

Syria, Libya, Tottenham... where do we stop?

Monday, 26 September 2011

When protests turn to riots, in move the police or soldiers or government enforcers - whatever the reason; wherever the gatherings.

Force needs to be put down with force since generally nothing else works.

As law abiding citizens we appreciate this; one of the jobs of government is to protect us and our property.

But where do you draw the line? And when is outside interference acceptable?

I feel we made a grave mistake invading and bombing Libya and the same would apply to Syria, Yemen, Saudi Arabia etc...

But should we have moved in to stop Hitler in Germany - even though he was technically the leader of a Democratically elected majority?

Or when his supporters started breaking windows? Or locking up Jews? Or killing Gays?

In Britain some citizens break windows (Tottenham - and around the corner here in Queensway). And the government locks up and kills innocent people (Sally Clark; Barry George; too many to list).

In America they even do it openly (Troy Davis).

The Internet allows those of us with little or no knowledge based on limited corrupt media coverage to express our opinions which are often - usually - wrong. If someone is pretty or handsome, we like them and support them. End of.

Some societies need strict government and limited individual freedom to benefit most citizens. Others don't. But restrictions on liberal countries like Iceland should have been tougher in some areas; in dictatorships, less so. Except, what would the impact be on the vast majority (who tend NOT to express opinions) in the long run? I worry that the changes in Egypt and Tunisia may eventually be shown to bring more negative than positive results. Increased poverty and crime can come with increased individual freedom.

The media don't like this - remember their reaction to Thatcher's ban on the "oxygen of publicity" for the IRA? Yet the results were arguably positive.

For us in the media, "it's a great story" is all that matters. We brush responsibility under the carpet and condemn the word "censorship".