

GOOGLING “Revolution” in North Africa : How “Deep Politics” Successfully Corrupts A Non-Violent Protest Movement

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In-depth Report: [ARAB PROTEST
MOVEMENT](#)

Preface:

To clarify my reasons for writing the following: I'm an enthusiastic supporter so far of the nonviolent Egyptian revolution, who is dismayed by the U.S. launch of yet another Middle Eastern war against Libya.

More specifically: I am neither a heart-led romantic who thinks thousands mass in the streets spontaneously without help, nor a heartless cynic who thinks that former State Department officials like Jared Cohen have no right to try to change the world.

What concerns me here is that power corrupts, and the power of a few in America to quietly help make a nonviolent revolution in Egypt seems to have led very swiftly to heavy missile attacks against Libya.

i

Googling:

Egypt revolution 2011

About 23,300,000 results

Egypt revolution 2011 facebook

About 11,800,000 results

Egypt revolution 2011 facebook google

About 6,150,000 results

Egypt revolution 2011 facebook google Movements.org

About 1,750,000 results

Egypt revolution 2011 facebook google " Wael Ghonim"

About 199,000 results

Egypt revolution 2011 facebook google Movements.org "jared cohen"

About 5,780 results

Egypt revolution 2011 facebook google Movements.org

"jared cohen""state department planning staff"

About 686 results

Egypt revolution 2011 facebook google Movements.org

"wael ghonim" "jared cohen" "state department planning staff"

About 16 results

Egypt revolution 2011 facebook google Movements.org

"wael ghonim" "jared cohen""state department planning staff" libya

8 results

Egypt revolution 2011 facebook google Movements.org

"jared cohen""state department planning staff" "shabab April 6"

Your search - ... - did not match any documents.

What???????

ii

Trying again:

Egyptian revolution "April 6 Movement"

About 195,000 results

"The protests in Egypt are being driven by the April 6 youth movement, a group on Facebook."1

"alliance for youth movements" "jared cohen"

About 5,450 results

Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs James K. Glassman, State Department, November 24, 2008: "And as a result of those conversations and the work that Jared has done, between December 3rd and December 5th [2008], that is to say next week,

a conference is being held in New York City at the Columbia University Law School that will bring together 17 organizations around the world.... Also, a foundation will be created called the Alliance of Youth Movements. And a hub, an electronic hub, again, anyone will have access to it around the world. Now, this conference - the entire conference will be streamed by MTV and by Howcast. We are - we at the State Department are one partner. In fact, we take a back seat to what the private sector is doing, which is just fabulous. But we're happy to have gotten this thing started, at any rate."2

Egypt revolution 2011 "Shabab April 6"

About 136 results:

Egyptian protesters gave a call for a million people to pour onto the streets of Cairo tomorrow....The call by so called 'April 6 Shabab Movement' came as an indefinite countrywide strike gripped the nation.... **The 'Shabab' movement which has been formed of all opposition groups** and the leaders declared that the march would start from Tahrir or Liberation Square and was aimed at forcing Mubarak to step down by Friday.3

Egypt revolution 2011 "Shabab April 6" "jared cohen"

9 results

Inaugural AYM [Alliance of Youth Movements] Summit and Egypt's Shabab April 6 Movement:

If you follow Movements.org at all, you've noticed that our network is made up of grassroots activists from around the world. At our summits, and here on this site, the goal is for people to share information with each other so that they can more effectively tackle campaigns for social change. Much of what I do is work on improving these training resources and facilitate the sharing of best practices among activists. As an example, on our private listserv there have been some questions lately out of Cameroon and Nigeria about how best to set up a campaign to monitor elections. On the list, we—me, Mark Belinsky of Digital Democracy, Ken Banks of Frontline SMS, Juliana Rotich of Ushahidi, and a few others—were able to get some helpful information out to these folks. Movements.org is first and foremost about making it easier for activists to connect with each other and get the information they need.[\[4\]](#)

* * * * *

The Shabab April 6 Movement, which was at the inaugural summit [in New York City of the Alliance of Youth Movements] in 2008, is one of the grassroots groups that has played a role in this network of activists. As is mentioned in a diplomatic cable released by Wikileaks and cited this week at The Nation, Newsweek, the New York Post and ABC News, April 6 was able to connect with other grassroots activists - who they remain connected to - at this event. That gets at the real value (hopefully!) of this website and the annual summit: helping activists to learn from each other by providing a platform and offline events that facilitate information sharing.

At the 2008 event in NYC, members of the Obama campaign new media team shared what they had learned with activists....

Movements.org Launches Online Hub For Digital Activism

The organization was founded by three Gen Next Members – Roman Tsunder, Jason Liebman **and Jared Cohen**. Cofounder Jason Liebman said “Movements.org is the source for anyone who wants to keep up to date on the use of technology for achieving real social change. We have existed for two years as a support network for grassroots activists using digital tools, and today we come out of alpha launch to make our platform and resources available to everyone.”

The Movements.org network of grassroots activists is diverse, representing approximately 27 countries from Latin America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. **Leaders of the Egyptian Shabab April 6 Movement were represented at our 2008 Summit and are playing an important role in the current protests in Egypt.**⁴

a) Cohen, in an interview with Foreign Policy magazine published on Tuesday [September 7, 2010], said that Google Ideas is “basically a think/do tank.”

“Much of the model for it is built off of my experiences on the Policy Planning staff,” he said, which he described as “the secretary of state’s personal start-up.”

“In the same way Policy Planning works by bringing together a lot of stakeholders in government, out of government, and across different sectors, so, too, will Google Ideas do something very similar,” Cohen said.

“It’s not designed to be, ‘Let’s pool all of Google’s resources and tackle global challenges,’” the former State Department official told Foreign Policy.

Cohen said challenges Google Ideas may focus on include “hard challenges like counterterrorism, counterradicalization, and nonproliferation, to some of the ones people might expect it to focus on, like development and citizen empowerment.

“What I’m interested in is the SWAT-team model of building teams of stakeholders with different resources and perspectives to troubleshoot challenges,” Cohen said.⁶

b) State Department Innovator Goes to Google

Jared Cohen, a high-profile advocate of the State Department’s forays into “21st-century statecraft,” is leaving Foggy Bottom for New York...

Anne-Marie Slaughter, director of Policy Planning for the last year and a half, says his exuberance will be missed: “Jared’s time with the Policy Planning staff was a period in which we moved from not only writing memos proposing new ideas, but also finding ways to put those ideas into practice as an initial proof of concept. We are known as the Secretary of State’s think tank, but we have become a think/do tank.”

In mid-October, Cohen will begin his new job as director of Google Ideas, a new division of the search giant that he is helping to launch. He will also be, as of Tuesday Sept. 7, an adjunct fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, focusing on counter-radicalization,

innovation, technology, and statecraft.⁷

c) Princeton professor of politics and international affairs Anne-Marie Slaughter makes a case for intervention in Libya in the NYT: “The United States should immediately ask the Security Council to authorize a no-flight zone and make clear to Russia and China that if they block the resolution, the blood of the Libyan opposition will be on their hands.”⁸

d) Anne-Marie Slaughter, March 18, 2011: “The point of a no-fly zone is to get him [Ghadafy] out of the country.”⁹

Summing up:

There have been diverse consequences so far of the Egyptian revolution.

1) “A man in Egypt has named his newborn daughter “Facebook” in honor of the role the social media network played...”¹⁰

2) U.S. State Department spokesman says of Bahrain: “We stress here obviously that there’s no way to resolve this situation through security or excessive force,” he said. “There needs to be a political dialogue that leads to a political resolution.”¹¹

3) “Libya: No End in Sight” — On March 19th, an American president commences bombing in order to destabilize a dictator in a far-away region of the world. Our goals are to prevent him from harming his own people, to prevent his actions from spreading chaos in a region and to see regime change in his country.

In 2003, it was George W. Bush initiating our conflict in Iraq. In 2011, it was Barack Obama committing to a no-fly zone above Libya. The approach toward international collaboration has been different and the stated scope of this mission is different, but there is also a shiver that runs up my spine about what is the same: We’re entering a military conflict in the Arab world and don’t know our end goal.

President Bush had always stated a simple end-game: remove Saddam Hussein. More than seven years later, we are still embroiled in the security efforts of a country that has seen devastating loss of civilian life and civil strife since our stated mission was accomplished. President Obama’s objective seems just as straight-forward: Impose a no-fly zone, as approved by a host of international organizations. But what happens when a bloody ground war continues in Libya despite a successful no-fly zone?”¹²

4) The comparison to Iraq is obvious. Both countries had a monstrous dictator. Both were subjected to no-fly zones. The no-fly zones don’t deter the dictator. In due course, this evolves into a massive intervention in which the government is overthrown and the opposition goes into an internal civil war while simultaneously attacking the invaders.¹³

Notes

1 Telegraph [London], January 27, 2011,
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/egypt/8286864/Egypt-protests-Q-and-A.html>

2 U.S. Department of State, November 24, 2008, "State's Glassman on Alliance for Youth Movement Summit:

U.S. partners with private sector for youth summit in New York December 3-5,"

<http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2008/November/20081124173327eaifas0.8017237.html#ixzz1FdUVuhRO>

3 Indian Express, January 31, 2011,
<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/egypt-protesters-plan-a-million-man-march-in-cairo/744144/>

4 Inaugural AYM Summit and Egypt's Shabab April 6 Movement,
<http://www.movements.org/blog/entry/first-aym-summit/>

5 <http://www.gen-next.org/index.php/resources/blog/>

6 "Former State Department official to head 'Google Ideas'," Agence France-Presse, September 7, 2010,
<http://www.france24.com/en/20100907-former-state-department-official-head-google-ideas?quickspeed=1>

7 State Department Innovator Goes to Google, Foreign Policy, September 7, 2010,
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/09/07/jared_cohen

8 Anne-Marie Slaughter urges action on Libya," citing New York Times, March 13, 2011,
<http://www.bluemassgroup.com/diary/22302/annemarie-slaughter-urges-action-on-libya>

9 Anne-Marie Slaughter, National Public Radio, March 18, 2011,

<http://www.npr.org/templates/archives/archive.php?thingId=134662681>

10 Global Post, February 21, 2011,
<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/egypt/110221/egypt-facebook-wael-ghonim>.

11 Voice of America, March 21, 2011,
<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/middle-east/US-Says-Force-Wont-Solve-Alarming-Bahrain-Crisis-118125954.html>

12 Justin Krebs, "Libya: No End in Sight,"
<http://www.wnyc.org/blogs/its-free-blog/2011/mar/21/libya-no-end-sight/>.

13 George Friedman, STRATFOR, March 22, 2011,
<http://co108w.col108.mail.live.com/default.aspx?wa=wsignin1.0>

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