

The Coup Plotters - The Albert Einstein Institution

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The Albert Einstein Institution (AEI) has played the key role in recent years in training and deploying youth movements to help prepare the conditions for coups through fostering the impression that the targeted regimes are deeply unpopular, and through destabilizing those regimes through their demonstrations and the like.

The group, which is funded by the Soros foundations and the US government, is led by former DIA officer Col. Robert Helvey, and Harvard University's Dr. Gene Sharp.

According to the Albert Einstein Institution's report, Dr Gene Sharp ([curriculum vitae](#) and [Biographical Profile](#))

) "founded the Albert Einstein Institution in 1983 to promote research, policy studies, and education on the strategic uses of nonviolent struggle in face of dictatorship, war, genocide, and oppression."

Dr. Sharp has held research appointments in Harvard University's Center for International Affairs for nearly 30 years. His writings, which on the strategic use of nonviolence in overturning states, have been translated into 27 languages. Through funding provided by the Soros foundations, and through the National Endowment of

Democracy and other US government conduits, Sharp and his associates have regularly traveled to targeted regions to facilitate revolutions, since the group's creation.

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According to Sharp, "If the issue is to bring down a dictatorship, then it is not good enough to say, 'we want freedom.' It's necessary to develop a strategy, or a super-plan, to weaken a dictatorship and that can only be done by identifying its sources of power. These [sources of power] include: authority, human resources skills, knowledge, tangible factors, economic and material resources and sanctions like police and troops."

For this reason, Sharp reports, he has written numerous books on nonviolent struggle to help oppressed peoples develop a "superplan." These works, of which the major one is "The Politics of Nonviolent Action," have been translated into 27 languages. Among these languages are Russian, Ukrainian, Latvian, Estonian, Macedonian, Arabic, Tamil, Burmese, Karen (and several other Burmese minority languages), Thai, Chinese, Korean, as well as French, Dutch, Spanish, German, Italian, and other European languages still spoken in former colonies.

While Sharp is the main theoretician of the group (and officially its senior scholar), its more practical work is overseen by its president, Colonel Robert Helvey, who began working with the center even before officially retiring from the US Army in 1991. A 30-year veteran of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Helvey had practical experience in subversive operations throughout Southeast Asia prior to his work with the institution. According to numerous reports, Helvey was the case officer for the US-sponsored coup in Serbia, was deeply involved in similar operations in Georgia, and according to at least one report, was on the ground in the recent coup in Ukraine. ([Ukrainian translation of From Dictatorship to Democracy](#) by Sharp has just been announced by The Albert Einstein Institution)

According to the Albert Einstein Institution's report for the years 2000 to 2004, its mission is to "advance the worldwide study and strategic use of nonviolent action in conflict."

Numerous individuals and organizations interested in the potential of nonviolent struggle contact the Albert Einstein Institution. In recent years, requests for information or advice have come from people involved in conflicts in Albania, Kosovo, Moldova, Serbia, Slovakia, Cyprus, the Republic of Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Iran, Afghanistan, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Lebanon, the Occupied Territories, Vietnam, China, Tibet, West Papua, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Aceh (Indonesia), Kashmir, Haiti, Venezuela, Colombia, Bolivia, Cuba,

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Mexico, Angola, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Togo, Kenya and Zimbabwe.

AEI's translation program has been instrumental in expanding our global reach. In the last four years alone, the Albert Einstein Institution's publications have appeared in Serbian, Russian, Ukrainian, Spanish, Arabic, Farsi, Tibetan, and several ethnic Burmese languages. Additional translations are currently underway in Chinese and Kurdish.

In his letter from the president, Col. Helvey reports:

Strategic nonviolent struggle must be recognized as a subject that can be understood and applied by all who seek to throw off the yoke of governmental oppression.

. . . The assumption that there is no realistic alternative to violence in extreme situations is contradicted by various cases of important nonviolent struggles in several countries in recent decades. These include Norway, Germany, France, Czechoslovakia, the Philippines, the Soviet Union, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Serbia, El Salvador, Guatemala, India, and others. Many earlier cases of improvised nonviolent struggle occurred and are also relevant. Usually the importance of these history-making nonviolent struggles has been trivialized or ignored. Although there have also been some failures in nonviolent struggle, such as in China and Burma, the fact that these cases could have been waged at all, and that numerous nonviolent struggles have succeeded, is highly important.

International Center on Nonviolent Conflicts

The International Center on Nonviolent Conflicts has been heavily involved in the new Postmodern Coups, especially through its top figures, Dr. Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall.

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According to its website, the center "develops and encourages the use of civilian-based, nonmilitary strategies to establish and defend democracy and human rights worldwide." It "provides assistance in the training and deployment of field advisors, to deepen the conceptual knowledge and practical skills of applying nonviolent strategies in conflicts throughout the world where progress toward democracy and human rights is possible."

The most significant nonviolent conflicts in the world today, which may lead to "regime changes," it reports, are occurring in Myanmar, Zimbabwe, Chinese Tibet, Belarus, Ukraine [now nearing completion], Palestine, Iran, and Cuba.

Dr. Peter Ackerman is the founding chairman of the center. He is currently the chairman of the Board of Overseers of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy of Tufts University, an important US intelligence recruitment center, and is on the Executive Council of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London.

Dr Ackerman was also a founding director of the Albert Einstein Institution.

Dr. Ackerman was the executive producer of the PBS-TV documentary, "[Bringing Down a Dictator](#)," on the fall of Slobodan Milosevic, which has since been translated into Arabic, Farsi, French, Mandarin, Russian, and Spanish. He was also the series editor and principal content advisor behind the PBS-TV series, "A Force More Powerful," which documents the use of nonviolence in regime changes. It has been translated into Arabic, Farsi, Mandarin, Russian and Spanish. Ackerman is the co-author of two books on nonviolent resistance:

A Force More Powerful

(Palgrave/St. Martin's Press 2001), which is a companion book to the television series, and *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: The Dynamics of People Power in the Twentieth Century*

(Praeger 1994). He regularly lectures on the use of the nonviolence in toppling targets states, including at the State Department.

Former Air Force officer Jack DuVall, is the president of the center, and was one of its founders. Like Dr. Ackerman, DuVall gives frequent lectures nationally and internationally on the strategic use of nonviolence.

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The center's vice chairman, Berel Rodal, is the former director-general of the Policy Secretariat of the Canadian Department of National Defence.

The Arlington Institute

[The Arlington Institute](#) (TAI), is an apparent strategist in the use of postmodern coups. It was founded in 1989 by John L. Petersen, in order, in his own words, "to help redefine the concept of national security in much larger, comprehensive terms by introducing the rapidly evolving global trends of population growth, environmental degradation, and science and technology explosion, and social value shifts into the traditional national defense equation." Among its board members are Jack DuVall, the former Air Force officer who is director of the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict in Washington, DC and James Woolsey, the former Clinton administration CIA director and neocon spokesman who is currently the chairman of Freedom House.

The need for an organization like the Arlington Institute, its [website reports](#), "evolved from the bipartisan, eighteen-month long National Security Group project that Petersen co-founded and jointly led in Washington, DC, in 1986-7. That ad-hoc group of national security experts was brought together to explore and map the security environment that the successful candidate would have to operate within after the 1988 presidential campaign. Petersen also wrote the final report for the group, 'The Diffusion of Power: An Era of Realignment,' which became a strategy document used at the highest levels of the Department of Defense."

"In the early part of the 90s," it adds, "Petersen was engaged in a number of projects for the Department of Defense which functioned to build a systematic understanding of the major approaches that were then being used to study and anticipate futures. One notable project for the Office of the Secretary of Defense involved traveling throughout the world visiting the foremost practitioners of futures research to assess each methodology and attempt to develop a new, synthetic approach that drew from the best of the then current processes." Petersen became an advisor to a number of senior defense officials during this time, serving in various personal support roles to the undersecretary of the Navy and the chief of Naval Operations, among others.

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Midway through the 1990s, it adds, "Petersen became convinced that humanity was living in an extraordinary time of change that would necessarily result in a major global shift within the following two decades. TAI committed itself to playing a significant role in facilitating a global transition to a new world that operates in a fundamentally different way from the past."

Penn, Schoen and Berland Associates

[Penn, Schoen and Berland](#) (PSB) has played a pioneering role in the use of polling operations, especially "exit polls," in facilitating coups. Its primary mission is to shape the perception that the group installed into power in a targeted country has broad popular support. The group began work in Serbia during the period that its principle, Mark Penn, was President Clinton's top political advisor.

PSB was founded in 1975, with offices in Washington, DC, Denver, and New York. It reports it has conducted research in over 65 countries for Fortune 500 companies and major political campaigns.

"PSB is perhaps best known for our work as long-term strategic advisors to Bill Gates and Microsoft," it reports, while in the political world, "the firm is best known for being the long-time strategic advisors to President Bill Clinton and to Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, among others."

The firm reports that it has conducted "a wide variety of government research projects, including recent work for the U.S. State Department in troubled countries overseas." Its business clients have included Siemens, American Express, Eli Lilly, Fleet, Boston Financial, Texaco, BP, Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, ING Group, DeBeers, and KMG, among others.

The groups touts its role in Serbia. In an article, entitled "Defeating dictators at the ballot box: Lessons on how to develop successful electoral strategy in an authoritarian society," posted on their website, coauthors Penn and Schoen report:

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International strategists, political and media consultants—such as ourselves have played critical roles behind the scenes of the elections in Serbia and Zimbabwe, helping the opposition parties craft strategies, messages and organize a credible and effective campaign that has enabled them to weaken the dictator, his political party, and eventually throw him out of power..

The introduction of cutting edge political and communications techniques is as well as the advise of the best Western political consultants and image makers, is as potent a weapon as the planes, bombs, and intelligence technology used in such conflicts as the Persian Gulf War, Bosnia, Kosovo, and, most recently Afghanistan.

The firm's role in subverting Serbia was first detailed in a December 11, 2000, Washington Post article by Michael Dobbs, [US Advice Guided Milosevic Opposition](#).

In a softly lit conference room, American pollster Doug Schoen flashed the results of an in-depth opinion poll of 840 Serbian voters onto an overhead projection screen, sketching a strategy for toppling Europe's last remaining communist-era ruler.

His message, delivered to leaders of Serbia's traditionally fractious opposition, was simple and powerful. Slobodan Milosevic—survivor of four lost wars, two major street uprisings, 78 days of NATO bombing and a decade of international sanctions—was "completely vulnerable" to a well-organized electoral challenge. The key, the poll results showed, was opposition unity.

Held in a luxury hotel in Budapest, the Hungarian capital, in October 1999, the closed-door briefing by Schoen, a Democrat, turned out to be a seminal event, pointing the way to the electoral revolution that brought down Milosevic a year later. It also marked the start of an extraordinary U.S. effort to unseat a foreign head of state, not through covert action of the kind the CIA once employed in such places as Iran and Guatemala, but by modern election campaign techniques.

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Milosevic's strongest political card was the disarray and ineffectiveness of his opponents. The opposition consisted of nearly two dozen political parties, some of whose leaders were barely on speaking terms with one another.

It was against this background that 20 opposition leaders accepted an invitation from the Washington-based National Democratic Institute (NDI) in October 1999 to a seminar at the Marriott Hotel in Budapest, overlooking the Danube River. The key item on the agenda: an opinion poll commissioned by the U.S. polling firm Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates.

The poll reported that Milosevic had a 70 percent unfavorable rating among Serbian voters. But it also showed that the big names in the opposition—men such as Zoran Djindjic and Vuk Draskovic—were burdened with negative poll ratings almost as high as Milosevic's.

Among the candidates best placed to challenge Milosevic, the poll suggested, was a moderate Serbian nationalist named Vojislav Kostunica, who had a favorable rating of 49 percent and an unfavorable rating of only 29 percent.

Schoen, who had provided polling advice to former Yugoslav prime minister Milan Panic during his unsuccessful 1992 campaign to depose Milosevic, drew several conclusions from these and other findings of the poll. . . . Most important, only a united opposition had a chance of deposing Milosevic. "If you take one word from this conference," Schoen told the delegates, "I urge it to be unity."

Mark Penn has been president of the firm since its founding in 1975. He served as President Clinton's pollster and political adviser for the 1996 re-election campaign and throughout the second term of the administration, including during the period he oversaw the Serbian election campaign which toppled President Milosevic. His influence over the Clinton administration was such that the Washington Post called him perhaps "the most powerful man in Washington you've never heard of". According to the firm's website, Penn helped elect 15 overseas Presidents in the

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Far East, Latin America, and Europe.

Doug Schoen is the firm's founding partner and a principal strategist. According to the firm, Schoen has, for the last 20 years "created winning messages and provided strategic advice to numerous political clients in the United States and to heads of state in countries around the world, including Greece, Turkey, Israel, the Philippines, the Dominican Republic, Bermuda and Yugoslavia." Additionally, he was "President William Jefferson Clinton's research and strategic consultant during the 1996 reelection, and has been widely credited with creating and effectively communicating the message that turned around the president's political fortunes between 1994 and 1996."

Alan Fleischmann, who runs the firm's Washington offices, is described as a "specialist in strategic and crisis communications who has served in domestic and overseas senior management posts in the private and public sectors, specializing in finance, public and foreign policy, marketing, communications, negotiation, mediation, and strategy. Prior to joining the firm, Fleischmann been staff director of the Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere of the United States Congress, and a senior advisor to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Fleischmann has also been a legislative aide to the late German Chancellor Willy Brandt in the German Bundestag.

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