

Chip Berlet and the Ford Zoo

by Anton Chaitkin

John Foster “Chip” Berlet, a sewer creature who has been paid throughout most of his adult life to slander American political leader Lyndon LaRouche, will speak June 23 in Colorado to a conference of a tax-exempt charity, the International Cultic Studies Association.¹ Berlet will exhort his audience to demonize LaRouche. He will say that LaRouche’s promotion of the political-economic policies of Franklin Roosevelt, and his attack against the Bush-Cheney Administration, “are a coded form of historic anti-Semitic conspiracy theories that appear in the infamous hoax document, the ‘Protocols of the Elders of Zion’ ”!

Over the past four years, as LaRouche has rallied the Democratic Party to return to Roosevelt’s policies and to stand up to the Cheney clique, a large portion—\$325,000—of the funds paying Berlet’s salary has come from grants by the giant Ford Foundation to Berlet’s group, Political Research Associates of Somerville, Massachusetts.

Why would the Ford Foundation pour hundreds of thousands of dollars into Chip Berlet’s activities? Berlet’s career as a low-level dirty-tricks operative against LaRouche, his sole claim to fame, stretches back to the 1970s when he worked for the narcotics trafficking magazine *High Times*. The accompanying illustration shows his May 1981, article attacking the LaRouche political movement, entitled, “They Want to Take Your Drugs Away!”

Lyndon LaRouche was a declared candidate for U.S. President in 2002, when the Ford Foundation gave Berlet’s group \$175,000. And in early 2004, when Ford gave another \$150,000, LaRouche had the highest number of contributors of any of the candidates for the Democratic nomination. Did the \$10 billion Foundation circumvent the rules barring tax-exempt entities from interfering with individual political candidacies? If so, why?

Political Passion and Campus Recruitment

The answer seems to be supplied by the rapid growth of the LaRouche Youth Movement (LYM), taking off in the year 2000. While no one else was seriously organizing young people, and the Democratic Party as a whole was morbidly inactive against the Cheney war drive, the LaRouche move-

ment aggressively reached out to campuses to multiply a political youth force that could spur the Democratic Party into a fighting stance and an FDR revival. Young adults trained in Classical music and Renaissance science manned LaRouche literature tables, and lit up American colleges with intense, impassioned philosophical and policy debates, in classes and outside. The growth of the LYM shocked Democrats, while profoundly gratifying the labor and civil rights elements of the Party.

According to the 2002 Ford Foundation annual report, the official purpose for that year’s grant to Political Research Associates (PRA) was, “To study the college and university campus leadership and outreach programs of major national organizations and social movements and their relationship to political environments on campuses.”

By way of accounting for the two political payments from Ford, Berlet’s PRA issued an 84-page report (“Deliberate Differences—Progressive and Conservative Campus Activism in the United States”) in 2004, which makes this petulant claim:

“We saw very little evidence of national organizations physically coming to campus to recruit members. Perhaps this might be a result of college administrators’ efforts to limit such groups’ access to students. For instance, at Howard [University], our interviewees were aware that . . . supporters of Lyndon LaRouche, right-wing [sic] ideologue and political movement leader . . . had approached students on campus, only to be asked to leave by the administration.”

As is only too well known to Berlet’s financier sponsors, the LaRouche Youth Movement has in fact constituted the only live politics on the U.S. campus scene in the past several years. At Howard University in Washington, D.C., LaRouche organizers have a constant presence despite a hostile administration fed by lies from Berlet.

Ford’s ‘Strategic Hamlets’ for the USA

Chip Berlet’s sordid career is part of the initiative of financiers, to crush out the American spirit of industrial progress and optimism associated with Franklin Roosevelt’s use of government for the general welfare, the Kennedy space program, and Martin Luther King’s civil rights leadership.

1. Formerly, the American Family Foundation.



Chip Berlet's article in High Times, May, 1981.

This project applied a strategy used in the Vietnam War, known as *strategic hamlets*, for political/psychological warfare against the United States population. In Indochina during the 1960s, villages were isolated from each other and from the outside world, subjected to political assassinations, and taught to think of themselves only locally rather than as part of a national anti-colonial resistance.

The Ford Foundation led the application of this brutal policy to the American homeland, as a direct continuation of the overseas war. McGeorge Bundy (of the Boston Anglo-philic banking families) was President John Kennedy's National Security Advisor, until Kennedy was killed while trying to pull out of Vietnam. Staying on as President Lyndon Johnson's National Security Advisor, Bundy immediately pushed through an escalation of the war, and brought in the strategic-hamlets approach. In 1967, Bundy left the government and became the Ford Foundation's chairman.

The Foundation then went to war against the people in America's cities, campuses, and political caucuses. What in Vietnam was called "strategic hamlets," might now be called "*identity politics*."

To break potential resistance to intended austerity, slave wages, service cutbacks, the demolition of factories and

farms, and a predatory neo-colonialism, you fragment the population along racial, gender, and religious lines, and inculcate new, isolating identities upon the various competing fragments. You lower the self-conception of your victims below the dignity of scientific reason, destroying the compassionate belief in mankind's technological progress.

As we shall see, Chip Berlet would emerge in the 1970s, a career practitioner of the new "political technologies" in this domestic counterinsurgency process.

As bankers slashed school budgets, the Foundation funded "local control" programs. They threw New York City neighborhoods into violent racial struggles over what remained, blacks against Puerto Ricans against whites, ghetto parents against Jewish teachers and the teachers' union. They pitted destitute welfare recipients against employed workers, to displace them for a welfare check instead of a paycheck.²

The Ford Foundation and its spinoffs in the "alternate philanthropy" movement paid for a new sexual politics. Homosexuality was promoted as a *primary identity*, to trump the self-concept of a political person passionate about mankind's betterment.

Meanwhile, Holocaust-haunted Jews were panicked away from FDR politics into the Conservative Revolution, herded by bankers' agencies such as the Anti-Defamation League and the Israeli hard-liners. Other, allied bankers' agencies built the Armageddonist Christian Right.

The Ford Foundation led the promotion of *narcotics use*, with its degraded culture and cognitive death.

This began in 1951, when the financiers running the Foundation acquired a huge bequest from car manufacturer Henry Ford and his family. With University of Chicago president Robert M. Hutchins directing the program grants, the Ford Foundation paid for a project to test-proliferate the use of LSD and mescaline, in tandem with the MK-Ultra program of Allen Dulles's Central Intelligence Agency. Hutchins later used millions from the Ford Foundation to create his Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions (CSDI) to replace the "Old Paradigm" of industrial America with the new rock/drug/sex "revolution."

Under McGeorge Bundy, the Ford Foundation sponsored the *movement to legalize narcotics*. Using the Foundation's subsidiary, the Drug Abuse Council, and myriad other channels, the Ford Foundation paid for and helped lead the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML).

The result was the intended, reeking counterculture swamp, a crippled Democratic Party, and a managed Identities Zoo with functionaries such as Chip Berlet.

2. In the late 1960s, Lyndon LaRouche directly attacked Bundy and the Ford Foundation in a groundbreaking pamphlet entitled "The New Left, Local Control, and Fascism."



EIRNS

Dennis King and Chip Berlet at the Federal Courthouse, Alexandria, Virginia, January 27, 1989, for LaRouche's sentencing.

What Is Chip Berlet?

John Foster "Chip" Berlet's upcoming speech to the International Cultic Studies Association, is yet one more assignment in a bizarre life devoted largely to abusing Lyndon LaRouche.

Berlet was born in 1949 in New Jersey, the son of Reserve Army Lt. Col. George Numa Berlet, Jr., who reportedly worked permanently in military intelligence. The father became involved with layers of the intelligence apparatus, by combining his career as a Wall Street stock and bond executive, and his high rank within veterans organizations such as the American Legion. George named his son after John Foster Dulles, the brother of CIA Director Allen Dulles and an early supporter of Adolf Hitler.

Berlet drifted into radical causes in college, such as those favoring narcotics legalization and homosexuality.

Around 1975, when he was about 25 years old, Berlet was in Chicago, having entered a world of political intrigue as a staff member of the National Student Association (NSA).

NSA had been exposed back in 1967 as a front for the Central Intelligence Agency. By the time Chip Berlet came in, New Leftism had taken the helm at the NSA.

Chip was reportedly recruited to the NSA by *David Ifshin*, famous as the Association's earlier president who had gone to Hanoi in 1970 to broadcast against the U.S. war. But before he mentored Berlet into the NSA, Ifshin had undergone a miraculous change of mind, moving him into the service of the London-New York banking axis and their Cold War Social Democrats.

Chip Berlet became the NSA's chief fundraiser. Having grown up with his father's intelligence connections, Chip was the perfect intermediary to the new radical-theme foundations such as the Field Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation, and the Stern Family Fund, which funded Wall Street radical-Zoo projects in tandem with the Ford Foundation.³

NSA activists at the time have described Berlet as a "non-ideological" permanent staffer, more or less apolitical: a well-connected *apparatchik*.

Berlet's recruiter David Ifshin would go on to become general counsel to the American Israel Public Affairs Council (AIPAC), a leader of the Anti-Defamation League, and a director of the neo-conservative Committee for a Democratic Majority. Thus did

Berlet join the team which aimed, in particular, for the eradication of the Franklin Roosevelt legacy within the Democratic Party.

The Chicago Dope War and Wall Street

While at the NSA in the late 1970s, Chip Berlet went to work as Washington bureau chief for *High Times*, the magazine financed by narcotics traffickers, for narcotics users. *High Times* shared its criminal revenues with the pro-legalization NORML, a joint project with the Ford Foundation and *Playboy* magazine.

Lyndon LaRouche's political movement launched the National Anti-Drug Coalition in 1978, a Chicago-centered counter-offensive against the drug culture and the "bankers above suspicion" laundering Dope, Inc.'s money.

By the beginning of the 1980s, LaRouche and his movement had energized an otherwise moribund labor element of the Democratic Party, while simultaneously influencing a patriotic (anti-globalist) core of the Reagan Republicans to begin moving away from the Bush-Kissinger-Wall Street elements.

On Dec. 16, 1981, Chip Berlet and a fellow writer for

3. Stern Fund executive director David Hunter had worked at Ford Foundation pioneering their ghetto counterinsurgency projects. Hunter moved his protégé, flour-heir George Pillsbury, to organize the "Alternative Philanthropy" initiative. They created the Funding Exchange and many Lesbian/Gay-theme money channels for financier paradigm-bending projects; these comprise most of the funds eventually backing Berlet's organization PRA.

High Times, Dennis King, held a press conference in Washington to demand that Federal agencies “investigate allegations of widespread illegal conduct by organizations tied to Lyndon H. LaRouche” and his political movement. The wild fabrications on their seven-page press release would show up almost verbatim years later, in opening statements of various prosecutorial teams assembled by the financiers sponsoring Berlet.

In 1983, Chip Berlet met with John Rees, a right-wing spy for the FBI and the Anti-Defamation League—whom Berlet has many times publicly attacked as such. Rees introduced Berlet to Richard Mellon Scaife, *über*-financier of the Conservative Revolution, and later, the sugar daddy for the assault on Bill Clinton’s Presidency. John Rees then paid Chip Berlet and Dennis King to attend one or more of a series of meetings in 1983 and 1984 in the home of Wall Street/intelligence figure John Train. There, representatives of the Anglo-American globalist faction of the National Security Council, such as Roy Godson, conferred with co-factioneers from NBC, *Readers Digest*, and other media, the Anti-Defamation League, and the drug lobby’s Chip Berlet and Dennis King, to map out a combined media and prosecutorial attack on LaRouche, who was denounced in these meetings as “financed by the KGB”!

From these meetings, Richard Mellon-Scaife arranged the financing for a book by Dennis King attacking LaRouche, (*Lyndon LaRouche and the New American Fascism*, which was given wide free distribution.

Despite intense hostility from the Wall Street media, LaRouche associates won the 1986 Illinois Democratic primary election for Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of State, promising to crack down on drug bankers. Pandemonium erupted.

By this time, Chip Berlet was working for Midwest Research Associates, a group funded by the ultra-wealthy Chicago speculator Richard Dennis, a prime sponsor of the movement to legalize narcotics through his Drug Policy Foundation. Money also came in through foundation networks of the Ford-David Hunter-George Pillsbury axis, among whose devotees was wealthy gay activist Jean Hardisty, founder of Midwest Research Associates and Berlet’s employer.⁴

The Zoo Moves to Boston

The 1980s Chicago version of Chip Berlet was certainly a strange composite specimen. For three years, through 1982,

4. The Ford Foundation gave a \$100,000 grant to Richard Dennis’s personal group, the Roosevelt Center for American Policy Studies, to educate citizens on how to cope with necessary “structural changes” in the economy, i.e., austerity and post-industrialism. Richard Dennis poured hundreds of thousands into the operation of gubernatorial nominee Adlai Stevenson III, who wrecked the state Democratic Party by splitting off to a temporary third party, rather than run on the ticket with LaRouche Democrats.

he was paid by the “Better Government Association,” the bankers’ “reform” group at war against the regular Democratic Party of Chicago. The 1986 LaRouche electoral victory raised the tempo of slanders and demands for police repression. Chip Berlet and the entire John Train “salon” began acting as consultants to the U.S. Attorney in Boston, William Weld, scion of an old Boston Anglophile banking family, who was at the center of the federal “Get LaRouche Task Force.”

Chip Berlet and his “Midwest Research Associates” moved, in 1987, from Chicago to Boston, in time for the first trial of Lyndon LaRouche; they then became “Political Research Associates.”

Berlet had a unique send-off: a going-away party sponsored by the Chicago Area Friends of Albania, supporters of the ludicrously pro-Stalin, pro-Mao dictatorship of Enver Hoxha. They put out a flyer which declared, “Chip and his family are moving to the Boston area to continue his anti-fascist work. Chip was one of our founding members, and a steadfast friend of Albania through thick and thin.”

In the Boston LaRouche trial, Federal Judge Robert Keeton brought in material from LaRouche’s factional opponents within the Reagan Administration (the George H.W. Bush-Roy Godson-Oliver North vector), tending to show a vendetta was in process. A mistrial resulted. But seven days after George Bush Sr.’s 1989 inauguration, his faction finally managed to jail LaRouche, who was only released after Clinton took office.

Now, a quarter-century after Chip Berlet was hired as an anti-LaRouche operative, the Democratic party is again the scene of a climactic fight between LaRouche-led supporters of the Franklin Roosevelt legacy, and those who would surrender to bankers such as Felix Rohatyn, who have decimated U.S. industry and almost exterminated the industrial labor force.

While the Ford Foundation has jumped back into the fray with direct sponsorship of Chip Berlet, a remarkable legal process has opened up behind them.

In August 2005, Michigan Attorney General Mike Cox launched an investigation of the Ford Foundation. The financier vultures who wrecked the auto industry and made Detroit one of America’s poorest cities, also seem to have “kidnapped” the Ford Foundation, which is a Michigan-chartered entity, although its headquarters is in New York. The Foundation has betrayed the industrial heritage of the Ford family, whose wealth they took hold of, and given virtually nothing back to help the people of Michigan. Attorney General Cox is probing the Foundation’s governance, potential conflicts of interest of its officers, and its abandonment of its legal home base, Michigan. This ongoing state probe coincides with LaRouche’s fight to reverse the shutdown of the auto industry, and to overcome decades of anti-industrial brainwashing and financial piracy by the Ford Foundation and other sponsors of Chip Berlet.