

# Geoff Young: Peace Candidate Who Wants to Abolish CIA Wins Democratic Primary in Kentucky

By [Jeremy Kuzmarov](#)

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*Geoff Young came of age politically as a student at MIT in the mid 1970s where he took political science courses with Noam Chomsky and Louis Kampf that opened his eyes to the evils of U.S. imperialism and to the U.S. government’s contempt for international law.*

Now, decades later, Young stands a real chance of being elected to Congress in Kentucky on a platform of abolishing the CIA.

On May 17, Young defeated Chris Preece with 52% of the vote to win the Democratic primary in Kentucky’s 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, which contains the cities of Lexington, Richmond and Frankfort, the state capital.

Young moved to Kentucky in 1982 to work in state government in the field of renewable energy, and first ran for public office in 2012 as a Green Party candidate.

In the November general election, he will face Republican incumbent Andy Barr, who has pushed [for expanding FBI surveillance operations against Chinese academics in the U.S.](#) under the [neo-McCarthyite China Initiative](#) and according to Young, criticized President Joe Biden for not sending enough weapons to Ukraine.

In an exclusive interview with *CovertAction Magazine* on May 25, Young said that he believes he won the primary in part because of a mailing in which he proclaimed that, unlike Andy Barr, he would never send weapons to Nazis in Ukraine.

Young also placed a billboard calling for abolishing the CIA.



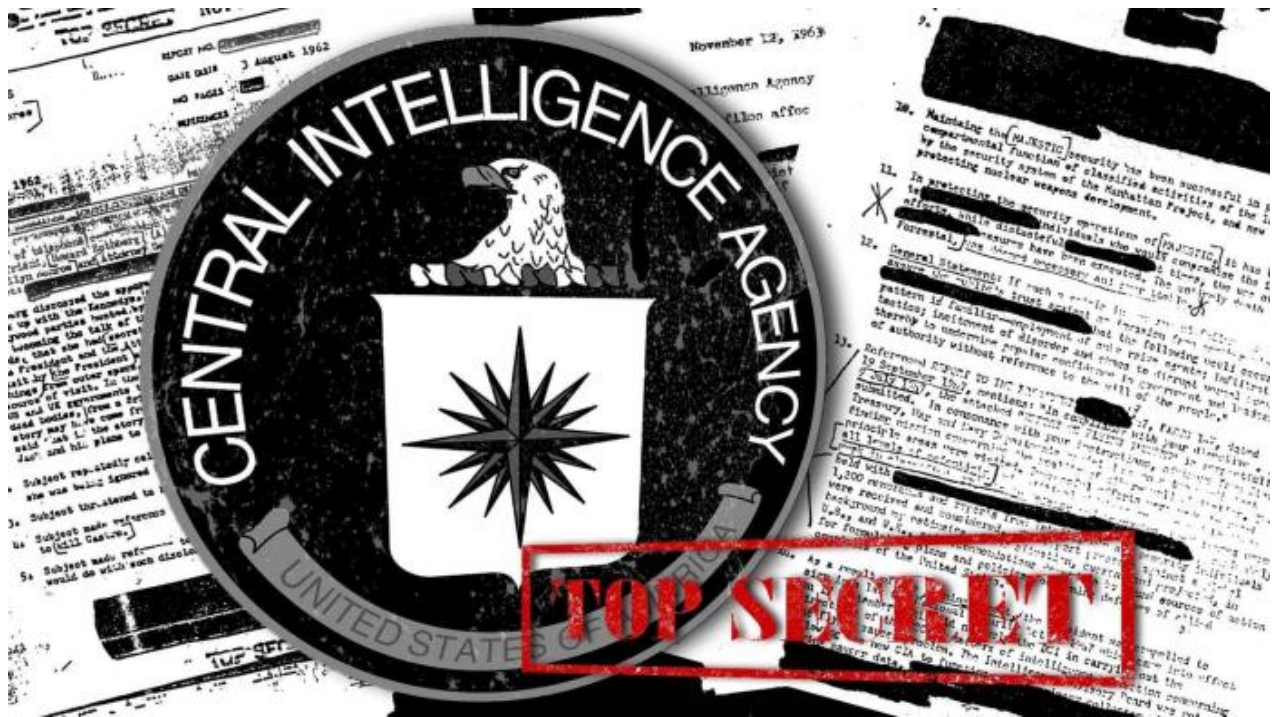
Source: [twitter.com](https://twitter.com)

These latter positions have become popular because of the blowback resulting from disastrous foreign policy interventions.

Young told CAM that, besides taking courses with Chomsky and Kampf at MIT in 1976, he read almost every book written by Chomsky, who taught him about the “horrible things that the U.S. government did in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Central America and elsewhere,” and how “U.S. media corporations lie and cover up all the atrocities.”

During the Cold War, “the CIA gained influence over the big media corporations under Operation Mockingbird,” and has “never stopped deceiving the American public through PSYOPs [psychological operations] which are illegal [inside the U.S.] under the CIA’s own charter.”

“[Unfortunately], they’ve only gotten better at [PSYOPs] today,” Young said. “As an example, under the ownership of Jeff Bezos, the CIA exerts full editorial control over *The Washington Post*, [which] is not how it’s supposed to be.”



Source: [schoolhistory.co.uk](http://schoolhistory.co.uk)

Young faces an uphill climb in his quest to defeat Barr not only because of his lack of support from corporate donors, but also because the Democratic Party establishment in Kentucky refuses to support him.

Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear, a Democrat, said that Young “[needs help](#) [insinuating he is mentally ill], and [“yelled something nasty \[at him\] in front of his son.”](#) The Kentucky Democratic Party’s State Central Executive Committee further said that [“the Democratic Party could not actively support a candidate that engages in countless frivolous lawsuits against the party, its officers and virtually every elected official over the past decade.”](#)

Young sued Beshear and other Democrats whom he said participated in gerrymandering and primary election rigging practices that violated Kentucky law.

Regarding the incident with Beshear’s son, Young said that when Beshear was walking with his son into the KDP Headquarters in Frankfort before the 2019 primary for Governor, Young announced cheerfully, “One of the criminals has arrived!” (the other alleged, election-rigging criminal being Democrat Adam Edelen). This was not something nasty but true.

CAM is delighted to see a viable congressional contender call for the abolition of the CIA and wholeheartedly endorses Geoff Young as a candidate for the U.S. Congress. We urge our readers to do the same and to try to help him win the election.

Besides calls to abolish the CIA, the rest of Young’s platform is also very forward thinking. He wants to a) abolish AFRICOM, b) tax the rich, c) get money out of politics, d) fight corruption, e) legalize cannabis and end the War on Drugs; f) expand Medicare for all, g) cut off military aid to Ukraine, and h) abolish economic sanctions.

Below is an edited transcript of the complete interview between CAM and Mr. Young on May 25:

Jeremy Kuzmarov: Hi Geoff. Thanks for joining us. It’s great to be with you. Congratulations

on your primary victory. It's quite an accomplishment.

Geoff Young: Yeah, it was. Thank you.

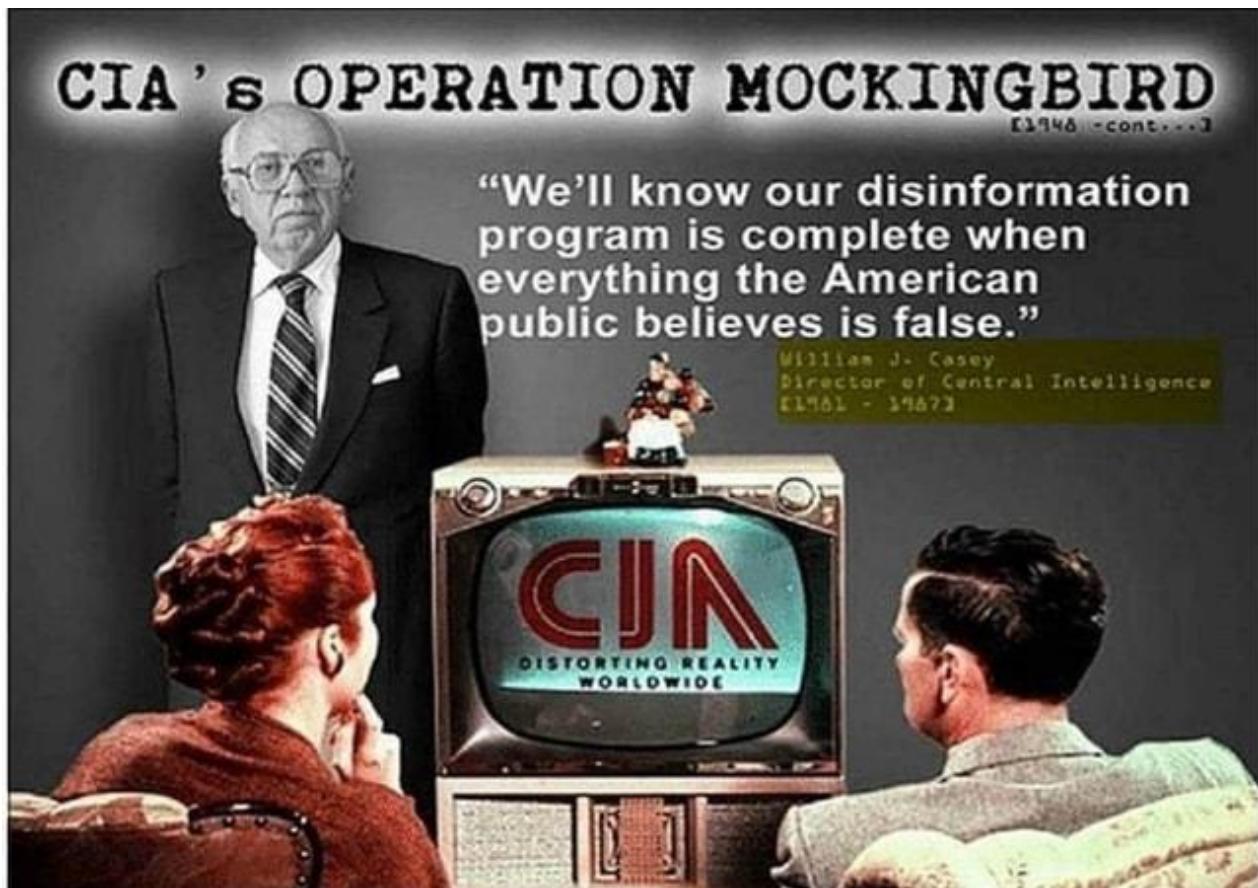
Jeremy Kuzmarov: Why don't you start by discussing your background. How you came to your views, criticism of the CIA, and how you came to run for the U.S. House of Representatives.

Geoff Young: Alright. I was born and brought up in a middle-class town, Marblehead, Massachusetts, in a middle-class Jewish family. My parents wanted me to get into MIT. So I worked hard as a student in the public school system and got in. And one of the reasons I wanted to go there was that, as a junior or senior in high school, I read a couple of books by Noam Chomsky on the U.S. war of aggression against South Vietnam, and its expansion into Laos, Cambodia, and North Vietnam.

And that opened my eyes about a lot of things—including about U.S. imperialism. And our government's total contempt for international law, especially the prohibition against aggression. So in 1976, I took a couple of political science classes with Noam Chomsky and Louis Kampf [of MIT's languages department]. And the first one was on U.S. foreign policy since 1945, which really influenced me ever since.

Since then I've tried to read every book Noam Chomsky has written on politics (I never got into his linguistic research). In a typical Chomsky book, the first half is about all of the horrible things the U.S. is doing in Vietnam or Central America, or whatever particular intervention is going on at the moment. The rest of the pages are a dissection of the way the mainstream media corporations lie about it, cover it up.

We know that the CIA has tried to gain and has gained a lot of influence over the big mainstream media corporations. I think that was Operation Mockingbird, and it's never stopped.



Source: [americasbestpics.com](http://americasbestpics.com)

And now we see former CIA agents acting as commentators on mainstream media news shows.

I moved to Kentucky 40 years ago, in 1982 to Lexington, which is in Fayette County. Been here ever since. I love it here—the people, the climate is a little bit better than Massachusetts in the winter; I like to garden and it's a longer growing season. I got a job in Frankfort in state government, working in the state energy office. Every state has one. In Kentucky, it was very small, but the mission of the state energy offices is to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy investments in all sectors of the economy. That was a great job. I retired five years early from that because it was just kind of getting a little bit repetitive.

And since about 2004, when I retired early, I've been a full-time political activist, mostly antiwar, never thought I would run for any office. Until about, well, my first run was 2012. I ran for the Kentucky House of Representatives in my district in Lexington against an entrenched far right-wing Christian Republican incumbent.

Since then I've learned a lot about how the political system in Kentucky works. And then every two years, starting in 2014, I have run for the U.S. House of Representatives in Kentucky's Sixth Congressional District, which includes Lexington shading toward eastern Kentucky and Frankfort, the state capital.

This year, Kentucky Republicans rammed through a redistricting map because they have total control over the state House and Senate. They took Frankfort out of the Sixth District in order to help Andy Barr, the Republican incumbent. Gerrymandering was invented in Massachusetts by Elbridge Gerry [American founding father who served as Massachusetts

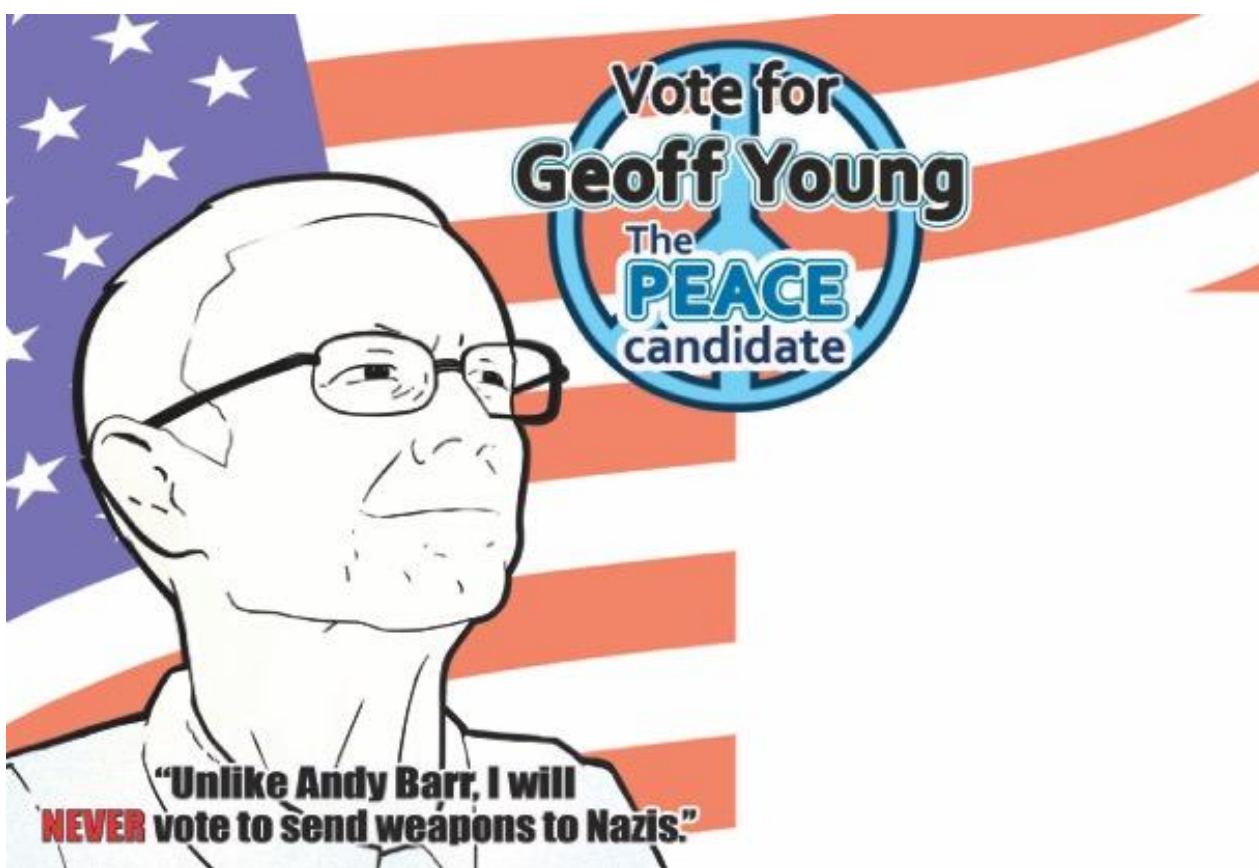
Governor]. And it's alive and well in the U.S.—probably also in Massachusetts.

But yeah, that's how I got into politics and I've had a long and interesting journey there since 2012.

Jeremy Kuzmarov: Great. Actually I was a student from 2002 to 2006 at Brandeis University [in Waltham, Massachusetts] and I used to go to MIT to attend Chomsky's lectures. He was also an inspiration and I read many of his books, so we have a lot in common. As far as your run for Congress, what do you think is different this time? In the last few races, you failed in the primary. Why do you think you won this time? And do you think you have a chance to defeat Andy Barr?

Geoff Young: Well, this time it was a pretty narrow victory. I got 52% to 48%. I think a lot of it was name recognition. I've been running since 2014 and a lot of Democrats know my name, compared to my Democratic Party challenger [Chris Preece, a high school teacher from Berea, Kentucky] who is very young.

Also on the eve of the primary I put out a postcard mailing which said: "Unlike Andy Barr, I will never vote to send weapons to Nazis."



Source: Photo courtesy of Geoff Young

And on the back it had a montage of articles from mainstream media sources showing that the Ukrainian government has these Nazi battalions, Azov and others. And then it had little pictures of articles from *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, all of these establishment media corporations saying Nazis are gaining influence in Ukraine, that kind of thing. And then on the back, I wrote that there is no way Andy Barr can claim that he didn't know that the United States was arming Nazis from 2014 until today.



Geoff Young: The Governor and the state central executive committee of the Kentucky Democratic Party do not represent all Kentucky Democrats. It would be inaccurate to say that the whole Kentucky Democratic Party hates me. That would not be true. The Governor [Andy Beshear—whose father Steve was Kentucky’s governor from 2007 to 2015] is not even on the state central executive committee but it’s universally recognized that he is the real leader of the Kentucky party.

I ran against Beshear in 2019 for governor. There were four Democrats in the primary. We all had a running mate. But it was not a fair contest. The party blatantly rigs its own primaries, the party leaders, the structure rigs important primaries all the time which is illegal. That’s not supposed to happen.

All the primaries, like all general elections, according to the Kentucky Constitution, are supposed to be free and equal but both parties—the Democratic Party and the Republican Party of Kentucky—routinely rig primaries that are important to them and violate the law. The Democrats have a bylaw that says you have to treat all Democratic Party candidates in the primary equally.

Republicans were smart enough not to put that bylaw in or create any formal documents. But they do it anyway. And so they’re writing their own bylaws on the Democratic side; and on both sides they’re violating Kentucky state law. So I have sued the Kentucky Democratic Party (KDP) in the past and nobody likes to be sued.

Andy Beshear was personally named in that 2019 lawsuit along with the other Democrats who I thought participated in that election rigging. I was in many events during that primary where I would say: “Look, in this primary, you have a choice. You can vote for a crook—that would be Andy Bashear or Adam Edelen—or you could vote for one of the honest, strong Democrats, Rocky Adkins, or me. If you don’t like me, vote for Rocky because he’s honest, he’s not a crook.

Andy Beshear didn’t like being in a room where someone was calling him corrupt to his face. So right before the Primary, there was the final meeting of the state central executive committee in Frankfort. And they invited the three establishment Democrats to come and talk to the committee. This is a big fundraiser with a lot of influential Democrats from all over Kentucky there.

I tried to register and a staff person said you’re not allowed in this building. They passed a resolution a year ago saying if you enter the headquarters building in Frankfort or the other one in Fayette County—my own party in my own county—we will call the police and have you arrested or we’ll call the sheriff.

And they did call the police many times. I never got arrested because I always left the building and chatted with the police officers outside. And so I’m not allowed in the building. The three others—Adam Edelen was inside. Rocky Adkins goes in, I chatted with him. He says, “Oh, I’ll find out what’s going on in there.”

And then Andy Beshear parks and is walking toward the building with his son, 12 years old at that time. And I say: “One of the criminals has arrived.” And Beshear says: “Geoff, this is my 12-year-old son.” And they just keep on walking in. That was the incident that he referred to. And when he was interviewed, when he was asked by a reporter the day after the primary this year, why he’s not supporting one of the Democratic nominees for



Congress, it was a personal thing.

Jeremy Kuzmarov: I see. Now we can start discussing geopolitical affairs, but one last question about the race: What's your game plan/strategy for trying to win in November?

Geoff Young: Well, I'm going to try to unite everybody, every Kentucky voter who is not happy with the way that the two establishment parties are running things.

And I'm going to continue to say "Unlike Andy Barr, I will never vote to send weapons to Nazis." I'm going to point out the devastating economic impact of U S sanctions against Russia, China, Iran, Venezuela, many other countries [including Cuba], and even some of our allies when they want to deal with Russia.

Now, these sanctions don't harm Russia very much. Russia is easily able to handle any sanctions that we can possibly impose. They have China that they can work with, they can export their oil and natural gas to China, to Asia. They don't have to export it to Western Europe or the U.S.—some of their oil.

So Russia will be fine. But when you cut off trade with a huge country that has a lot of natural resources that we need, strategic materials and everything, you're sanctioning yourself. And these sanctions are one of the major reasons why we're having rising gasoline prices, inflation, and all kinds of other problems.

We're destroying our own economy just to damage Russia and the Russian people. And it's already failed. The ruble is stronger now than it was for years. So the sanctions have totally failed. If we keep trying to do it or double down, our own economy is gonna collapse. The value of the dollar is going to disappear.

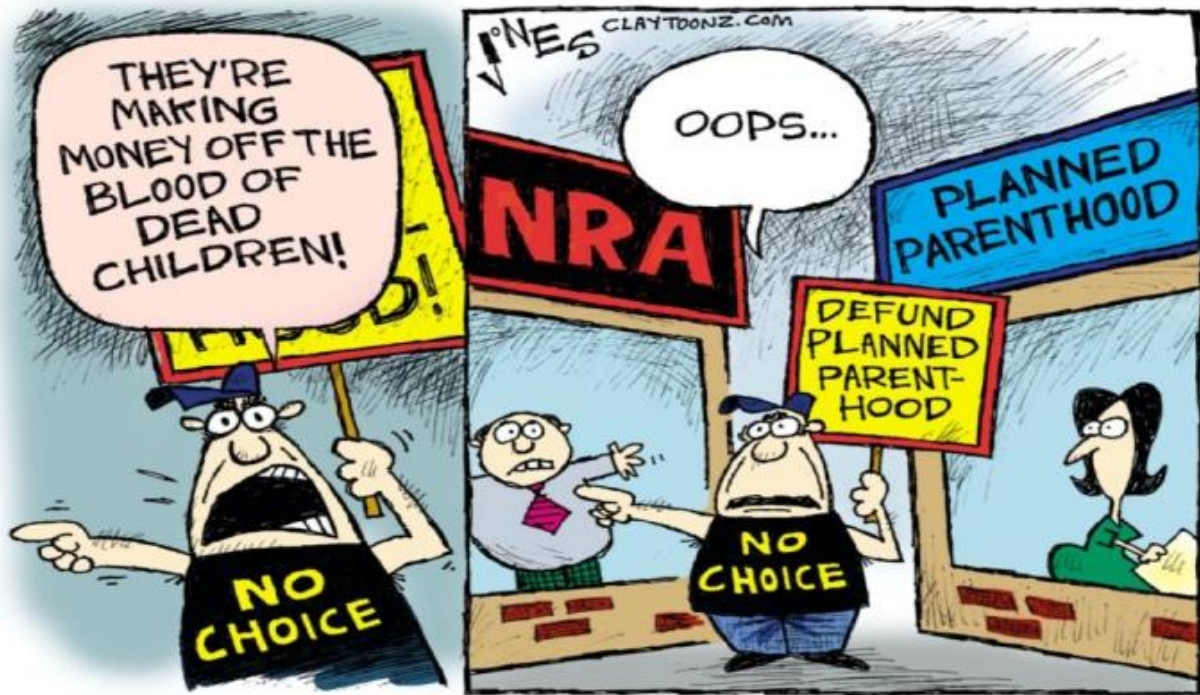


Source: [syracuse.com](http://syracuse.com)

We won't be able to afford imports from anywhere outside the United States. And we'll just be cut off from the rest of the world. In terms of trade and economics, that's a recipe for a long Great Depression. We're going to run on that issue. And abortion. The entire Republican Party for the last 50 years has been taking a totally immoral position on abortion.

Planned Parenthood is the most effective abortion-preventing and reducing organization that exists. And by trying to put Planned Parenthood out of business, the Republican Party will simply force women back into unsafe back-alley abortions. More women will die and the number of abortions will not decrease.

It might even increase a little bit, but they'll be illegal. And so, so the GOP's position is simply an attack against all women in America.



Source: [claytoonz.com](http://claytoonz.com)

Jeremy Kuzmarov: Great. And you also have a call to abolish the CIA in your platform. Can you discuss some of the abuses in recent years that you think the CIA has perpetrated and how they've corrupted democracy and what alternatives you would posit to a CIA?

Geoff Young: Okay. I have already mentioned the campaign by the CIA, since it was founded in 1947, to influence U.S. mainstream media corporations, and other opinion leaders such as academics. That's probably the worst thing it has done. They've never stopped doing it when their charter makes it illegal for them to conduct psychological operations, PSYOPs against the American people.

The CIA has been violating its own charter and conducting PSYOPs against all of us since 1947. Since that time, they've only gotten better at it. They've done it more and more.

*The Washington Post* today is owned by Jeff Bezos. He has a very large contract with the national security state. The CIA now has editorial control over *The Washington Post*, especially when it's reporting about some foreign country or a foreign war. The CIA controls *The Washington Post*. That's not how it's supposed to be.

And so we have this propaganda campaign today that is the worst I've ever seen. I lived through 9/11; in the years after that there was extreme uniformity in the mainstream media in supporting the war, supporting the troops and all that. The media never discussed whether the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 violated international law; that was never brought up.

When they would talk about the weapons of mass destruction issue, they never brought up the fact that even if Saddam Hussein had had weapons of mass destruction, that would not have justified the U S invasion and conquest and occupation of Iraq in 2003. Nothing can justify international aggression. It's the worst war crime possible for any country or any leader to commit. It's a crime for which German officers and their propagandists and other officials were hanged at Nuremberg. So controlling the media is the worst thing the CIA

does.

But also there's a long, shameful record of torture, regime-change operations, overthrowing a government that is an official enemy. The United States has been doing that constantly since 1947. We have 16 other "intelligence agencies." I always do that—use quotation marks with my fingers when I use the word intelligence—we have 16 others. We should just save some money and abolish the worst.



Source: [marxist.com](http://marxist.com)

Jeremy Kuzmarov: Great. Thank You. You seem to be the only candidate in this congressional race advocating for that position.

Geoff Young: Yeah, exactly. I am the only one. I don't know of any other candidate anywhere. And we put up a billboard saying "Abolish the CIA." I think that billboard actually contributed to my narrow victory.

Jeremy Kuzmarov: Excellent. It seems that the American people may have come around. I was [reading an article today by Chris Hedges](#), who you probably read.

Geoff Young: Some of his articles. He's fantastic.

Jeremy Kuzmarov: He's a brilliant guy. And he was saying in the Cold War, the American public turned a blind eye to covert operations like in Indonesia because the U.S. economy was going well, but a generation or two later, the public has really come to revile the foreign policy elites in Washington and agencies like the CIA.

From what you've seen, do you think that your positions are really popular in Kentucky and could the majority of people agree with your assessment?

Geoff Young: Well, I haven't done polls, but I think that a lot agree with me. People have told me and my campaign helpers. "Yeah. Yeah. Profanity the CIA. I agree with him on that position."

The CIA it should be pointed out has run drugs, addictive drugs since they were founded.

And I said in my campaign video, the addiction problem that has plagued Kentucky is not Kentucky's fault. I hold the CIA responsible for that—you know, they pretty much ran the Afghan opium trade and heroin trade for 20 years while our troops were there. And guarding the poppy fields. The CIA was raking off money, cooperating with organized crime all over the world and flooding the world, including the United States, including Kentucky with opioids, a tremendous amount of suffering and damage caused by the drug trade.

So I have a solution for all that: to legalize all drugs. Libertarians like that; the Tea Party likes that. Other countries like Portugal have done that and they have dramatically reduced overdose deaths, which is a horrible problem in Kentucky and across America. If drugs were legalized, people would not have to buy poison on the street from the illicit drug business and they can get a pure or safe doses as they work to treat their addiction.

We could use marijuana as a kind of a stepping stone toward recovery, which is not addictive and not harmful. It's been used as a medicinal herb for thousands of years. So, yeah, make marijuana legal and all drugs legal. Addicts could go into a clinic. John Oliver did a great segment on this in March; it's called harm reduction. I agree with that. That was a brilliant video. Probably the best thing I've seen of John Oliver's.

Jeremy Kuzmarov: Great. Two more questions. Your platform advocates for the abolition of AFRICOM [the Africa Command] and [we've done some articles exposing AFRICOM](#). So maybe you can just say a bit about that—the harmful nature of AFRICOM and why you want to have it abolished.

Geoff Young: Well, it's a purely military operation with Special Forces running around; no oversight. Helping our dictator friends in Africa avoid being overthrown by their own people.



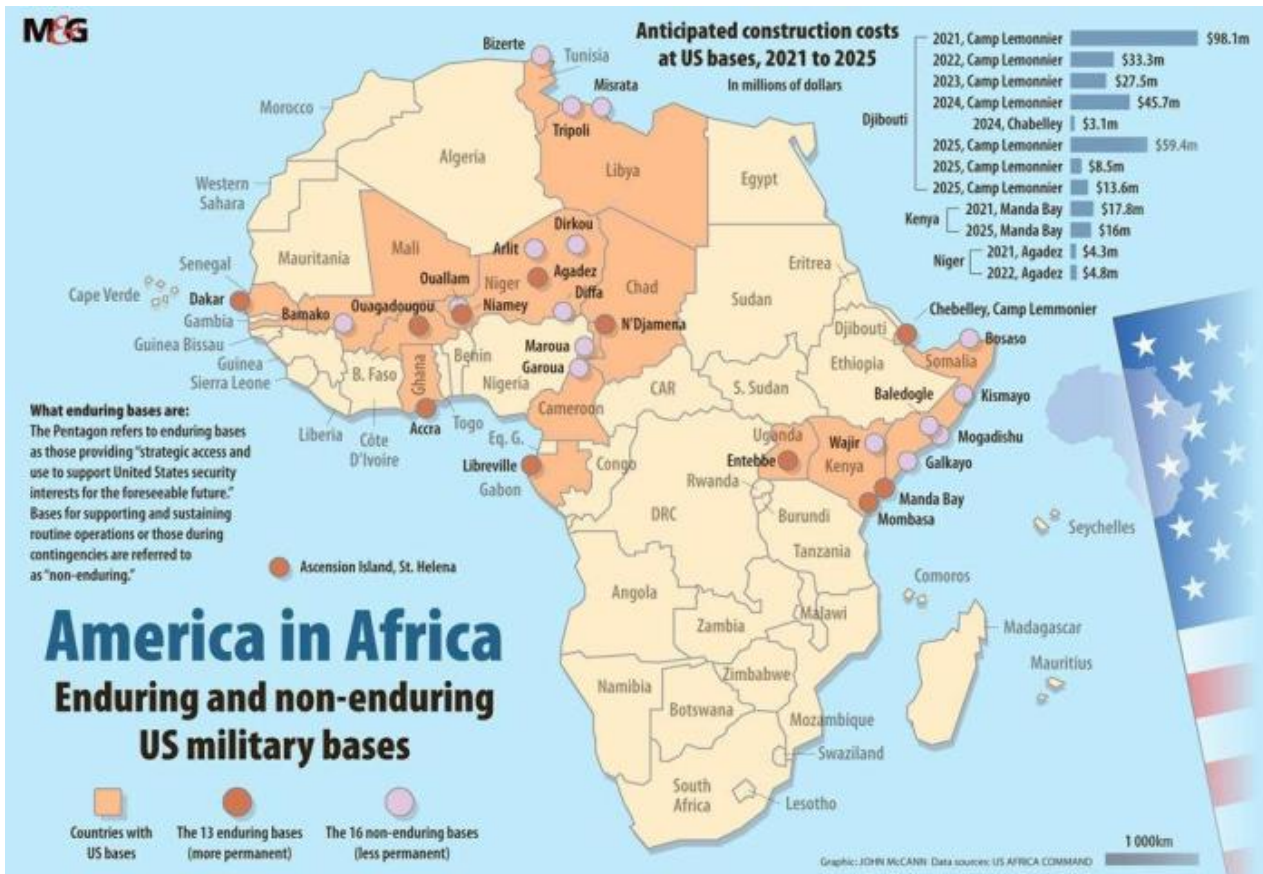
Source: [pulitzercenter.org](http://pulitzercenter.org)

Jeremy Kuzmarov: Yes and it's also to grab the natural resources. One of AFRICOM's first commanders even [admitted it](#). That's what it was all about and to counter China because China's moved into a lot of African countries.

Geoff Young: But China does not move in with their military.

Jeremy Kuzmarov: True, yes.

Geoff Young: They don't set up a base in Central Africa or anywhere. They've got one base, I think next to our base in Djibouti, but we have bases all over Africa [the U.S. has at least 29 bases in Africa]. And the purpose—as you said—the ultimate purpose is to get African resources at low prices.



Source: [mg.co.za](http://mg.co.za)

China's goal is for mutual benefit. China and Russia are not imperialist powers. They are not trying to dominate the areas they trade with. So AFRICOM is just a continuation of the old French-British-Belgian colonial system. The purpose of which is to just get those resources and leave Africa in poverty. China with its new silk roads, Belt and Road initiative is there to help everyone profit and benefit, develop their economy.

China does not interfere in the internal affairs of the countries they trade with; countries along the Silk Road, the Belt and Road initiative. They don't meddle in there in the governments of their trading partners. The United States by contrast always meddles—all the time as a matter of habit.

The U.S. is by far the worst imperialist country in the world today. And the rest of the world is getting tired of it.

Jeremy Kuzmarov: And my final question is about the media. The CIA controls the media; have they got wind of your campaign yet? Have you received any negative press or are they just kind of ignoring you?

Geoff Young: Well, public radio station WEKU interviewed me—reporter Stu Johnson was there the night of the primary results—May 17<sup>th</sup>. I was one of the last elections to be announced. Something like 11 o'clock and he was there. He was very even-handed and friendly in the interview.

Jeremy Kuzmarov: That's good.

Geoff Young: But KET [Kentucky Authority for Educational Television] is not friendly. That's a

public television station. They have always hated me. They favor the establishment candidate, even if it's a Republican.

This year they set three criteria to be in a debate before the primary. I had one primary opponent. Andy Barr had one primary opponent. So potentially, there could have been four people, maybe two debates, one or two for the Democrats, and one or two for the Republicans.

The first two criteria are reasonable. You have to have an active campaign essentially. Everybody always meets the first two. The third was that you had to raise a certain amount of money or spend a certain amount of money by March 31, 2022. And it had to be reflected in the FEC, Federal Election Commission's website, on or before April 15<sup>th</sup>.

So my Democratic Party rival [Chris Preece] didn't meet that third criterion. I met it. However, I got a letter from a private lawyer in Louisville; I don't know why they don't use state attorneys or the assistant attorney general from Kentucky to represent them. But they have a lawyer in Louisville who said that number in the box there on the FEC website was higher than \$25,000. But he said that those expenditures weren't legitimate; they had to do with things in the past; we're not counting that and you're not going to be on our stage. You will not receive an invitation to be interviewed by KET. So you met the criteria, but we're not inviting you.

Anyway, KET has a problem and that lawyer is one of their problems.

Jeremy Kuzmarov: This was very recently.

Geoff Young: Yes. I got that letter I forget exactly when; I'd probably say in April. And the primary was May 17.

Jeremy Kuzmarov: There is a progressive wing of the Democratic Party—Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and "The Squad." A lot of them were supporting the bill for the billions to Ukraine, which is disappointing. But on other issues often they've been good. Do you have any connection or support from them?

Geoff Young: I'm looking forward to working with all of them very closely. I want to join the Congressional Progressive Caucus if I win in November and work with the progressive wing of the party, I saw an article yesterday in *The Guardian* saying progressives have done unexpectedly well in recent primaries across the United States. And I think it's a trend.

Even though they were vastly outspent by their establishment Democratic Party opponents, they did surprisingly well. And I think that trend is going to actually accelerate. I think the future of the Democratic Party is the anti-war progressive wing of the party; it's going to replace all these ancient establishment politicians.

Jeremy Kuzmarov: I hope so.

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