provided. This could alleviate the stress put on the rest of the world and the problems will be dealt with much faster.

This solution could also prevent some uprisings from even occurring. For example, the uprising in Kyrgyzstan during April of 2010 could be contributed to the influence of Russia. The current president of Kyrgyzstan attempted to become less dependant on Russia’s power; so Russia decided to strike back by creating and running a negative campaign against him and his associates over the media outlets they were in control of. If Russia had not done this, there is a very good (but not great) chance that the uprising could have been avoided entirely.

The negatives that this solution possesses, unfortunately, are great. The dictator or government that the people have revolted against will hold strong in almost every

situation. The dictator or authoritarian will remain in power and may even govern his citizens harder than before. The dictator will stay in office and control for an extremely prolonged period of time, just like Fidel Castro and his family have done in Cuba. More casualties would also be expected and the moral of the country would diminish slowly.

Another possible, but improbable, solution to the problem would be for the United Nations to eliminate all dictatorships and governments with corrupt leaders; and replace them with democratic governments. This solution seems to be almost impossible, but if actually attempted, could be very beneficial. There would be fewer uprisings because of the new type of government and there would be much less hatred towards the leader of the country.

This possible solution has many negatives that go along with. First, a large amount of the international community's resources will be used and it will have ridiculous costs. Another factor that must be taken into consideration is that there is no guarantee that the people of the particular country will be for the removal of their current government. Also, there is no promise that the citizens will automatically adopt/accept the democratic style of politics.

For a more realistic approach to solving the problem of popular uprisings and revolutions, the United Nations and other international groups could commit themselves to one side of the conflict immediately. Then they could use all available resources to aid their party. This would be much more effective than the indecisive decisions demonstrated by the UN in Libya.

If this was to happen conflicts will no longer be prolonged and will be solved much quick. There is also a good chance that the opposing party may feel intimidated by the force assembled against them, which could lead to their resignation with less blood shed. You could also say that there is a chance the opposite could happen. It is not absurd to say that a dictator may still stand strong until his forces are almost annihilated. This solution is also extremely expensive because of the amount of resources invested in the conflict.

Finally, the most believable and easily implemented solution would be more strict regulations on elections so that they are fair and not influenced by any external powers (such as the current leader). No negatives can be drawn from this solution. When these regulations are put in place, dictators will no longer remain in power if they are not wanted by their people. This could positively affect the unrest in the country.

If any of these solutions are acted upon, uprising and revolutions will decrease by a significant amount, if not, be permanently terminated.

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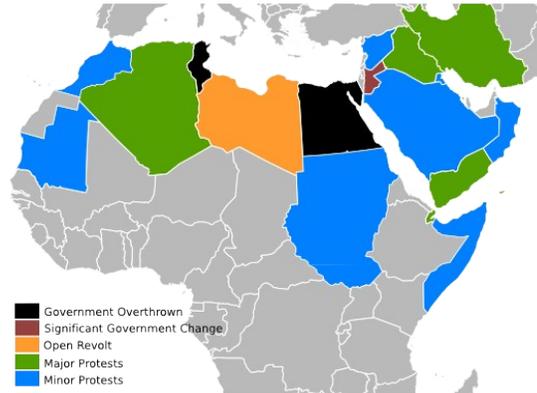
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Appendix

A.



B.

General Questions

1. To what do you attribute the increase in unrest around the world, especially in the Middle East? Are there three or four factors.

First, pervasive repression and lack of democratic participation. The people in the countries in revolt have been living for decades with constraints we in the West would not put up with: ban on public gatherings, political parties and peaceful political demonstrations, curfews, ever-present police, spying on citizens, always being at the mercy of the authorities. Second, corruption: having to pay bribes and extortion money to get the simplest things done -- a driver's licence, permission to set up a market stall, parking on the street, etc. Third, high unemployment especially among young people who are better educated than their parents. Fourth, inequality: seeing members of the regime living as millionaires while the vast majority struggle. Fifth: inflation and economic stagnation or decline that lowers already low standards of living.

2. Relative to history the uprisings seem to be resolved much quicker than in the past. Do what would you attribute this too? In both Tunisia and Egypt, the regimes collapsed from within once the security forces (especially the armies) realized that protests would only gain momentum and they might end up on the "wrong side of history." In Libya that hasn't happened, at least so far. Nor in Bahrain or Saudi Arabia. Syria will be the next test case, because although Bashar al-Assad is not as brutal as his father, and puts on a smiley public face, it's still a repressive police state in which the elite are getting rich while others struggle.

Specific Questions

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1. What role is Canada playing in Libya and the rest of the Middle - Eastern and Northern – African countries suffering from political unrest? The most high profile role is in the coalition to enforce a no-fly zone -- and protect vulnerable civilians -- in Libya. Canada is taking part in the bombing raids and has a naval ship in the Mediterranean near Libya. The NATO group taking part is led by a Canadian, Gen.

- Charles Bouchard. Other than that, it has offered help with elections, and I believe, development aid. For specific details suggest you look at the department of foreign affairs website, which lists aid.
2. Does religion have any influence on the current conflicts? Are the uprisings fuelled strictly by oppression and economics or are there other significant reasons? Religion has played no direct part in any of the uprisings. It's complicated, because in the "secular" autocracies, dictators used fear of Islamism as a reason to repress people and political parties. So religion became a mark of defiance for opponents. But there is evidence that the secularism has worked, and the majority of people in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, for instance, consider themselves either secular or moderate Muslims. In Saudi Arabia and Bahrain there have been protests by Shiite communities against the Sunni-dominated regimes. But that has to do more with a power struggle than a religious struggle.
 3. I know social networking had a large role in organizing protests in Egypt. Do you know if sites such as facebook have had such an impact on the other current uprisings? I can't comment on which social media were most effective. You may find studies on that.
 4. Would the Egyptian uprising been successful without the social networks. Probably not so quickly. And it helped that one of the movers behind the Tahrir Square uprising in Egypt was a young, dynamic Google executive. I believe there were also cases where demonstrations diminished because the government clamped down on social media and people didn't know how to communicate without them. Then they bounced back when communications improved.
 5. What impact has the media had on the success of the uprisings? I think a great deal. By showing people what is actually going on in their countries they gained hope and courage to continue, and could disregard the regimes' lies that everybody loved the dictators, and the protesters were criminals and terrorists. If the government prevents communication, and people are afraid to talk to each other for fear of being betrayed, they are kept in the dark. It's the theory of divide and conquer. The media -- both social and traditional, like al Jazeera -- have united people.
 6. Do you believe Gadhafi will eventually comply with UN requests or will he continue to be non compliant? It's hard to say. Everything I've learned about him says he'll go down fighting. He will likely have to face justice at the International Criminal Court if he flees, and in Libya itself he's sure to be charged with massive financial as well as criminal wrongdoing. Also, his exile possibilities are so far pretty limited. Zimbabwe is one

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of his few friends, and even Hugo Chavez in Venezuela hasn't offered sanctuary. He's also enriched his family, who would also stand to lose. But as long as his security forces and family-led army units are with him, and winning militarily, he probably wouldn't leave. But if

that changes, strange things do happen when people are in life-or-death situations, and a negotiated exit can't be ruled out.

7. Would the rebels have a legitimate chance of overthrowing the Gadhafi regime by themselves? If they are continued to be supported by NATO and the UN will they be able too? Without the NATO/coalition force the rebels wouldn't have a chance. Gadhafi has heavy weapons, although his air support is limited because of the air strikes that have already been made. But in the last few days we've seen the rebels driven back and back toward Benghazi -- and they've even said they would make a ceasefire deal with Gadhafi. Unless the NATO countries are prepared to send heavy weapons and trainers very quickly, which is unlikely, they won't be able to advance to Tripoli, take the capital and form a real government. For them to do that, there needs to be much more support from the NATO countries, including some "boots on the ground."

8. Do you believe these Middle Eastern countries will be able to function properly as democracy, or do you believe they are too accustomed to a dictatorship/socialist style of government? They are rebelling because they want democracy -- or at least an end to repressive rule. I think that in predominantly young societies, where the young people are very plugged in to international news, there's an understanding of what they should be aiming for. But I also think it's unrealistic to think that all the "liberated" countries would become model democracies overnight. After all, it took hundreds of years for Western-style democracy to come to our countries, and it's still a work in progress. The danger may be if people in the Mideast expect too much too soon in terms of improving their standards of living and reforming their security forces, economic systems, and infrastructures. I've lived in the former soviet Union just after communism crumbled, and there was terrible chaos, and people became angry and embittered. The hope is that the new governments will be able to work toward common goals, and make really sincere efforts to root out corruption and repression -- but without setting off a cycle of bloody revenge. It's a delicate balance, but they can do it.

9. Is Canada affected directly and/or indirectly as a result of the current uprisings? If so, could you provide an example(s)? Most immediate effect is the cost. The Harper government doesn't like to tell us what military efforts cost, but a Congressional report in the US estimated Washington's bill at \$400 million to \$1 billion. There's also the cost of evacuating Canadians from Middle Eastern countries when violence spreads. I haven't seen any reports of spiking refugee claims, but there could be some increase from countries like Libya where people are under threat, also Yemen and Bahrain. However Europe tends to be on the front line rather than us. Another, very positive, effect is that Canadians of Arab origin say they regained a sense of pride that took a battering after 9/11, when they felt suspicion.



C.