

Right Side News

The Right News for Americans

Anti-NSA Writer Featured at Soros-Koch Event

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In a case of politics makes strange bedfellows, organizations funded by four billionaires on the left and right are uniting to put on a major conference at Columbia University calling for the end to the war on terrorism, and the legalization of dangerous drugs. The featured speaker is writer Glenn Greenwald, best known for publishing NSA secrets leaked to him by Edward Snowden, the former NSA analyst living in Moscow who has been charged with espionage in the U.S.

The [“Stop the Wars on Drugs and Terrorism” Conference](#) is being sponsored by the Future of Freedom Foundation and Young Americans for Liberty, both financed by Koch Brothers’ money. Two other groups involved in the event, Glenn Greenwald’s First Look Media and Ethan Nadelmann’s Drug Policy Alliance, are financed by billionaires Pierre Omidyar and George Soros, respectively.

Greenwald has appeared before conferences sponsored by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Muslim Brotherhood front, and the International Socialist Organization (ISO), one of America’s main Trotskyist/Marxist-Leninist parties.

The Koch Brothers are usually attacked by “progressives” for underwriting some Tea Party activities and promoting free enterprise capitalism. But their libertarian perspective gives them common cause with the far-left, especially on foreign policy.

The emergence of two Koch-funded organizations in a major conference promoting anti-NSA writer Glenn Greenwald has caught many conservatives by surprise. Greenwald, a libertarian turned leftist, called the 9/11 attacks “minimal in scope,” compared to the damage he said America was inflicting on the world.

Calling this a “libertarian-leftist alliance,” blogger and Tea Party activist Tina Trent tells Accuracy in Media, “Citizen activists in the Tea Party and 9/12 movements need to understand that libertarians are moving further and further to the left. This conference is just one example of how a radical leftist agenda is now the priority of national libertarian leaders who otherwise claim to be conservatives, and who are using their influence in the Tea Party to promote things like drug legalization.”

Speakers include Radley Balko, who blogs for The Washington Post and has popularized the dubious notion of local police being unnecessarily “militarized;” Eugene Jarecki, a filmmaker who “explores how militarism disfigures America’s foreign and defense policies as well as her broader national priorities;” Hina Shamsi, director of the ACLU’s National Security Project;

Matt Welch, editor in chief of the libertarian magazine Reason and co-host of the Fox Business show, “The Independents;” and Greenwald associate Jeremy Scahill, who wrote a book and film by the name of “Dirty Wars,” about U.S. counter-terrorism efforts.

So-called “Diamond Sponsorship” is available for \$1,000 and includes VIP seating at the conference and a reception for four people, in addition to an after-conference reception and book signing with Glenn Greenwald, who wrote *No Place to Hide*.

However, some in the media seem to have [recently backed away](#) from their support of Greenwald and Snowden, apparently because of the perception that the NSA secrets they disclosed have aided and abetted America’s enemies and led to the rise of the terrorist Islamic State in the Middle East and Russian aggression in Ukraine.

The involvement of Koch-funded groups in these activities may be surprising to some, but the fact is that the Koch Brothers are known as libertarians, not conservatives, and put the vast majority of their funds into libertarian organizations.

In several other cases, such as drug legalization, the interests of the leftist and libertarian billionaires have clearly converged. Indeed, George Soros has funded the Cato Institute, a group favoring drug legalization that was founded by Charles Koch, and on whose [board](#) David Koch sits today.

Jacob G. Hornberger, founder and president of the Future of Freedom Foundation, a major sponsor of the October 18th New York City conference, has called for the legalization of all drugs, [saying](#) that “...people have the right, under fundamental principles of liberty, to ingest anything they want. What a person puts into his mouth is none of the state’s business.”

Trent, who writes about crime and the drug problem, comments, “When they talk about drug legalization they mean cocaine, methamphetamine, ecstasy, LSD, everything. And when they talk about eliminating the military and the border patrol and opening the nation’s borders, they literally mean that.”

She’s referring in the latter statement to a 1980 Libertarian Party platform that called for “the withdrawal of all American troops from bases abroad,” as well as the “abandonment of interventionist doctrines” such as NATO and the Monroe Doctrine. It also sought “the abolition of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation” and “the elimination of all restrictions on immigration, the abolition of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Border Patrol, and a declaration of full amnesty for those people who have entered the country illegally.”

David Koch, one of the famous Koch Brothers, was the 1980 vice presidential candidate on the Libertarian Party ticket. More recently, however, he has worked through the Republican Party and the Tea Party movement.

However, Trent has expressed deep concern about the influence of libertarians on Tea Party groups. She says these groups tend to emphasize economic issues, to the exclusion of foreign

policy and cultural or social problems, and have adopted an anti-police mentality demonstrated by their exaggerated claims about the “militarization” of police in Ferguson, Missouri.

“The initial incident in Ferguson was hand-to-hand combat between a cop patrolling a dangerous neighborhood alone and someone twice his size who attacked him while he was alone,” she noted. “The looters and rioters were throwing bricks at cops and shooting at them. Should those police have gone to the riot scenes without body armor to gratify the leftist and libertarian activists? Would you want your son or daughter to confront a mob, one that’s going to be given special dispensation by the courts, without wearing the most protective gear their department can afford? In reality, when the police have armored vehicles, it makes it possible for them to dispel looters and rioters without having to resort to shooting them.”

Trent says the shared conference agenda of libertarians and leftists demonstrates that the nature of the political spectrum is changing. “Anti-police messaging has always been an organizing tool of the left,” she points out. “Now it’s becoming an obsession of some people on the right. People who don’t believe anything else in the mainstream media now believe stories about ‘militarization’ of police. You can trace these discussions back to libertarians like Radley Balko. The nicest thing you can say about them is that their ideas aren’t reality based. The most disturbing thing is that they’re in bed with people like communist Angela Davis who celebrate cop-killers and literally want to empty the prisons.”

Another pet cause of the libertarians is open borders. Hornberger, for instance, opposes “immigration controls,” [saying](#), “So, for decades the federal government has abused and mistreated people whose ‘crime’ has been to exercise the fundamental God-given rights to which Jefferson referred—freedom of movement, freedom of travel, freedom of trade, freedom of association, and economic liberty.” He denounces the “statist position on immigration,” which he claims entails “waging war against peaceful people who are simply trying to better their lives, help their families, and pursue happiness by offering their labor services to others who are willing to pay for them.”

He has not explained how the social problems caused by open borders will be taken care of by free markets.

On other issues, he has:

- Compared the terrorist detention facility at Guantanamo Bay to communist North Korea: “How is the North Korean judicial system any different in principle from the judicial system established by the Pentagon and the CIA at their prison camp in Cuba?”
- Compared harsh interrogation techniques to prevent a terrorist attack on America to Islamist beheadings of Americans: “Given that the Islamic State subjected American citizen James Foley to physical abuse, waterboarding, and extra-judicial execution, U.S. officials and American interventionists, including those in the mainstream media, are describing the Islamic State as savage and barbaric. But wait a minute! When the U.S. government was doing those same things, weren’t U.S. officials and American interventionists saying that such actions weren’t any big deal?”
- Condemned the liberation of Iraq: “In the Iraq War, the U.S. troops were the aggressors.”

- Urged abolition of the CIA: “It’s time for Americans to do what they should have done a long time ago—abolish, not reform, the CIA. It’s time to put a stop to the lying, murdering, assassinating, spying, torturing, and detaining.”

The term “interventionist” is used to describe supporters of a strong U.S. military who believe in challenging national security threats and preventing terrorist attacks.

Hornberger says the grant for the one-day conference at Columbia University on October 18 came from “one of our donors” that he would not identify publicly. “We are doing the conference in partnership with the Young Americans for Liberty, a nationally renowned group devoted to libertarianism,” he noted. “We have worked with YAL in the past on our college tours.”

He said the theme of the conference, “Stop the Wars on Drugs and Terrorism,” refers to “two wars [that] are the two most destructive forces against the liberty, peace, and prosperity of the American people in our time.” He said the purpose is to “bring both of these wars to an end.”

Publicly available reports indicate that while the Future of Freedom Foundation has been a relatively minor recipient of Koch funds (\$10,000), the other major co-sponsor, Young Americans for Liberty (YAL), has received tens of thousands of dollars from various Koch entities. Robert A. Tappan, who handles external relations for the Koch Companies, did not respond to specific questions about whether the Koch Brothers approved the use of their funds for an anti-NSA event.

[YAL](#), a group founded by supporters of Ron Paul, which grew out of his 2008 presidential campaign, is a “[partner organization](#)” of the Charles Koch Institute.

YAL is considered a libertarian version of Young Americans for Freedom (YAF), the conservative youth group founded in 1960 that emphasized free enterprise, traditional values and a strong national defense. But in contrast to YAF, Young Americans for Liberty has no platform plank on a strong foreign policy in its “[statement of principles](#),” says nothing about traditional religious or cultural values, and emphasizes private property rights.

In addition to sponsoring Glenn Greenwald, YAL counts The American Conservative magazine as one of its “partners” in opposing the “neoconservative agenda.” The publication is associated with Patrick J. Buchanan, the veteran conservative who once proclaimed anti-communism but now says that former KGB spy and Russian President Vladimir Putin has emerged as a Christian leader in global affairs.

The term “neoconservative” usually refers to former liberals who left the Democratic Party over its abandonment of a strong foreign and military policy. They first became prominent under the presidency of Ronald Reagan and helped establish the “Reagan Coalition” of social, foreign policy and economic conservatives that helped him win two presidential terms.