



REVOLUTION

voice of the
revolutionary
communist
party, usa

*the newspaper formerly known
as the Revolutionary Worker*

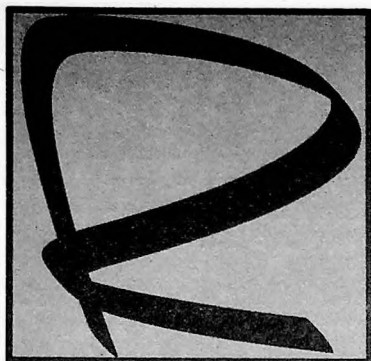
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An alleyway
in Galle that was
filled with water
from the tsunami.

Photo: Mukai



REVOLUTION

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DESIGN A NEW MASTHEAD FOR REVOLUTION NEWSPAPER

To our readers:

This is Issue No. 2 of *Revolution/Revolución*, formerly known as *Revolutionary Worker/Obrero Revolucionario*. In a future issue, we will lay out more fully the thinking behind the change from *RW* to *Revolution*. But in short, we believe that the new name more fully reflects our revolutionary communist ideology and politics, and the enriched vision of a tribune of the people that has been pioneered by RCP Chairman Bob Avakian.

As part of the new transformation we have embarked on, we are working to create a fresh graphic look that captures the spirit of revolutionary communism in the 21st century.

Our graphic look is still "under construction." In particular, the masthead on the front page is a work in progress. The masthead is a very important element of any publication. We invite people broadly to be part of the process of finalizing the masthead in the coming weeks.

We would like to hear from artists, designers, design students, and others. Send in your comments on the special masthead that appears in this issue; suggestions for variations or modifications; or different ideas for the *Revolution* masthead.

We are extending the contest we announced several weeks ago for new masthead designs.

Design elements should include:

Title: REVOLUTION
Subhead: Voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party
revcom.us
Website: revcom.us
Issue info: volume number, issue number, date, and price

Masthead designs should be printable in three color as well as in black and red. Entries should include mastheads for both a newspaper and magazine format, in English and Spanish. The deadline for entries is July 1. Submit as many entries as you like.

Send entries to:

email: revolutionredesign@yahoo.com
by mail: Revolution Redesign, c/o RCP, Publications, PO Box 3486, Merchandise Mart, Chicago IL 60654
Include printout, camera-ready copy, and file on disk in any common graphic format. Indicate program info on disk.
First prize: A set of five historic full-color revolutionary posters
Three runners-up: Full-color historic May 1st, 1980 poster

Three Main Points

by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP, USA

What do we in the Revolutionary Communist Party want people to learn from all that is exposed and revealed in this newspaper? Mainly, three things:

- 1 *The whole system we now live under is based on exploitation—here and all over the world. It is completely worthless and no basic change for the better can come about until this system is overthrown.*
- 2 *Many different groups will protest and rebel against things this system does, and these protests and rebellions should be supported and strengthened. Yet it is only those with nothing to lose but their chains who can be the backbone of a struggle to actually overthrow this system and create a new system that will put an end to exploitation and help pave the way to a whole new world.*
- 3 *Such a revolutionary struggle is possible. There is a political Party that can lead such a struggle, a political Party that speaks and acts for those with nothing to lose but their chains: The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.*

This Party has the vision, the program, the leadership, and the organizational principles to unite those who must be united and enable them to do what must be done. There is a challenge for all those who would like to see such a revolution, those with a burning desire to see a drastic change for the better, all those who dare to dream and to act to bring about a completely new and better world: Support this Party, join this Party, spread its message and its organized strength, and prepare the ground for a revolutionary rising that has a solid basis and a real chance of winning.

Suscribe! See page 15

Our Ideology is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism
Our Vanguard is the
Revolutionary Communist Party
Our Leader is Chairman Avakian

revcom.us

You can now use this new address — revcom.us — to reach Revolution Online, the web edition of *Revolution* newspaper.

Help us promote this address and our website everywhere. Link to it online. Put it boldly on leaflets, signs and wherever it can be seen.

In the period ahead, our website will be going through further changes. At the same time, we want everyone to know that our old address (rwr.org) will continue to function—now and on into the future. We will not cause existing links to break. And we intend to keep the full archives of the Revolutionary Worker available online. People who have bookmarked our site, its "what's new" page, and specific articles will continue to connect.

The Republi-Fascists... and the Republi-crats And Where Is the *Real* Alternative?

by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

EDITORS' NOTE: This is part of a series of excerpts on various subjects—drawn from conversations and discussions, as well as more formal talks, by Bob Avakian—which we will be running in this newspaper over the next period of time. This has been edited for publication and footnotes have been added.

The Democratic Party is after all a party of the ruling class, it is a party of the capitalist system. At the same time, the Republican Party, especially now, is the party of openly and aggressively benefiting the rich and further impoverishing people—benefiting the rich and driving down the poor. It is the party, *openly and aggressively*, of white supremacy. Let's not forget, these people are opposed to affirmative action, these are the people who brought you *The Bell Curve*. (This refers to a book published during the 1990s which claimed, based on phony science and faulty methods, to show that there are unchangeable, genetically based differences which account for inequalities, including the supposed mental superiority of people of European descent as compared with people of African descent. The studies, statistics, methods and approaches cited in this book have been soundly refuted, both before and after the publication of this book, but the book was nevertheless promoted and treated as serious scholarship within many mainstream institutions, including media, and in particular it became part of the ideological arsenal of "conservatives" in arguing against things like affirmative action and more generally concessionary social programs whose stated purpose was to help overcome social inequalities.)

It is not a matter of gimmicks when we point to what these people represent—their stands in support of the death penalty, unleashing the police without restraint, and so on. Again, it's not that the Democratic Party is not for these things—there are real reasons why I (and others) have referred to the Democrats at times as "Republi-crats." But the Republicans are the party of *openly and aggressively* doing this—imprisoning more people, unleashing the police against more people, impoverishing more people, attacking people's rights more—all openly and

aggressively. That's why it is correct, and not hype, to refer to them as Republi-fascists.

As I have said a number of times: These reactionaries should not even be allowed to use "conservative" to describe themselves. We should say, "Conservative, my ass, these people are Nazis."

And, again, what they are all about definitely includes open white supremacy. What does it mean when you look at the fact that all the "Dixiecrats" have become Republicans? ("Dixiecrats" refers to the bourgeois politicians in the south who, after Reconstruction was ended in 1877, openly stood for segregation and white supremacy and were part of

the Democratic Party, representing its "southern wing." Since the time that the government, particularly through the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, was forced to make concessions to the civil rights struggle and pass certain laws and policies outlawing outright segregation and open discrimination, many of these types of southern politicians have, over the past several decades, moved from the Democratic to the Republican Party.)

But, again, the fact is that the Democrats support most of this program. They do have a different "cohering logic" than the Christian Fascist and overall Nazi-type logic which is increasingly dominant in the Republican Party. And they do have differences over some policies, such as taxes and social security. But, despite very real and sometimes sharp differences, when you get down to it, what the Republicans are doing is, to a large degree, agreed on by the Democrats as well — including such crucial things as the war in Iraq and the broader war for empire carried out under the banner of "war against terrorism." And what the Democrats may not agree with, they overwhelmingly go along with in any case. Witness, for example, the confirmation of Alberto Gonzales as the new Attorney General—after it was well established that he played a key part in formulating the defense of torture by the government and the position that the president can act contrary to international law, and U.S. law for that matter. The Democrats caved in on this, just as they did with the appointment of that other fascist, Ashcroft, as Bush's first Attorney General. Why? Because the Democrats are the representatives of the same system, and fundamentally for that reason they cannot offer any real alternative. I spoke to this in "The Pyramid of Power"* and it is something we need to keep going back to and deepening people's understanding of, in order to enable people to see the need to break out of this whole framework of mainstream bourgeois politics in order to bring about a real alternative.

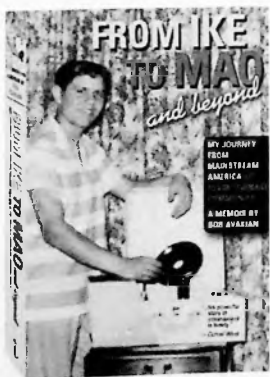
*Bob Avakian, "The Pyramid of Power and the Struggle to Turn This Whole Thing Upside Down," RW/OR #1269. Also available online at revcom.us.

A Message from Chairman Avakian

Editors' Note: We have received the following note from Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party, and, as requested, we are publishing it here. Correspondence for Chairman Avakian can be sent care of Revolution, (P.O. Box 3486, Merchandise Mart, Chicago IL 60654) or Insight Press, (4064 N. Lincoln Avenue, #264, Chicago IL 60618)

I would like to thank the many different people who have sent letters and other correspondence for me. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, I am not able to respond directly to much of this correspondence, but I read it with great interest, and I would like to convey to all those who have written to me that I very much appreciate and continually learn from this correspondence. And I would like to encourage those who would like to do so to write and to offer any suggestions, questions, disagreements, and criticisms which people feel would be relevant to raise to me, in the spirit and with the purpose of coming to know the world more deeply and to transform it more thoroughly in the interests of the masses of people and ultimately all of humanity.

How to Get Works by Bob Avakian



From Ike to Mao and Beyond: My Journey from Mainstream America to Revolutionary Communist
Insight Press
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Available for ordering online at Amazon.com
Also available at Revolution Books stores and outlets



Marxism and the Call of the Future: Conversations on Ethics, History, and Politics
by Bob Avakian and Bill Martin
Open Court Press
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Revolution: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Possible, What It's All About
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Could We Really Win?
Phony Communism Is Dead...Long Live Real Communism!
Preaching from a Pulpit of Bones
Democracy: Can't We Do Better Than That?
...and other books and pamphlets are available from RCP Publications (PO Box 3486, Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654) and at Revolution Books stores and outlets

Download audio files of important talks by Bob Avakian from bobavakian.net.

A wide range of articles, essays, and serialized writings are available online at the Revolution newspaper website: revcom.us. Audio of the interview by Carl Dix—"Bob Avakian Speaks Out On War and Revolution, On Being a Revolutionary and Changing the World"—is also available on this site.

Fundamentalist Right Rally in Louisville, April 24: A Demand for Power and

"We should not have to choose between believing and living by what's in this book and serving the public whether it be on the bench as a judge...This debate will shape the future of this nation."

Tony Perkins
Master of Ceremonies
at "Justice Sunday" Rally
holding a Bible in one hand
and a judge's gavel in the other

"The people on the secular left say, 'We think you're a threat.' You know what? They're right!"

Bill Donahue
National Catholic League
Louisville, April 24

Two thousand preachers and church members packed into the massive Highview Baptist megachurch in Louisville, Kentucky on Sunday, April 24, to listen to speeches by prominent leaders of the Religious Right.

Among the speakers were James Dobson (Focus on the Family), former Watergate conspirator Chuck Colson ("Prison Fellowship"), Bill Donahue (National Catholic League), and Albert Mohler (president of the influential and highly conservative Southern Baptist Theological Seminary).

On the surface, this rally was demanding a basic change in the Senate rules. The speakers demanded that Bush's stalled judicial nominees be approved by the Senate. And they insisted that opposition senators must not be allowed to use any "filibusters" to block those approvals.

Filibusters are a way that small groups of legislators have historically blocked laws that they strongly opposed. For example, during the civil rights struggle, hateful segregationist senators often filibustered against laws that would grant legal equality for Black people.

Now, a huge fight is brewing over new judges—and the rally organizers are trying to create a political climate where any monster nominated by Bush can cruise to power

without real challenges.

The name of their rally tells of a deceitful approach: "Justice Sunday, Stopping the Filibuster Against People of Faith." They claim that allowing filibusters is (somehow) a blanket assault against all "people of faith."

This growing fight over filibusters is itself an opening skirmish of an even bigger fight. All kinds of political forces are gearing up for the struggle over the next Supreme Court nominees—a fight that is expected soon as various ailing court members retire or die.

And listening to the speeches at this rally, you can see that the forces gathered in Louisville have even bigger ambitions about holding and wielding state power. All day, their belligerent, Bible-pounding speeches made it clear, in many ways, that their goal is nothing less than that the Bible—and particularly their literal, ultra-conservative reading of the Bible—should be put at the very center of U.S. political and cultural life.

This fight over judges is ultimately a fight over what the whole legal framework of the United States will be—with a profound influence on what will dominate the culture and politics of this country, and what will be harshly suppressed.

Putting Them on Center Stage

Senator Bill Frist, leader of the Senate Republicans and ambitious presidential hopeful, singlehandedly made this rally into a major national event when he announced his endorsement and sent a personal speech to be played at the event.

Then these proceedings were beamed straight into countless church services and millions of households over a national network of Christian cable stations, radio and websites.

Organizers claimed that their broadcast reached 60 million people, which is probably a gross exaggeration. Still there is an ominous truth embedded within their hype: these religious-political forces have created a self-contained political subculture within the U.S.—where tens of millions of people are indoctrinated about the world through the prism of extreme fundamentalist dogma and politics.

This event was a powerful attempt to seize the initiative in the political struggles that are developing, and to mobilize a loyal and quite ignorant social base as an attack force in this cause.

Focus on the Supreme Court

"The judiciary branch of our government has overstepped its authority on countless occasions, overturning and in some cases just ignoring the legitimate will of the people... Our next step, whatever it is, must be more than rhetoric."

Tom DeLay,
Republican leader,
House of Representatives,
during the buildup to "Justice Sunday"

"The issues that we care about and the values that are important to us are now threatened by the court system and especially the United States Supreme Court. There's a majority on the Supreme Court that is, and you'll have to pardon me but this is the way I see it, they're unelected and unaccountable and arrogant and imperious and determined to redesign the culture according to their own biases and values, and they're out of control. And I think they need to be reined in."

James Dobson
founder of Focus on the Family,
prominent leader of the Religious Right,
Louisville, April 24

For millions of people, it is bewildering to see the Religious Right claim that they are "threatened" by this Supreme Court.

After all, *look at this Court!*

This is the same court that carried out the shocking Republican coup d'etat in 2000—handing over the White House to George W. Bush on the most dubious grounds (while overruling the Florida courts and short-circuiting any vote recounting as they did it).

This is the court long headed by "hang 'em high" conservative William Rehnquist—who has crafted court decisions speeding up executions, reducing appeals, and executing prisoners who are youth or mentally retarded.

This court includes the blunt Christian fascist, Antonin Scalia, who openly makes the medieval argument that governments get their legitimacy from "god."

It is a court notorious for upholding government secrecy, permitting this government to round up immigrants without charges, and holding foreign prisoners without oversight.

And so, it is revealing (and chilling) that this quite conservative court is treated as *intolerable* by the powerful rightwing forces who support this president and what he represents. You get a sense of the *quantum leap to the right* that they have in mind!

In speech after speech in Louisville, it emerged what kind of court and legal system—and what kind of country—these forces have in mind.

An Openly Christian State

"We're going to save this civilization and uphold righteousness."

Rev. Albert Mohler,
president of Southern Baptist
Theological Seminary
at "Justice Sunday" rally

"The secular left ... say we're going to have a theocracy. What are we, the Taliban?"

Bill Donahue,
National Catholic League,
Louisville, April 24

"Conservative, my ass, these people are Nazis."

Bob Avakian,
Chairman of the RCPUSA

When James Dobson, one of the most prominent "social conservatives" in the country, got up to speak he raged at how intolerable the separation of church and state are to him. He said:

"For forty-three years the Supreme Court has been on a campaign to limit religious freedom, religious liberty. It goes back to 1962 with Bible reading, in '63, prayer in schools, both prohibited."

In his mind "religious freedom" clearly means the right to impose his Christian fundamentalism on the general population—including through prayer indoctrination in schools.

And at the rally it became clear what these forces see as the solution: raising up like-minded judges to the highest posts.

This rally cheered Judge Charles Pickering of Mississippi—who attended, marched onstage and led them in the Pledge of Allegiance. Pickering was nominated by George Bush for the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals—and the speakers in Louisville fumed that he has not yet been approved by the Senate.

Rev. Mohler praised Pickering for saying that "Christians ought to base their decision-making on the Bible." And pointed out that this is currently considered a problem for a federal judge:

"In the views of some radical secularists," Mohler said, "that just invalidates him from serving on the federal bench."

But Pickering's stalled nomination is not a case of someone being persecuted for his faith. Pickering is not just a religious believer, he openly believes that a literal reading of the Christian Bible should be the law of the land.

Pickering has publicly said that the Christian Bible should be "recognized as the absolute authority by which all conduct of man is judged." And he carried this out from the bench—including by citing the Bible in his legal decisions.

It has to be said plainly that applying the Bible literally, as the law of the land, would be a HORROR. The legal "wisdom" of this book includes execution for countless minor offenses, upholding the gross subordination (and even killing) of children, stoning as punishment, rights of slavemasters over slaves and much, much more.

And it is important for any fair, thinking, enlightened person to insist (loudly!) that theocrats like Pickering, who see the Bible as an absolute legal authority, must NEVER be allowed to sit in judgement over other human beings.

And, by taking Pickering as a hero and symbol, these Religious Right forces show that they are precisely pushing for a theocracy in the U.S.

Such a fundamentalist Christian theocracy would be a *Christian fascist* society—with awful implications for people's lives and for their hopes of progressive change.

Getting Literal

"God's people have had to learn to discern and say, no, the [Bible's] text is the inerrant and infallible word of God, it is what God says it is, and what God revealed it to be, and that's what must constrain our interpretation."

Rev. Albert Mohler
Louisville, April 24

"Our children will best be served by judges who appreciate our Godly heritage and can interpret the Constitution exactly as it is written."

The video that opened "Justice Sunday"
Louisville, April 24

President Bush has announced that the only "litmus test" he has for judges is that they should just apply the Constitution as written. And it is not surprising that those who believe in a literal interpretation of the Bible should be excited about a similar literalism in regard to the U.S. Constitution.

But it is important to draw out exactly what that means:

The *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion in the U.S. was made based on the legal doctrine that there is an unwritten "right to privacy" implied by parts of the Bill of Rights. And in attacking *Roe*, the literalists say that since the Constitution says



Poster for the Christian fundamentalist "Justice Sunday" rally.



The Highview Baptist megachurch in Louisville, Kentucky, site of the "Justice Sunday" rally.

The Bible Taken Literally Is a Horror

Theocracy

When the American Taliban Came to Louisville

by Sunsara Taylor

nothing about privacy or abortion there is simply no basis for the Supreme Court to take such a stand.

And clearly one of the goals of these Christian fascists is to finally and completely overturn any federal legal protection for women's right to choose abortion.

However, following the logic of their logic—there would also be no literalist standing for the federal court legalization of birth control, which was also done on the basis that there is a constitutional "right to privacy." And so was the Supreme Court decision legalizing gay sex and overturning so-called "sodomy laws." In Louisville Bill Donahue shouted from the stage that the idea of a man marrying a man "belongs in an asylum"—so you get a sense of where they want things to go!

Many current standards of U.S. legal decisions are not *literally* there in the Constitution—like the right to see a lawyer when arrested. And, of course, the same goes for many of the legal rights won by Black people. (It has been pointed out that the Constitution mentions the army and navy, but not the air force—so perhaps it is violates a literal reading of the Constitution for the federal government to buy bombers!)

Legal decisions on civil rights were not mentioned at Louisville, but many of the prominent participants have a history that speaks for itself. The Louisville master of ceremonies, Tony Perkins, is a known associate of Louisiana's Council of Conservative Citizens (formerly known as the "White Citizens Council"). He once paid former Klan Grand Wizard David Duke \$82,000 for his political mailing list.

Judge Charles Pickering campaigned in law school against legalizing interracial marriage, and as a judge showed favoritism toward people who burned a cross on the lawn of an interracial couple.

The Promise of More to Come

"The time will come for the men responsible for this to answer for their behavior."

Congressman Tom Delay after the final legal verdicts in the Terri Shiuvo case

"I want it said loud and clear that I appreciate and agree with Majority Leader Tom DeLay and what he has been trying to do."

James Dobson
Louisville, April 24

After DeLay made his threatening remarks, there was a tremendous debate in Congress and the media over what *exactly* he meant.

Was he saying judges should be punished for rulings that offended the Religious Right?

Did he mean that they should be im-

peached or purged?

There was even nervous talk that his remarks might trigger a round of assassinations, similar to the way that anti-abortionists have shot women's doctors.

Quite openly, speakers in Louisville argued that Congress (where conservative Republicans have a majority) should intervene—both by appointing a wave of conservative and theocratic judges, and getting the current courts "reined in" (as Dobson put it).

But just as clearly, there was a profound undertone that no one here is just talking about Senate procedure or business as usual.

There was a stunning and quite revealing moment at this Louisville rally, when James Dobson reached for an example from the past. There are other times, in U.S. history, he said, when the Supreme Court has done "some horrible things."

And then he pointed to the particular example of the Dred Scott decision—in the pre-civil war days of 1858.

Dobson said: "That decision rendered tremendous chaos and contributed in many ways to the Civil War that resulted in six hundred thousand deaths, the saddest period in American history, it came from the Supreme Court, essentially."

There have been repeated comparisons of this current period with the mounting tensions of the pre-Civil War period. This was raised prominently by Newt Gingrich, a Republican mastermind, and now by Dobson in a speech televised across the country.

Dobson is pointing out that important future decisions by high courts might literally tear the U.S. apart—putting powerful forces within the current government at each other's throats and plunging the whole existing order into crisis and chaos.

It is hard not to read that statement as a warning, and perhaps even a threat.

On the stage in Louisville, Dobson went on to say that the growing fight over judges and basic legal doctrine is "one of the most significant issues we've ever faced as a nation."

This rally in Louisville *should*, in fact, be taken as a warning—these forces are mobilizing, with powerful support at the top of the government. They are working to take a legal system, which never served the masses of people, and make it an even more aggressive instrument for oppression and ignorance. They are straining to whip their religious social base into an arch-conservative attack force. And they are deadly serious.

Snapshot:

Louisville, Kentucky. Dressed all in black they rise in the balcony, their gray and blond hair catching the ceiling lights. Something unusual, and heartening, is happening in this church. One by one, the defiant and spectacular voices of an all-gay choir, Voices of Kentuckia, hover in the air, overlap, play with each other, and gather in a crescendo. The crowd, first sitting in silent awe, erupts in warm and welcoming applause.

Just hours later, across town, a bigger crowd in a much bigger church cheers as Bill Donahue bellows that the idea that a man should be able to marry a man "belongs in an asylum." And, "The people on the secular left say, 'We think you're a threat.' You know what? They're right!"

A cold front of moral absolutism and self-righteousness is crusading across the land, colliding with a hot front of critical thought, diversity, and dreams of a global community. Welcome to storms of America in 2005. Welcome to the clash of civilizations.

And here in the "heartland," an important new conversation is beginning to pick up speed. "Theocracy" is a word now playing on the lips of pundits and clergy, scientists and scholars, in a way that months ago would simply have been scoffed at.

For days the media has barraged the country with news of "Justice Sunday," an event where Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist joins leading theocratic evangelicals in denouncing anyone who opposes them or Bush's judicial nominees, as "against people of faith." Under a false veil of populism, they have been launching assaults on the rule of law, restricting the rights of women and gays, and pushing relentlessly towards theocracy. Through it all they pose as the victims.

I am just off the plane from the Midwest and tired after days of travel, but as I join the people streaming into a progressive church in Louisville, the mood of excitement and urgency snaps me awake.

I have come here because I heard that a group of clergy from around the country assembled themselves almost overnight to oppose the theocratic trend and express a different Christianity and a different morality through an event they are calling *Social Justice Sunday*. I want to learn more about what motivates them and how they see going forward. Also, from my vantage point as an atheist, I want to join them in opposing the horrors of the Bible enforced literally.

I take my seat next to a local woman who holds a small, handmade sign, "Stop the Christo-fascists from destroying America." She first heard the slogan from her daughter, a lawyer, but soon a small crowd of people around her have written the same slogan on their programs and hold them up as well. Other signs are strewn about the church: "Civics 101, Separation of Church and State." My personal favorite: "The Christian American Taliban, Welcome Mullah Omar Frist."

Reverend Phelps, a local minister, whose church has a very similar name to that of the one hosting Justice Sunday, released a statement the week before to make clear that the whole religious community was not behind the event. When he speaks, he ridicules the religious right's claim of being persecuted saying, "That's not what [it's called] when you hit a bump on the road to total domination."

Reverend Dr. William Kineaid, pastor and president of Lexington, Kentucky's Interfaith Alliance of the Bluegrass, argues repeatedly against the notion that any religious faction has a monopoly on God. "I don't know a bigger burden than only knowing a certain sliver of the truth. We need each other as we journey for the truth."

Different and conflicting themes emerge, many from the same people, as the speakers wrestle with how to understand the dangers of the hard religious right and how to act accordingly. Many share their pain at seeing the community of faithful so deeply divided and express a desire for dialogue and healing. Many draw lessons from the Jesus they worship,

one they describe as tolerant and unifying. Some roll up their sleeves and decry the "hijacking" of their faith by extremists. One warns of "Taliban tactics." Almost all speak of a dangerous rising theocracy, the need to draw a line right now, and to act urgently to turn this direction around.

The people in this church are not radicals. Many of them have never been to a demonstration. They are patriotic. Applause booms when speakers call the Christian right "un-American" and booms some more when speakers speak of the need to defend "our great democracy." But mixed in with this patriotism is an acute sense that something extreme is going on, that the response from the politicians is insufficient, and that the people themselves have to be actively part of an urgent response.

Reverend Dr. Joan Campbell, Director of Religion at the Chautauqua Institution speaks last. She recalls one of her favorite slogans in the movement to stop the war on Iraq, saying it is appropriate for people of faith to begin using it now: "Not in my name." She captures the severity of the moment and the seriousness of people's resolve, bringing the audience to their feet with cheers when she ends saying, "There comes a time when silence is betrayal. That time is now. Let's leave here determined to speak truth to power, to act, to say with Esther [of the Bible]...when confronted with the destruction of her people, 'I go. And if I perish, I perish.'"

Amidst the talk of a rising theocracy, hints of fascism, and mention of an "American Taliban, I sense we are not unlike similar gatherings in different countries at different times. A relative handful, beginning to give a name to the dark shadow looming ever larger on the horizon while most of society buzzes along like things are "normal."

How bad is it? Is there some way to deescalate, to avoid a confrontation? Or should we be mobilizing and building strength so we don't lose when the full confrontation comes? How to speak to the people caught up in the reactionary frenzy? Is there even any point?

How accurately the dangers are identified, how clearly they are called to the attention of others, how quickly our side moves and how we draw dividing lines will have implications for everything to come. The lives of millions in this country and well beyond will bear the burden of inaction—or possibly soar to new heights—based on our answers.

Later in the day—

A different group of progressive clergy is assembling, wearing their robes. One holds a sign that reads, "We are people of faith with moral conviction—you don't speak for us."

Another appreciates the signs held by the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade amidst a cloud of red flags, "The Bible Taken Literally is a Horror" and points it out to his friends.

Despite the biting wind and cold, they are joined by dozens of people from the morning event.

Behind us, Highview Baptist Church, the host of Justice Sunday, looks something like a gimmicky, road-side theme park...on steroids. Later, I'll laugh when John Stewart, referring to the term



Some of the participants in Social Justice Sunday, which opposed the Christian fundamentalist rally.

Correspondence

Kansas Creationists Threaten Evolution—AGAIN!

Dear *Revolution*,

Here they go again!

I certainly don't believe in resurrection, but the "Living Dead" are coming back to life in Kansas. The Kansas State Board of Education, is *once again* moving to teach religion in science classes—as if religion were some "alternate scientific" explanation of the reality that life evolved on this planet. This is nothing but an attempt to deprive a generation of students of an understanding of science, and to actually *blind* new generations to well known, well established scientific facts, and the scientific method of understanding reality. Where will this leave students? Where will this leave society as a whole?

Only a few years ago these same anti-evolution forces were voted out of their position of power on the Kansas Board, after that Board had passed, in the late 1990s, similar "standards" for "education" in that state. But they have systematically

worked to get back into position, and are now poised to gut the scientific teaching of evolution in Kansas—and in fact to demolish the foundations of real science education in that state. Similar forces are working nationwide—on the same medieval mission. Their Kansas "come back" is due to well organized anti-science forces who are backed from the highest levels in U.S. society. President Bush—who claims to be on a mission from God—has said that "the jury is still out" on evolution. And this has given a green light to little brigades of religious lunatics around the country to wreck scientific education. Now these forces are holding a kangaroo court in Kansas—to denounce evolution as dogmatic and "just a theory."

Never mind that *evolution* is among the most well established scientific facts ever, reinforced from scientific findings in many fields—from fossil evidence to genetics, to geology and more. *No* scientific evidence against the theory of evolution has ever

been discovered in over a century of work in many fields since Darwin put forward the basic foundation of the theory of evolution. And evolution is foundational, not only for biology, but, to a significant degree, for other modern sciences as well.

To get a sense of the sweeping anti-science agenda at work here, one has only to note that the first Kansas board of education decision, back in 1998, did not stop at removing important aspects of biological evolution from their science standards. That same 1998 Board decision also eliminated statements mandating that Kansas students study the evidence that the earth is much older than 10,000 years, the theory of plate tectonics (the motion of the earth's crust) and the Big Bang. The 1998 decision led to such outrage that those Board members were voted out, and their rules overturned; but now the "Flat Earthers" are back in charge and poised to attack evolution again.

While posing as "scientific experts" these forces do not include any real biologists, and the ones providing "evidence" now to the board are, according to their own statements, motivated by religious conversion and conviction. These witnesses present no *scientific* evidence against evolution. What is this doing in the class rooms supposedly devoted to teaching science?

The Killing of Science in the Name of Openmindedness

A *New York Times* reporter described the current Kansas board hearing: "Even as they described their own questioning of evolution as triggered by religious conversion, the experts testifying Thursday avoided mention of a divine creator, instead painting their positions as simply one of open mindedness, arguing that Darwinism had become a dogma."

Their method has been to throw up "doubts," which are not based in the scientific method of examining reality, testing theories repeatedly, from many angles and in the course of evidence-based debate and review among scientists. Instead they challenge science with statements like, "I know design when I see it," to argue for "a designer" vs. all the facts of evolution. And, in this profoundly *unscientific* way, they fight against the "dominance" of evolutionary theory. Doubt and arguments about "fairness"—devoid of scientific content—is

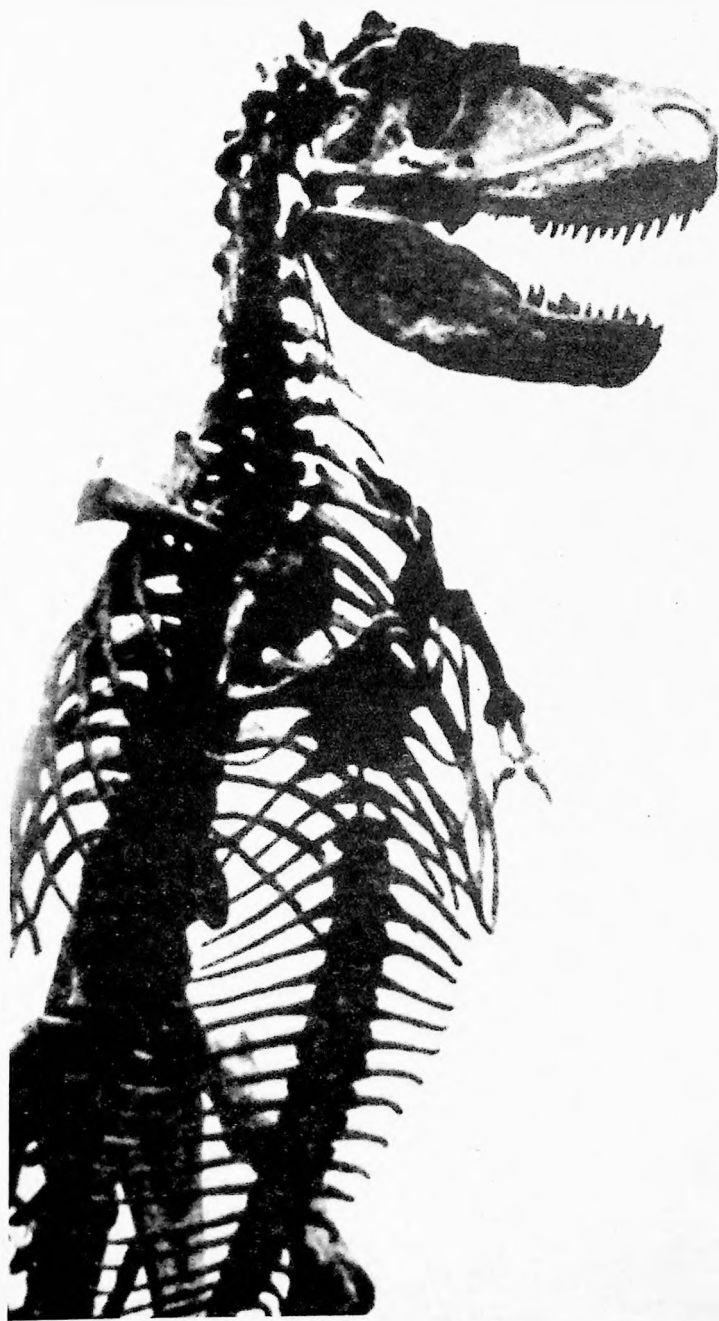
good for knocking down the door. And once that door is knocked down, the program and outlook driving all this is not "critical thinking" or "fairness," but a plan to *replace* science, and the scientific method of thinking, with *religious dogma* about "creation."

The current battering ram for religious creationism entering into science classrooms, including in these Kansas hearings, is called "intelligent design." This theory, which is *not* established by *any* scientific evidence has been well exposed by many scientists and, in fact, has almost *no* acceptance among biologists and scientists in related fields. People can read an extensive refutation of "Intelligent Design" in the series "The Science of Evolution" by Ardea Skybreak (part 7c.). (This amazing series appeared in #1220 and #1221 of the *Revolutionary Worker* newspaper and is available online at www.revcom.us)

The school board is now proposing that the very definition of science in the Kansas standards be changed from "seeking natural explanations of what we observe around us" to "continuing investigation that uses observation, hypothesis testing, measurement, experimentation, logical argument and theory building to lead to more adequate explanations of natural phenomena." The words may be foggy, but the clear intent of this change is to "leave open" the idea that something *other* than science may explain "natural phenomena." Their method is to pry open the door with claims that the scientific method is rigid and let *real dogma* run amok. This has zero to do with "openness" in the classroom.

What are the stakes of this move by the Kansas School Board? All the promise and wonder of the scientific method would be driven down under a mountain of religious gibberish—and down, too, will go the right and ability of students to understand science as a consistent and emancipating way of deepening our understanding of reality. And this whole assault on science is part of a very dangerous, theocratic program of powerful forces in this society, who seek to dominate both in political power and in the way people are taught to think in this society.

Efforts like this are underway right now in 20 states. It is way past time to strip these ghouls of their disguise, and put a stop to their plans.



Science Alert: Kansas School Board Hearings

The Kansas State Board of Education has called six days of committee hearings on May 5-7 and 12-14 to revise the state's science education standards. In June, the Board is expected to adopt state standards requiring that the theory of evolution be challenged in science classrooms with creationist theories that have *no basis in science*.

Earlier this year, a "science standards writing committee" of scientists and educators, which was appointed by this same Kansas Board, had approved science education standards that included the teaching of evolution — and not creationist theories. But the creationist authorities who dominate the Board are still determined to override this and ram through science education standards that include creationism and require challenges to evolution.

And, in an attempt to legitimize the decision they plan to make in June, these forces on the Board have called this month's hearings. At the hearings, there are no standards of professional qualification for "expert witnesses."

In opposition to this anti-scientific move by the School Board, the Kansas Academy of Science, Kansas Citizens For Science, Kansas Families United for Public Education, and the MAINstream Coalition issued a statement that said, "We reject the show-trial hearings, whose purpose is to make it appear that Intelligent Design creationism and the well-established science of evolution are on equal footing."

These Kansas organizations have called for scientists around the country to boycott the hearings. As we go to press, the Kansas Board of Education has failed to find a single evolutionary biologist willing to participate in the hearings.

David Horowitz: Battering Ram For Bush Regime

by Leslie Rose

In the fall of 2003, David Horowitz came to town. As a result, Dr. Oneida Meranto's teaching career became a nightmare. By the 2004/2005 semester, Dr. Meranto, a Navajo professor in political science at the Metropolitan State College of Denver, was taping her classes to defend her career. And two days after class started, a student filed a grievance with the college saying that in her class the professor "attacked Republicans. She implied that we are incapable of thinking critically and should therefore drop her class." The college president reviewed the tape and found no grounds for the complaint. Dr. Meranto was forced to tape her class as self-protection against students trained in dirty tactics and egged on by David Horowitz to go after their progressive professors.

*According to the campus paper, the complaining student was actually sent into the class by a former student who had filed complaints against Meranto in 2003, after attending the speech by David Horowitz. That student, a six-year Marine Corps veteran and president of the campus Republican club, had accused Meranto of liberal bias and intimidating conservative students. After a lengthy investigation the university found she had done nothing wrong. In the meantime, Dr. Meranto endured death threats ("shoot the commie bitch") after the Marine student posted a slanderous article on David Horowitz's on-line magazine. Fearing for her life, students walked Meranto to her car after evening classes. ("A Liberal Professor Fights a Label," Jennifer Jacobson, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 11/26/04)*

Watch What You Say

Who is David Horowitz? He is a former 1960s radical turned right-wing bully, a self-described "battering ram" in service of extreme right-wing politics. Recently, he has attracted attention for his part in the highly organized ideological and political assault on Ward Churchill, a radical Native American professor in the ethnic studies department at the University of Colorado.

In the wake of 9/11, the Bush regime, through press secretary Ari Fleischer, put out a threat: "People have to watch what they say and watch what they do." Later, Fleischer had to back off the "watch what they say" part.

But in America today, "watch what you say" is back with a vengeance. Will people be allowed to engage in critical inquiry and speak out against the government, or will critical thought be muzzled? This question is being sharply battled out at universities across the country.

Enter David Horowitz.

Fascist Methods and Agenda

Horowitz is president of the right-wing Center for the Study of Popular Culture and founder of the online *Frontpagemagazine.com*. He is a major architect of the so-called "Academic Bill of Rights," which is being introduced by Republican politicians in legislatures in Ohio, Florida, Indiana, New York, and California among other states (see "A Student Bill of Fights," *The Nation*, 04/04/05).

In tandem with these legislative efforts, Horowitz has promoted a network of campus spy squads of Republican youth called Students for Academic Freedom (SAF). This handful of brown-shirts harass and demand the firing of liberal and radical professors. Horowitz and SAF amplify the tales and charges by arranging for these students to appear before state legislative hearings—at which point the conservative blog-sphere and Fox-like media go into action and create lynch-mob hysteria against these professors.

There is a pattern to the reactionary tactics. It can be seen in every sphere in battle after battle: in the arts, in the media, in the teaching of evolution, in judicial nominations.

First, the fascists play the victim. On campuses, these Republican students allege that they are persecuted by left and liberal professors. They complain about bias in classes, file grievances, write slanderous articles, and drag progressive professors through unjust investigations.

Second, they dress themselves up as advocates of "fairness." They charge that conservative students receive low grades and are intimidated in classrooms. And they pretend that all they want is fairness and equal time for their views, including hiring conservative faculty. (Horowitz and these students oppose affirmative action for oppressed minorities but want it for right-wing Republicans to get jobs as professors!)

Third, they intimidate and seek to suppress those with opposing positions—to turn on anyone who objects to this persecution and, once they have the ability, to impose a regime of "thought control." In the case of the universities right now, they are setting out to purge radical and progressive scholars. Horowitz himself has said: "In political warfare you do not fight just to

prevail in an argument, but to destroy the enemy's fighting ability."

The Bush forces are out for nothing less than to create a society where there is NO platform to contest their worldview. Students coming out of religious backgrounds won't learn that evolution is a fact. Students who have been indoctrinated that the U.S. is a force for good in the world will not even be introduced to the contradiction between that propaganda and the realities of the situation.

A professor at the University of New Mexico described the reaction of students to a film that carefully documents the Bush administration's pretexts for the Iraq war: "I found the students to be almost speechless... One student became visibly enraged and began pounding on his desk... I want to know why we aren't allowed to see this kind of information in mainstream news. I feel betrayed, used. I feel like my government is more dangerous than the terrorists..." ("The New McCarthyism on Campus: Ward Churchill and the Imminent Destruction of Higher Education," Carolyn Baker, *Counterpunch.org*, 2/9/05)

What will it mean for society if the reactionaries carry out their witch-hunts?

Connect the Dots

There's a booklet that Karl Rove, George Bush's chief strategist, describes as "a perfect guide to winning on the political battlefield." It is a booklet that Republican Congressman Tom Delay and the right-wing Heritage Foundation made sure that every Republican member of Congress and 2,300 conservative activists got a copy of before the 2000 election. That booklet is "The Art of Political War" by David Horowitz. (See "The Banana Republicans: How the Right Wing Is Turning America Into a One Party State," John Stauber, 2005, excerpts online). Horowitz wrote the tract after a 1998 visit to Austin, Texas, at the invitation of Rove, to discuss strategy and crafting the message for a Bush run at the presidency. Hanna Rosin, in a *Washington Post* article (April 23, 2000), writes that, earlier, when Bush's bid for governor of Texas was being shaped, Rove gave Bush his three favorite books, one of which was *Destructive Generation: Second Thoughts About the Sixties* by Horowitz. Rosin describes how in 1997-98, Rove "started to summon his favorite thinkers to the governor's office," as he strategized about Bush's run for president. Horowitz was one of the select few.

In waging the culture war in academia, Horowitz works on a parallel track with Lynn Cheney (the wife of Vice-President Cheney). Lynn Cheney was the former head of the National Endowment for the Humanities in father Bush's administration. Cheney has tried to effect a high-toned disguise, while Horowitz has been unabashedly down and dirty working in the gutter. But Cheney and her American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) were also responsible for a post-9/11 hit list of radical and liberal professors whose teaching and statements were to be monitored. And it is no coincidence that when the media frenzy against Ward Churchill began, the governors of New York and Colorado immediately called for Churchill's firing—both are members of ACTA's "Governors' Project."

Horowitz invokes the idea of "balance" in academia, but what he is really up to can be seen in his many writings and on his website. A typical headline of an article

from his online magazine: "The ALA Library: Terrorist Sanctuary." The ALA is the American Library Association.

Horowitz rants that those who dare deviate from the government's propaganda are themselves "terrorists" and "terrorist supporters." The left in the antiwar movement and on the campuses is portrayed as having "alliances with the Islamic radicals." "Treason" is a legally lethal label slapped on those who dare to critique U.S. designs of empire. Horowitz's treatment of Noam Chomsky is a perfect example. Described by *The New Yorker* magazine as "one of the greatest minds of the 20th century," Chomsky is also one of the most outspoken critics of U.S. foreign policy. Horowitz vilifies Chomsky's work as "demonic and seditious" and declares that "its purpose is to incite believers to provide aid and comfort to the enemies of the U.S." (Horowitz, *The Unholy Alliance, Radical Islam and the American Left*, 2004).

A key target of the right-wing campaign for thought control on campus is certain courses and entire departments. According to Horowitz, they are "interdisciplinary and are ideological in their very conceptions... Women's Studies, Ethnic Studies, American Studies, Cultural Studies, Peace Studies and other easily identified disciplines." ("Bowling Green Barbarians," 4/4/05, *frontpagemagazine.com*).

Horowitz and the reactionaries are determined to discredit any questioning of the history of the U.S. and what the U.S. does in the world today. Examination of the brutal history and legacy of slavery; the genocide of the Native Americans; the stealing of land from Mexico; the domination of other countries at the point of the American

gun...this is all "America bashing."

The reactionary forces are fearful of the birth of a new student movement that knows and spreads the true history of the U.S. and its role in the world. They want to bury the lessons and legacy of the 1960s. As Horowitz puts it, "When Americans are sufficiently divided, their government is significantly weakened in its ability to exert its will on international actors and events." Translated: we must preempt the possibility of radical ferment and upsurge on campus and in society that might threaten the Bush team's global agenda of unprecedented U.S. domination over the world. Horowitz sums up: "Consequently, it is the war at home that will ultimately decide America's fate." (from introduction to *Unholy Alliance*)

A sledgehammer is being taken to academia in the U.S. Its critical thinkers and dissenters are in grave danger of being mowed down and silenced. Labels like "sedition," "treason," "collaboration," and "support for terrorists" are bandied about by a man who strategizes with Karl Rove. In the current political climate, these spurious charges are designed to destroy the richness of academic life, to ruin careers, and to incite violence and government persecution against those who have been targeted.

There is far too little critical thinking and dissent in society as a whole. That is the criminal situation. And critical thinking and dissent must not only be defended in the colleges and universities but spread in society. This is what the reactionaries want to prevent. And it is why a major assault on academia is emanating from and connected to the highest office in the land.

A counterrevolution is gathering speed and momentum. It matters to the whole direction of society and to millions around the world who hate U.S. domination and oppression whether the campaigns of David Horowitz and his backers triumph or are trounced. They will be forced to back off only if powerful opposition is built on campuses and spills out and intersects with the broader battle in society—as two worlds more and more collide.

Meet the Real David Horowitz

Pathological Liar: Horowitz writes, "On March 16, 2003 an Israeli bulldozer set to work removing shrubs in the Gaza Strip town of Rafah. These shrubs obscured the tunnels terrorists were using to smuggle weapons... As Rachel Corrie knelt in front of the terrorists' supply lines, the bulldozer's driver... ran over her." What actually happened? "Along with several other people, Rachel sat down in front of a house that was targeted for demolition by the Israeli army—one of thousands of Palestinian homes in Gaza and the West Bank destroyed by the Israeli occupiers just in the past two years. Witnesses say the bulldozer's driver could clearly see Rachel, who wore a fluorescent jacket and was speaking into a bullhorn. But the bulldozer continued forward, pulling Rachel under—then it reversed and drove over her again."

Shameless Hypocrite: A commentator posted on Horowitz's website, fellow reactionary Ann Coulter, said that North Korea should be nuked because it would be "fun." She also said that the 9/11 hijackers should have flown into the *NY Times* offices. Horowitz is not demanding that Coulter be silenced or denied the right to speak on campuses—as he has done with Ward Churchill.

Racist Bigot: Horowitz praises Jared Taylor of the Council of Conservative Citizens, an openly racist organization, calling him the "author of a pioneer book of political incorrectness on race... a very intelligent and principled man." Taylor says things like "in some important traits—intelligence, law-abidingness, sexual restraint, resistance to disease—whites can be considered 'superior' to blacks." Taylor's group calls immigrants "slimy mass of brown glop."

Fascist Thug: During the stealing of the 2000 election, Horowitz issued "war room briefings" for the Republican operatives who intimidated Florida election officials into calling off the recount. Entries on Horowitz's website had advice like this: "Question...: 'David what do you recommend for the Republican strategy on the Florida recount?' [Horowitz replies.] 'This is my answer courtesy of Al Capone: 'If he comes at you with a fist, you come at him with a bat. If he comes at you with a bat, you come at him with a knife. If he comes at you with a knife, you come at him with a gun.'"

Whining Philistine: Horowitz tries to appeal to narrow-minded philistinism towards academics when he attacks professors, claiming they are only in class six hours a week and get four months paid vacation while getting paid \$60,000 to \$100,000 a year. This is cheap demagoguery—from someone whose own work could never stand up to peer review and who makes many times that through funding from right-wing foundations.

Special to Revolution

After the Sea Stood Up Life and Death in the Tsunami

by Michael Slate, photos by Mukai

In March and April, Revolution correspondent Michael Slate traveled all over Sri Lanka, one of the places hardest hit by the devastating tsunami of December 2004. Slate talked to many different people about the tsunami and the oppression and suffering that continue to unfold. This is the first in a series of reports by Slate from the tsunami zone that will appear in Revolution over the coming weeks.

Heading south out of Colombo in the early morning rush hour is crazy. There is one rule that governs driving in Sri Lanka—especially in the larger cities like Colombo, Kandy, and Galle—and that is: fill up every available inch of space and keep moving at all costs. Cars, buses, and lorries try to steamroll ahead. Tuk Tuks—three-wheeled modified scooter taxis—zip between them like mosquitos. Motorbikes and bicycles carrying entire families compete with the three-wheelers. Skinny men whose bodies seem to be permanently strained push impossible loads of construction materials, rice, or other goods on ancient wooden wheeled handcarts in whatever tiny crevices are left between all this. And every now and then two or three cows wander out into the middle of all this to wreak havoc. If you don't have a functioning horn you'll never make it more than a few blocks.

At the edge of the city the traffic begins to thin out and the bustle of the early morning life disappears. Here the houses are tiny shanties pitched up in a jumble along the sides of the road. A few kilometers later the shanties are replaced by small houses lining the beach.

It isn't until you hit this point that the evidence of the tsunami begins to leap out at you. Many of the houses along the beach have been destroyed—whole walls washed away, floors and roofs collapsed. Even now, months after the tsunami, the bones and carcasses of fishing boats still litter the beaches and roadsides. Large multi-day fishing boats perch on the roadside with giant holes punched in the hulls. Smaller day-boats lie cracked and broken. Even smaller catamarans lie splintered like toothpicks up and down the coast.

Some people still try to live in the houses that haven't been totally destroyed. But as you get farther and farther south, the number of these houses dwindles quickly and, for the first time, you begin to see signs of the awesome power of the huge tsunami waves that ravaged a huge section of the Sri Lankan coastline. Instead of houses, you find a wall here and there, an upper floor perched on top of four support columns, a staircase leading nowhere, or nothing

more than a foundation covered with sand.

On the morning of December 26 a massive earthquake off the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia, gave birth to a tsunami that killed approximately 250,000 people throughout South Asia. The largest number of people were killed when the wave tore into the Sumatran province of Aceh just ten minutes after the quake. Approximately 40,000 people were killed and 800,000 left homeless when the wave, traveling at 500 miles an hour, reached the island of Sri Lanka on the other side of the Indian Ocean two hours later.

The Remains of the Queen of the Sea

Two hours south of Colombo, huge tent cities have been erected all along the coastal road to house the many thousands left homeless in this region. And off to the side of one of these villages/refugee camps—a spot in between Peraliya and Telwatta—sits a silent monument to the death and destruction brought on by the tsunami. It's eerie how one of the largest natural disasters in history can become so concentrated in a few rusting railroad cars and a stretch of twisted train tracks. This is all that remains of the Samudra Devi—the Queen of the Sea—a storied train that ran down the

coast between Colombo and the city of Galle.

On December 26—the day after Christmas and a Buddhist holiday—the train was jam-packed with at least 2,000 people when it stopped at Telwatta. Within minutes it was slammed by two giant waves. Passenger cars were ripped apart and sent tumbling off the tracks. A whole section of the tracks reared up and twisted around. At most only a handful of passengers survived. It's estimated that 2,000 people died, but undoubtedly hundreds more should be added to that figure since many from the village and people fleeing the road in the face of the tsunami climbed on top of the train, hoping to escape the waves. Now, three months after the tsunami, three rusted and sealed railroad cars stand in silent and ghostly tribute to the dead.

In a makeshift medical clinic I talked with Chamila, a young woman from the village of Peraliya. We started out talking about the train but quickly moved into Chamila's experience with the tsunami.

"I was at home when the tsunami came. Because I am a Christian that is a special time. I have a very small daughter, she is one year and three months old. Before the tsunami I was ready to go to church and I'm on the way. Somebody told me I can't go because of tsunami. I don't believe because I never heard of tsunami. We thought that it was beach water coming. We don't know that it is coming very fast. I never see and I never heard about that.

"I carry my daughter and I am going to a little bit high place. Everybody is going and calling me, saying come take your daughter, come take your daughter and save your life. I saw that water and I saw a lot of people are going and they are asking help—but that water is come very powerful and nobody can help, nobody can help.

"They had two or three helicopters going, but they can't come down, because there are a lot of trees and a lot of houses and the water is very powerful. We had two days—me and my daughter and a lot of people on that high place. We had all around us water. We can't do anything and we can't go anywhere. We can just sit there.

"We couldn't find any food—only some cookies. They were floating and somebody who can swim went in and got the cookies and some drinking water. Whoever had those little bit of things, they give only to the babies, the kids. The parents can't get anything because we don't know how long time we can stay there. There is no radio, no message, nothing works. We can't understand what's happened. We tried everything but we can't find anything to work, no electricity. Just only candle—without candle then it was a very dark night we are staying. Two nights it was very dark, without anything. We were scared because there were so many voices saying 'help, help' all night. So many people are crying there. We see it in front of our eyes but we can't help.

"The water was not very soon going down. I couldn't just walk through the water. I tried—after two days it was maybe four feet, that water. The water was very dark, and there were a lot of bad things in the water. There were a



Zone



Galle, Sri Lanka

lot of bodies also and it smelled really bad. That's why we scared and can't go alone. Somebody had to help.

"My family lost six people in the tsunami. But we only found two people. We didn't find four bodies. A lot of bodies, we don't know where they are. There is behind our village a big river and I think some of the bodies are going to other places because that water wasn't coming through one way. There was the mixing of the beach water and the river water. And there was water in the well, and still we find bodies inside that well now three months after the tsunami. I think in that river are a lot of bodies. Daily, daily, every day we are finding bodies.

"A lot of people in this village died because there was the first wave and then the second wave was very powerful. And there was the train problem also in this village. I think 250 parents and younger people from this village and 175 kids are dead."

Death and Destruction in Galle

The city of Galle is probably the most well-known resort town in Sri Lanka. Sitting on the southwest tip of the island, Galle and the towns north of it seem like they should have been protected from the tsunami—at least to some degree. But tsunamis are complex things, and when the wave hit the tip of the island it refracted and changed direction, devastating the southwest coastline.

Galle town, in part because it is the administrative and commercial hub for a half dozen or more beach towns that have grown up around it, was featured in every

international newscast on the tsunami. In the Galle district—which includes all the little tourist towns on the outskirts of the city—at least 4,000 people were killed by the tsunami and tens of thousands left homeless. In the city itself conservative estimates put the death toll at approximately 2,000 people. No one will ever know for sure because so many people were in transit or visiting the market when the wave hit, and they are all gone.

According to the mayor of Galle, "Most of the 2,000 people who died in Galle town were women and children because they couldn't run. And mothers would not leave the children and run. They had to die with the children. If this happened in the nighttime it would have been worse because all the people would have been sleeping at home and they wouldn't have known it was a tsunami until they were washed away. This happened at daytime and all the people were shouting and running to save their lives."

A short distance from downtown Galle there is a small rectangular block of row houses—more like apartments than houses actually. The different homes line either side of a small concrete footpath, and in the rear end of the

complex the homes back up onto a narrow rocky shoreline. When the seas are rough, waves crash just 20 feet from the windows and doors of the back houses.

I stood at the back end of this complex on a day when the sea was calm. It was blistering hot in the sun and the slight ocean breeze was welcome. For a moment I stood there thinking about how relaxing the ocean and the soft lapping of the waves on the rocks were. Then my mind snapped to imagine what it must have been like to see a 20-foot wall of water speeding towards your back windows. I turned around to see what was left of the back houses after the tsunami. It looks like bombed-out houses in a war zone. Children's toys and shredded clothes were stuck under piles of bricks and fallen wood.

"I Can't Leave My People"

Ranpalee, a very slight woman in her late thirties, stood in a doorway with a fearful look in her eyes. She was in her house when the tsunami hit. "I was going about my usual business and the sea was behaving in a not ordinary way. It was behaving violently. I came into my house and looked out to see that the water was ris-

ing, and I told my friend to come and get behind the door. Then the water slammed the door and came through and I went back into my house. I closed my door. But the water slammed my door, broke through and came into the house, and so I took my sister and we went upstairs. Then we felt that all the other buildings downstairs were getting destroyed, so we climbed out onto the roof and we were shouting and screaming for somebody to please help us."

The residents of this housing block sought refuge in a local temple and then a local Christian school. After three weeks at the school the principal threatened them with eviction if they didn't leave on their own. When they got tents they set them up on the first piece of land they could find. But when the owner of the land found out about it, he summoned the police who threatened the people with arrest unless they left. Finally, the people returned to their housing block and set their tents up in front of the building.

Ranpalee continued, "We had no place to go, so we asked for some tents. With the greatest difficulty we were able to get some tents. We are still living in tents. We don't stay in the building at night. We just come here during the day because it is not possible to stay in the tents in the daytime. We don't like to stay here at night because we are still fearful of the sea.

"Now we are without anything. We need a home. I have worked for 13 years abroad as a housemaid and a tailor in Dubai and Jordan and places like that and it was with the greatest difficulty that we built up this house. My sister and I and my husband and her husband live here. But my daughter came and asked me to come to Colombo, and I said I cannot leave my people.

"I can't say that we got any relief or assistance, because without a home we can't really build up a livelihood. Some foreign people gave me a machine to start sewing, but how can I sew if I don't have a proper place? Having a home is my top priority, and nobody seems to be addressing that. We all live together here. We always have some solidarity here, we always cook together, we always eat together, and after tsunami we shared grief and we make sure that everybody is taken care of. Even when my daughter comes and tells me she wants to

take me out of this, I tell her that I can't leave my people. So they come from Colombo and look after me whatever way they can, but I stay with the people.

"The government has not helped us at all because we are very poor people. We don't have property, we live at the sea. All we need is a home and they have not addressed this issue at all. We raise questions, we make our demands, but nobody seems to listen. My sister has a heart problem and she can't use her one hand. I also have some disabilities, but I try to do some tailoring to survive. We are very helpless people and very poor. We made sure we didn't lose any lives in the tsunami because we were together and we helped each other to survive.

"Biggest change for me is psychological because I still fear the tsunami. At night in the tent, even if a vehicle goes and I hear the noise I think it is another tsunami and I wake up screaming. I don't want to stay in this house. I am so full of fear. When I am staying here I keep looking at the sea wondering when it is going to come again. People say on the 26th of this month there may be another tsunami, so there is really nothing except to live with fear."

Rangani's Story

Halfway down the concrete footpath that bisects the housing complex, a little boy with a very dirty face, a swollen stomach, and the most devilish grin I've seen in a long time stood in the small doorway into a small, dark apartment. When I approached he yelled out "Hi," giggled, and ran inside. In a moment his mother came out and invited us in. As my eyes adjusted to the darkness of the one-room apartment, a voice rose up from a far corner of the room. Rangani, a woman in her late forties or early fifties lay crumpled on the floor. Her leg had been injured in the tsunami and she could no longer walk. She wanted me to know her story and charged ahead in telling it.

"I work as a domestic servant for this Muslim family and that's how I raise my three daughters and two granddaughters. One day when I was working I saw the waves coming, and I shouted to the Mister that the waves were coming. I warned them and they ran. I ran after everybody else, and then I first had to come and look



Far left top: Galle. Far left bottom: The remains of the train named Queen of the Sea. Middle: Kiyoma, who lost two children in the tsunami. Left: The beach at Galle, Sri Lanka. The tsunami waves completely covered the building in this picture.

Life and Death in the Tsunami Zone



Rangani, who injured her leg in the tsunami.



House damaged by tsunami, Galle.

Continued from page 9

for my family. On the way the water hit me and dashed me on the rocks. I lost my husband 25 years ago, and they lost their father 25 years ago. It is really working hard as a domestic servant—cooking, washing, and doing everything—that I have been able to raise them. The man I worked for comes now to give me a little assistance and that is like gold for me now.

“These boys who were at the Muslim mosque were rescuing people who were dashed against the rocks by the tsunami. And the lady where I worked also helped pull me up. I am very strong. One time I pounded 25 kilos of rice for an event and I have a lot of courage. But after pounding the 25 kilos of rice and giving birth to my third daughter something happened to my spine so now I am a bit weak. It is a long story of endless suffering for us. Sometimes it is not bearable. My daughters come and tell me that we should take an oil lamp and set fire to ourselves and kill ourselves. Maybe the stench will get outside and then maybe people will come and look at us.”

Nelith and Chandrani's Struggle

On the far east side of Galle there is a quiet little patch of land, full of trees, birds, and lizards. It's separated from the road by a beautiful little lagoon. On the other side, it sits right on the edge of the ocean. Six months earlier this place was idyllic—now even the air is heavy with tension and fear.

Nelith has lived here most of his life. He caught up with me as I walked towards an almost finished house nestled up close to the lagoon. Nelith explained that his house had been demolished by the tsunami and that he was building this house with financial help from a British woman who lived up on a hill about a mile away. When Nelith built this new house he put it up very close to his old home simply because he had nowhere else to go. He and Chandrani, his wife, lost their daughter in the tsunami, and Chandrani lives with constant fear and horror.

After the house was built Nelith was visited by the police, who told him that since his new house was only 96 meters from the water's edge, it will have to be demolished because it violates the law that says no house can be built within 100 meters of the water. This is a law that was put on the books back in the 1990s but was never enforced until the government started talking about it again after the tsunami. Of course, it is selective enforcement since only fishermen and others among the poorest people in Sri Lanka are being pressured under the law. Tourist hotels who use their proximity to the edge of the ocean as a big selling point receive special dispensation from the government. Nelith firmly believes that he has done nothing wrong, and he refuses to leave his new home.

Nelith was not home when the tsunami hit, and it took him five hours to get there from downtown. Chandrani told me her story of the tsunami. She couldn't speak more than a few minutes without crying. She was so devastated by grief that she had barely eaten since the day of the tsunami. And on top of it all, the weight of religious tradition and superstition pressed down hard on her. It was coming up on the three-month anniversary of her daughter's death, and according to Buddhist tradition there needed to be an alms-giving ceremony. But Chandrani and Nelith had nothing to put into this ceremony. In fact, they had just managed to pull together the house in time to hold the ceremony.

As Chandrani spoke, her voice cracked and her frail body shook intensely. “After tsunami we moved into a school and we were there for a few days. A foreign lady said she would help us rebuild our house. We said okay, and then we have come back here. It's not really because we like to come back here, because still we feel frightened. But still we have no alternative except to come back here.

“When the tsunami hit I was not here, I was at the well. When I knew something was happening I came back here and I screamed for my daughter. Then I got washed away with the second wave and then I clung on to a

tree. Then my son found me and asked where his sister was. Then we found my daughter lying on the ground unconscious. We carried my daughter to the hospital but she died. I had only a son and a daughter and I lost the daughter.

“The waves came up to almost the roof. We found our clothes and bedsheets on the roof after the waves left—so it was that high. Now we have to have the almsgiving for our daughter after three months. So we had to build this place. What does the government expect? This is not the house we lived in. But much of the back end of the house is gone, even though the house is not completely demolished. We had a much bigger house, but everything got washed away, even our clothes. The clothes I am wearing today are the clothes I was wearing in the tsunami. Whatever furniture you see here belongs to my son's wife. We lost everything. They say that tomorrow, the poya day (full moon), there will be another tsunami. I don't know but we are very frightened.”

“I Don't Know What Else There Is To Lose”

Across the street from Chandrani and Nelith there is a refugee camp made up of more than 60 blue tents. Inside the main pathway through the camp children sit playing games and beating on drums. Dozens of dogs lay around in the dust, trying to find a way to escape the sun.

Kavith, the camp manager, is a young man full of life, energy, and humor. Before the tsunami he had a house about 100 yards back off the road. It was demolished. He says he was “rich” and he got that way being a combination gangster and mechanic. When the wave hit his life changed.

“The tsunami was very dangerous. We had never seen anything like that, and even now we don't talk about it because it makes us tremble with fear. We have never seen something like that. I was at home that day watching a DVD, and people started screaming. I looked outside and saw this wave

coming at us—it was about 25 feet in height. There was nothing you could do, you couldn't swim, you just had to let the wave take you. I was taken away and ended up in a small jungle clearing way over there.

“I lost my oldest daughter that day. We have lost all our properties, maybe some 10 lacs or 15 lacs, about one and a half million rupees, but we are not wallowing in that loss.

“The tsunami took a toll on lives. My hands were wounded and I was bruised and covered in blood, but I went around to rescue bodies. I went looking for bodies of our people, and I rescued about 15 bodies. It was then that I also rescued my own daughter's body. Then I realized that we have all lost our loved ones. I cried at the time but then I learned not to cry because why should I only cry when everybody has suffered. Then I did the best I could by bathing my daughter and giving her the most decent burial that I could.”

I spoke with Kavith for awhile as he detailed life in the camp. At one point a very young woman, Kiyoma, came up to us with pictures of her children in her hands. Kavith asked her to sit down and talk with me. Kiyoma had a crooked, shy smile and a voice that started out tiny but rushed ahead into urgency as she told her story.

“On the day of the 26th I was 19 days pregnant. I was looking after my youngest daughter and my son was on the other side and I was with my mother when the wave hit us. I heard this big noise and I thought it was dynamite, which happens when people fish so I didn't take much notice of it. Then I saw this water coming in. My husband was sleeping so I woke him up and I took this child and then had to look for my two other children. Then we came to this side of the road. From my shouting and screaming people thought it was an accident. Then I saw my father and I took my father and my infant son with my other hand and went to my mother's house.

“I was running with my two children, escaping from the water. I never believed that a wave would hit like this. The

wave hit and it hit in so many ways. It hit from side and in front of me a wave was receding and a lamppost which had got uprooted came and struck me. When it struck me I lost hold of both my children and they got washed away. I lost two children and my other child was losing his life, struggling to live.

Somehow he was rescued. I also saw my mother being hit by something that was floating and she was also down. So I was getting washed away and I saw this tree and I reached out to grab a limb and somehow I got hold of my other son and I held onto him. And then another wave came again and I couldn't hold onto this tree so I was carrying my child and he was drowning. We ended up at another tree and I held onto that tree and I lifted my child up and he was full of water. So I pumped his stomach and got it out and was able to save his life. With my son and holding onto this tree I was pleading with the gods to help us. I just told my son as I was clinging onto him that this is when we die and get washed away.

“Then I saw my sister's son rolled up in a lot of twine and weeds and stuff and he was screaming for me. We reached out and somehow he disentangled himself. Then I saw my father coming, walking unsteadily towards us, so I told this boy to go and help my father. Then I was told that the dead body of my daughter is to be found in a tree. We didn't even have a place to do a burial or a funeral. I was walking with this one child that is left and we recovered this body of my daughter and turned it over to a lorry so that it would be taken to a hospital and left there.

“My family, along with my mother, we have lost eleven people. My other child that was lost, we didn't recover the body but I have given the police a photograph so if somebody recognizes it they can let me know.

“When it's hot, it is hot. When it rains it seeps in—there is no way to get any rest in these tents. We have lost our home and I have lost my children and I don't know what else there is to lose.”

To be continued

Support the GIs Who Refuse to Fight!

by Philip Watts

May 10 is a National Day of Action for GI Resisters. This is the day before sailor Pablo Paredes and soldier Kevin Benderman are scheduled to go before military court martial tribunals for their opposition to the Iraq war. Both men applied for conscientious objector status and both were denied. They are facing jail time as well as financial penalties. The May 10 actions in support of GI resisters are being called by Courage-To-Resist, which can be reached at CourageToResist.org.

Pablo Paredes, a Navy petty officer, refused to board his ship in December 2004 as it left the San Diego Naval Station. In a public act of conscious opposition to the war, he wore a T-shirt which said, "Like a cabinet member, I resign." At the time of his refusal, Pablo said he hoped his protest might inspire other GIs to refuse to take part in the war.

On January 5, 2005, Sgt. Kevin Benderman refused to deploy for a second tour of duty in Iraq with the Army's Third Infantry Division after being told to fire on children by a chaplain. Seventeen other soldiers from his unit went AWOL, two tried to kill themselves, and one asked a relative to shoot him in the leg so he could avoid deploying.

In light of all this, and wanting to support those GI resisters who refuse to partake in the U.S. war for empire, I was reflecting on some discussions that I had this past March in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

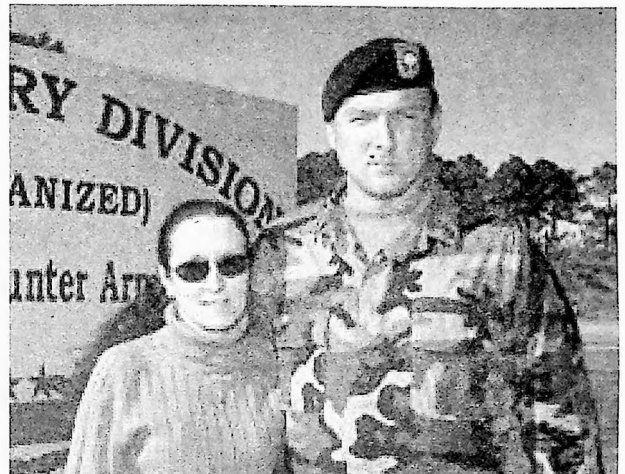
I went to North Carolina on the second anniversary of the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq. As part of a worldwide day of action, anti-war veterans and military families organized an anti-war event drawing thousands. During this trip I was struck by a theme, relating to the question of courage, that came up in many conversations I had with GIs who had gone to Iraq and came back opposed to the war.

Kelly Dougherty was one of those who brought this point out. Kelly was in Kuwait and Nasiriyah, Iraq, from 2003 to 2004 working as a military police sergeant. She escorted Halliburton fuel trucks from Kuwait to Iraq. We talked about the horrible conditions of the Iraqi people living under the U.S. occupation. We also talked about the process of GI resistance. Kelly had questions going into the war and became increasingly opposed to the war during her time in Iraq. When she came back to the U.S. she met IVAW (Iraq Veterans Against the War) and started actively speaking out against the war.

Kelly said, "I would be thrilled if everyone getting ready to go over to Iraq said, 'No, I'm not going. This war is wrong. I won't continue to fight it.' 'cause obviously you can't fight a war without soldiers. But I know that's not going to happen. I think what a lot of people who haven't been in the military or who don't know friends or



Pablo Paredes



Kevin and Monica Benderman

family in the military might not realize is how difficult it is to speak out.

"You know what people are calling the resisters or those going to Canada or filing for Conscientious Objector status—they're saying that they're cowards. But what I would like people to know is that it takes more courage and more bravery to refuse to go fight in the war in Iraq than it does to actually go. Because you face legal repercussions, you could go to jail, you get ostracised from your community—and for people especially in active duty the military is their family. And if they refuse it is like losing your family. They also might receive opposition from their own real family."

What I also got from numerous conversations with Iraq war veterans in North Carolina was a picture of the mindless and unquestioning culture in the U.S. military. They talked about how group-think is imbued, starting from basic training, so that while soldiers may have questions, they don't dare raise them. They're trained not to stand out, especially if they disagree with what is going on, because there are "repercussions."

I've also heard from a number of GI's who are not necessarily anti-war activists though they had questions about why the U.S. was in Iraq. A common theme among them is, "You have a job to do, you signed up, so you do your job and get home safe." But what does it mean if your "job" consists of taking part in a rape of a whole country and degrading and murdering ordinary Iraqi people as part of war for empire? What is the right and honorable thing to do—to go on doing such a "job," or to take a stand and refuse?

This goes to the heart of why it is so important that there are GI's who are refus-

ing to take part in the war and resisting orders to go back or go at all. This war and occupation of the Iraqi people have very serious consequences. We could start with the fact that over 100,000 Iraqi lives have been taken so far. And I keep thinking about Kelly's point—that it takes more courage to refuse to fight on principle than to go along with the war.

Just look at the lives of the Iraqi people under U.S. occupation. Take something as basic as language, for example. As in every other war the U.S. government has waged on the people, racist language is used against a whole people. In Vietnam it was "gook," in Somalia it was "sami," and in Iraq it's "haji." This is a way the military dehumanizes the Iraqi people so that U.S. troops can more easily kill them. It feeds a culture of fear and hatred for the Iraqi people that has been brought to light by a number of troops who have returned from Iraq.

One of them is Aidan Delgado, who returned from Iraq in 2004 after serving six months in Nasiriyah and six months at Abu Ghraib. Aidan grew up as a diplomat's son and spent his teenage years in Egypt. Because of this he had a deeper understanding of Arab culture than others. Sometimes he was asked to translate for the military. After seeing the increasing brutality of the U.S. troops, he turned in his weapon and filed for conscientious objector status. They didn't let him leave, however, and his unit ended up being stationed at Abu Ghraib where he was a mechanic. While there he witnessed all kinds of horrors that the U.S. troops were committing against Iraqi prisoners and documented it with gut-wrenching photographs that can be seen on the internet.

Aidan was recently quoted in a *New York*

Times column by Bob Herbert. Aidan said that he "witnessed incidents in which an Army sergeant lashed a group of children with a steel Humvee antenna, and a Marine corporal planted a vicious kick in the chest of a kid about 6 years old." Aidan told Herbert, "There were many occasions when soldiers or marines would yell and curse and point their guns at Iraqis who had done nothing wrong."

Aidan said, "Guys in my unit, particularly the younger guys, would drive by in their Humvee and shatter bottles over the heads of Iraqi civilians passing by. They'd keep a bunch of empty Coke bottles in the Humvee to break over people's heads." When Aidan opposed and questioned this, his fellow troops answered, "Look, I hate being in Iraq. I hate being stuck here. And I hate being surrounded by hajjis."

The experience at Abu Ghraib was even more harrowing and revolting for Aidan. The grotesque inhuman treatment of Iraqi prisoners has been exposed for the world to see. But only a few low-ranking military have even been indicted for the torture and abuse which was sanctioned at the highest levels of the military and government.

Aidan witnessed the shooting of unarmed prisoners by U.S. troops. Herbert wrote, "Mr. Delgado confronted a sergeant who, he said, had fired on the detainees. 'I asked him,' said Mr. Delgado, 'if he was proud that he had shot unarmed men behind barbed wire for throwing stones. He didn't get mad at all. He was, like, 'Well, I saw them bloody my buddy's nose, so I knelt down, I said a prayer, I stood up, and I shot them down.'"

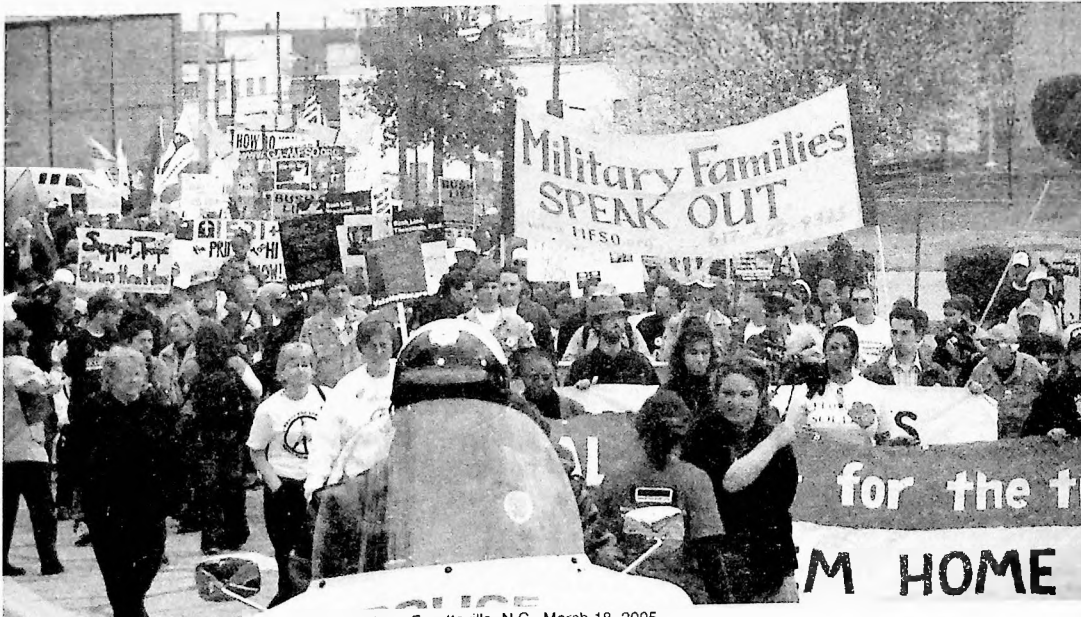
It is exactly this kind of treatment of the people—the brutality and the murder that is being carried out—which makes it so important for U.S. troops who are becoming conscious to break ranks and dare to resist. Such resistance has consequence. And not to resist when you understand this war is wrong, unjust, and immoral has consequences too. And this is why people very broadly must support those GI's who do dare to resist—especially those being persecuted by the military and the government.

I've never been in the military. But as a communist I'm well aware of the importance of acting on principle and going against the grain when necessary to do the right thing, including putting my life on the line for it. Dreaming about a world without oppression can be controversial these days, not to speak of fighting for such a world. But if you're right, it matters deeply to act on principle. It matters to the world, it matters to humanity—and it creates space for others to act as well.

Jeremy Hinzman, the first public conscientious objector to go to Canada rather than return to the U.S. war in Afghanistan summed up his experience in a recent article: "My only regret is that I didn't just take off my uniform and refuse all orders."

More info about Pablo Paredes:
www.SwiftSmartVeterans.com

More info about Kevin Benderman:
www.BendermanDefense.org



Protest on second anniversary of US invasion of Iraq, Fayetteville, N.C., March 18, 2005

India to Resume Arms Shipments to Nepal's King

We received the following from A World to Win News Service:

May 2, 2005. A World to Win News Service. One of the most important developments at the otherwise uneventful Asian-African summit held in Jakarta and Bandung, Indonesia, in late April was the meeting between Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Nepal's King Gyanendra. At this private get-together the king seems to have thrust himself more firmly into Indian hands than ever, setting the stage for events with potentially far-reaching consequences. The pounding inflicted on the Royal Army by the people's war led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) may have influenced the thinking of the king and India alike.

Many countries had been going through the motions of isolating Gyanendra since he staged a coup and returned the country to absolute monarchy February 1. At that time, the UK announced that it was suspending military aid and the U.S. threatened to do likewise. India, Gyanendra's key foreign backer, imposed an arms embargo on Nepal soon after Gyanendra dissolved the government and dismissed parliament. Official Indian displeasure is said to have prompted the king to boycott the annual summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) scheduled for February, forcing the meeting's cancellation.

At the Indonesia conference, however, India's public attitude changed. The Indian newspaper *The Hindu* reported that Singh reassured Gyanendra that Indian arms shipments to Nepal would resume—"very soon," according to an Indian foreign ministry official.

Even more ominous developments have also taken place. In February—during the period when it was claiming to be isolating Gyanendra—the Indian government decided to almost double the size of its Border Security Force, from 25,000 to 40,000 men, over the next three years. The BSF has already intervened in Nepal, taking part in a battle against the Maoist-led rebel army at Bardia, five kilometers inside Nepal's border with India.

When seen in light of India's intentions, even Gyanendra's post-Indonesia conference proclamation ending the state of emergency he had imposed at the time of the coup is a sinister move. It was probably dictated by India or at the very least designed to provide India (and perhaps the U.S. and UK as well) with political cover to step up open support for the Nepalese monarchy.

The king's April 30 announcement actually changes little. It certainly does not undo his suspension of parliament and civil rights. Demonstrations, public meetings and picket lines are still banned in much of the Kathmandu valley, although Kathmandu itself saw a big demonstration against the king May 1. There is no end to the total censorship. Some 400 journalists have been arrested or taken for questioning and about a thousand forced into unemployment. News is banned outright for most media and dictated by the king's men for the rest. Although Gyanendra announced that some parliamentary party leaders would be freed, he renewed the detention of several others. There is no freedom in sight for most of the 3,000 people human rights organizations believe were detained during the state of emergency. Most importantly, of course, the king still holds absolute power.

The Maoist Nepali weekly *Janadesh* has analyzed the indications that King Gyanendra, while still not tired of making a hullabaloo about patriotism and national unity, has bet his kingdom on the support of the Indian ruling class.

Janadesh wrote, "It has been learned that the Indian regime has secretly made up its

A World to Win News Service is put out by A World to Win magazine (awtw.org), a political and theoretical review inspired by the formation of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, the embryonic center of the world's Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties and organizations.

own roadmap." One sign of such a development, it said, is that the SAARC summit has now been reset for the end of May. What makes this possible, *Janadesh* inferred, is that Nepal's feudal monarch has made secret agreements with India involving further capitulation.

The protests of the Indian ruling class in the wake of Gyanendra Shah's coup were not motivated by altruism or concern for the Nepalese people, the Maoist publication continued. The Indian ruling classes always put their interests at the center. For them, American domination of Nepal is not acceptable. While the Nepalese economy is under the control of Indian monopolists, military control has gradually tilted toward U.S. imperialism. Since the U.S. is bogged down in the quagmire of the war in Iraq and not able to intervene more forcefully in Nepal, on the one hand, and on the other Gyanendra more fully capitulated to India at the Bandung conference, as a result, India feels assured that it can fulfill its interests by supporting Gyanendra at a moment when he is extremely weak.

The second reason, the weekly wrote, for the Indian regime's somewhat changed stance is that it may no longer be confident that its interests can be served by only supporting the parliamentary parties, which have been in decline due to their own political ambiguity during the last three months. Thus, instead of solely supporting the parliamentarians who are now unable to do anything against the king, India has come up with the idea that it could align the parliamentarians with the king to better fight the Maoist revolution.

The third point is that the Maoist revolutionary movement that has been developing in India itself has been a serious headache for that country. If the fascist Gyanendra is not supported in Nepal, the Maoist revolutionaries who now control over 75 percent of Nepal's territory, according to Indian data, could win central political power quickly, and that would seriously challenge the reactionary system in India.

The fourth reason why India changed its position, *Janadesh* pointed out, is that in the face of U.S. imperialism's inability to more aggressively intervene against the Nepalese people's war, China, Pakistan or Israel may try to fill that vacuum. That would also be a headache for the Indian regime. In order to prevent other countries from coming into Nepal too, the Indian regime seems to have decided to help the feudal despot Gyanendra Shah by hook or by crook.

In this regard, leading Indian newspapers have also revealed important aspects about the conspiracies being hatched by the Nepalese and Indian ruling classes against the Nepalese people. *The Times of India* wrote in its editorial on April 25, "Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh's meetings with King Gyanendra on the sidelines of the Afro-Asian summit in Jakarta sent out signals that New Delhi is willing to engage the monarch in efforts to restore democracy to the kingdom." The so-called democracy the Indian regime is talking about restoring in Nepal is the reactionary parliamentary system under the constitutional monarchy against which the Nepalese people have struggled for decades, especially since the start of the people's war in 1996. *The Times of India* further emphasized, "India has a vital stake in working with the king to bring about a return to democracy."

"In a conciliatory gesture, perhaps agreed behind the scenes before the Jakarta meeting, key Nepali political leaders have been released from detention," *The Times* went on. Note that the words "a conciliatory gesture agreed behind the scenes" were written before the king's announced end to the state of emergency, which seems to be exactly one of those gestures.

India's political roadmap seems to involve the formation of a coalition government, assembling the parliamentary parties and dividing the Maoist party so that it can be bent to India's will as well. "New Delhi must now nudge the king to call for national consultations with all political parties, including those Maoists who are ready to talk," *The Times* continued. This revealed how the reactionaries of both countries are working to dismantle the revolutionary movement in Nepal. In fact, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), a well-disciplined party that has been engaged in the political debate about the path of world proletarian revolution in the 21st century, faces no prospect of being dismantled.

"The outcome of such a conversation could be a national government in which the king would have a role, perhaps a formal presiding one," the newspaper said. While the Indian regime is not fully confident that peace and stability can be restored through the process of forging such a coalition government, still it sees the possibility of using the Indian army against the Maoist-led revolution. Getting to the main point, *The Times* laid out, "[I]t is unlikely that such a formation will be able to maintain peace on its own. It might then become necessary for an impartial but effective external force to help bolster Nepal's attempts at restoring stability."

In this scheme, the Indian forces would work with the full cooperation of the U.S., UK and China. The newspaper expresses

the aims of the Indian ruling classes as the following: "Towards such an end, New Delhi must work closely with the U.S., UK and China, all of whom are keen to see Nepal become normal once again. If necessary as an eventuality, an international force could be set up under the aegis of the blue helmets. This would mean that the Nepal issue will have to be raised in the UN for a Security Council resolution. If it went through, and an international stabilizing force were to be created, the bulk of the peacekeepers could be from South Asian nations, many of whom have experience of international peacekeeping operations. After breaking the ice in Jakarta, New Delhi should now think out of the box." In short, what is being proposed is a major intervention in Nepal by the Indian army flying the United Nations flag.

In the meantime, the Russian envoy to Nepal, Valery V. Nazarov, said it was "high time the international community supported Nepal in her efforts to fight terrorism," as reported by nepalnews.com. Since the feudal despot's coup, Russia's position has been that this is an internal matter, a position seconded by China and Cuba. "Referring to Nepal's support to Great Britain during the Second World War to fight the 'deadliest common enemy of fascism,' the Russian envoy urged the 'elite nations' to reciprocate and support Nepal in her current efforts to curb terrorism," the Nepali news service wrote April 27. "On rights violations in Nepal, he compared the incidents at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, Chechnya and Guantanamo and said, 'Though the historical and political context may be different, rights violations are similar. It is not the government's policy to violate human rights, it happens when there are criminal elements in the law enforcing agencies.'" This is a blank check not only for whatever atrocities the king carries out, but whatever the U.S. does as well—as long as it doesn't criticize similar Russian atrocities.

These developments indicate that the imperialists and India are preparing for direct military intervention in Nepal.



Photo: Li Onesto/Revolution
People's Liberation Army fighters in Rolpa, Nepal, 1999

Authoring Culture and Mastering Science in the Post-Mao Era

by Akil Bomani

As an undergrad at an art school, one of the main things that stuck with me was a portion of the mission statement at that school. It stated how they intended to produce individuals that would “author the culture of our times.” And this statement really influenced the agency of my intellectual and artistic intents. Once that statement really sunk into my thoughts I made a declaration that everything I’d create, and every idea that I’d explore, would be framed under this intent to author culture. And in order to effectively and consciously author culture, I figured that one has to know and continually learn the dynamics and developments of material reality.

This point is one of the things that led me to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM). There was a certain thrill of actually applying scientific method to social affairs, to politics, to history, and using that in turn to affect social affairs, create politics, and change history. All this fell in line to authoring a culture. And of course, the culture I wanted to be a part of authoring was one in which people were freely associating human beings beyond the social and economic perimeters of race, class, and gender. The culture I wanted to author was one in which all individuals were able to understand and consciously transform the world around them—free from the chains of class relations. So, of course, the Communist Manifesto, Marx’s essay on “The German Ideology,” Lenin’s *State and Revolution*, Mao’s *Talks at Yanan Forum on Literature and Art*—all of these works fed into this passion to author the culture.

Yet the more that the socialist/communist movement of the 20th century is genuinely examined, it is clear that there has been a tendency to negate this aspect of the agency of the masses to consciously author a culture. And this is very sad because at its essence, that is what a revolution aims to do—radically impact the way in which a society socially relates as another class rises to a ruling position. However, the fragility and complexity of the cultural arena has been greatly dismissed in the struggle toward a society free from all oppressive relations. Many of the Marxist trends, as well as the anti-Marxist trends, have historically reduced this science to simply a deterministic and reductionist economic continuum.

It isn’t an automatic thing. Just because you take up the most scientific, the most comprehensive and systematic world outlook and method doesn’t mean that you are therefore automatically good at working with ideas, or that you automatically arrive at the truth about something. And conversely, as we have also emphasized, there are people who not only don’t apply this outlook and method, but who disagree with it—or even detest it—who nevertheless discover important truths. And understanding that is also a very important part of really grasping and applying the world outlook and methodology of communism. That’s the contradictory nature of it.”

Bob Avakian, “Dictatorship and Democracy, and the Socialist Transition to Communism”

In that, the ultimate goal of communism is often assumed (by both bourgeoisie and communist alike) to be an earthly kingdom of harmony or a utopia of equal distribution of goods to humanity. No wonder it only sounds good on paper.

One of the most prominent forces historically, who, through his invaluable body of works, has consistently combated erroneous and incomplete notions of communism (who I very often refer to within my works) is Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA. No one since Mao or Lenin has advanced the science of Marxism further. In light of the many ill lines regarding the course and intent of a communist revolution—coupled with the very dire times society is undergoing now—his presence as an irreplaceable individual and leader of a communist movement is priceless.

What he has offered, in particular within a summation of a synthesis that he has been forging for decades entitled *Dictatorship and Democracy and the Socialist Transition to Communism*, is a new light on the science of communist thought and the particularities involved in creating a society free from class relations and all oppressive relations in general. In this work, not only does he lay forth the necessity for and basic science of a socialist revolution, he also identifies the achievements and errors of past socialist societies in relationship to its critical need now. One of the best attributes of his work is that he does not offer “set formulas” to the creation of an unseen society, but raises deep questions — questions that have to be struggled with by broad masses of people.

For instance, he starts this synthesis with the question of working

with ideas. This is one of the shortcomings of past socialist revolutions. Intellectuals in spheres of science, art, and philosophy were suppressed, denounced, or unjustly treated because their views did not align with the communist party in power. In Maoist China, there are many accounts, both exaggerated and true, of intellectuals and artists stifled and generally suppressed—especially during the Cultural Revolution. While this did not define the essential thrust and outcome of the movement—which was an unprecedented and liberatory “revolution within the socialist revolution” (including a flowering of mass movements in science and culture)—the quality of intellectual ferment and the view toward intellectual dissent during the GPCR requires further serious interrogation by the communist movement. This leads into the rudiments of erroneous socialist thought, that the validity of ideas should be weighed on how well it “supports the revolution.” Much of the socialist realism in Russia took the character of this proclamation.

However, Avakian combats this “know it all” tendency and stresses the “importance of actually getting deeply into the realm of ideas in its own right, really wrangling with ideas, and having an open mind about what you’re dealing with, and then ultimately taking your ideas into the real world, into the realm of practice and testing them out there.”

“This is a very important approach generally from people in the sciences, or people generally who work in the realm of ideas. And it is something that people who seek to apply the outlook and methodology of communism should be the very best at. But that takes work. It isn’t an automatic thing. Just because you take up the most scientific, the most comprehensive and systematic world outlook and method doesn’t mean that you are therefore automatically good at working with ideas, or that you automatically arrive at the truth about something. And conversely, as we have also emphasized, there are people who not only don’t apply this outlook and method, but who disagree with it—or even detest it—who nevertheless discover important truths. And understanding that is also a very important part of really grasping and applying the world outlook and methodology of communism. That’s the contradictory nature of it.”

What Is a Vanguard?

This point he makes leads into the deeper question of the actual role of a communist vanguard. Is a vanguard simply a group of politicians trying to achieve certain political objectives? How should mass criticism, even dissent, be dealt with by such a party when it is in power? What about the intellectuals who are completely against the party in power? Does the bourgeoisie have “its truth,” and the proletariat “its truth”? These are some of the questions that the communist movement has struggled over since its birth.

Avakian is grappling with these issues and puts forth the idea that at its essence, truth, and the infinite forms it entails, is what the science of communism strives to continually attain. And this is the principle pursuit of a communist party based on MLM. There is no “political truth” or “class truth”—only objective reality. Even if that truth of objective reality reveals the most repulsive sides of what the party is about or serious mistakes the communists have made, it will still serve to advance the movement, to advance humanity. However, the tendency has been to see this method of MLM as an end in itself; simply because one is an MLM-ist, one is an authority on all areas of knowledge. And this plays out logically in roles of power.

This leads to ideas being suppressed based on their allegiance to the authority and its method. Further, what this points to is the evaluation of ideas based on how much they contribute to the socialist revolution. In that, very valuable truths (whether they seem valuable or not at the time) that weren’t arrived through an MLM method, or even ideas presented by those who disagree with the method and the party in general, are dismissed. And this can cause great damage on many levels.

One of the ways Avakian characterizes this is “instrumentalist” thinking, or “to try and make your ideas an instrument of your desires and aims.” He gives a vivid example using the Trofim Lysenko experience in the Soviet Union. Lysenko, a botanist, claimed to have made a scientific breakthrough in

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agriculture that would have greatly contributed to the yield of crops. At the time the Soviet Union was struggling with agriculture and feeding the population in general. However, his claims were scientifically incorrect; yet he was supported by the communist regime in power because pragmatically it would have been a way to solve huge food problems. And Avakian points to the damage this caused, both on the material level of misdirected resources to an erroneous project, and on the level of ideas. He states that:

“...this did a lot of damage. Not only in the short run and in a more narrow sense—it didn’t lead to the results they were hoping for—but it also did a lot of damage in the broader sense in terms of how people were being trained to think, and how they were being trained to handle the relationship between theory and practice, and reality and understanding and transforming reality. There’s a way in which this has had long-term negative consequences. First of all, it did in the Soviet Union. And it did in the international communist movement, because it trained people to think in an erroneous way...political expediency dictated what was done there, and the people who were critical [experts in the field who were reactionaries that pointed to the error of this hypothesis] were actually suppressed.”

This leads back to what the role of a vanguard party is, and further the ultimate goal of a communist society. For if it is like the narrow and utopian visions pointed to above, espoused by bourgeoisie and revolutionary alike, then production and distribution of resources are the ends. And if this is the ends, then it will dictate political action, and all ideas, correct and incorrect, that don’t align to this, are likely to be dismissed.

The Dreaded “D” Word

Avakian goes into the many contradictions of bringing about a communist society. Within this is the question of what a *dictatorship of the proletariat* is, something which is at the basis of a socialist transition to communism. Now, this issue of dictatorship has been controversial throughout the 150 years plus since the communist manifesto where Marx boldly declared the bourgeoisie as producing its own gravediggers (the proletariat). This question of a dictatorship has been denigrated by the bourgeoisie, feared by the masses (the proletariat themselves even), and ever contrasted with the so-called “freedom” of democracy. Conventional wisdom often associates dictatorship with a single person that has absolute rule over a sovereignty (i.e., Hitler or Saddam). But in reality a dictatorship is not the rule of a person, but a class of people. Avakian clarifies this distortion with a concise definition that is validated by historical evidence as he says:

“A dictatorship is the rule of one class or another over society, backed and enforced by political structures

“...even democracy that develops for the masses of people under socialism—and we have to learn how to give this even better and more full expression—but even the democracy that develops for the masses of people under socialism is part of and could not exist without the dictatorship of the proletariat, the rule by the proletariat over society. Without that state power, without that political rule, the masses of people would have the same rights they have now...essentially nothing when it comes down to the fundamental issues.”

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Because of the so-called “democratic” process in America, most would never imagine the term “dictatorship” to describe the political system. There are “free elections,” “checks and balances,” “Bills of Rights.” However, if there is in fact a ruling class in this society, which there is, then essentially, democracy, the concepts of freedom and equality and consent of the governed that follow it, ultimately reinforce their position as a ruling class. At its very basis, the laws and processes, and elected officials, undeniably represent the interests of a minority class of people who to one degree or another hold a stake in maintaining prosperous ownership of the means of production, a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Avakian presents the question as such:

“How can you have a democracy in which everybody takes part on an equal basis, when some people have all kinds of leisure time and sit at the top of this whole process—a process that doesn’t just involve one country but is worldwide—people who, to use a certain metaphor, are sitting at the top of the food chain eating what is produced by everybody else along the way? How can the other people take part equally with them? It’s impossible. So naturally these people are going to

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dominate political affairs and the decision making over the direction of society and they are going to enforce that rule in order to perpetuate the system that has put them in that position in the first place.”

His point in speaking to this, however, is not simply to unveil democracy’s “dirty little secret,” so to speak, but to point to the essential necessity of a *proletarian dictatorship* in order to reach a classless society. This proletarian dictatorship would actually answer to the need of masses of individuals from all sectors to participate in determining the direction of society, a need that must be answered in order to reach that society. Yet it is unattainable as long as the class that objectively reflects the interest of humanity (those in whom the sustaining resources of this planet would be unavailable if not for their labor) does not have state power, and all that that entails. For instance he states how:

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But this point of dictatorship is far from exhausted. It is not a simple concept to swallow, especially the idea of needing a special kind of dictatorship (proletarian) in order to abolish all class relations that necessarily entail to dictatorships. And even in his extensive analysis of it, he, once again, does not give a formulaic solution, but a body of thought, based on veritable grounds, that necessitates the active inquiry, cognitive struggle and conscious input of the broad masses of individuals from all sectors of society. This is because of the fact that the way a dictatorship of the proletariat actually functions, as well the reason and ultimate goal of its functioning, requires the engagement, criticism, and especially dissent of the masses. And this gets back to the point of what a socialist transition aims to do and how a dictatorship of the proletariat is qualitatively different from the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Avakian sums it up as such:

“...the dictatorship of the proletariat, the rule that represents the interests of the proletariat, has to involve the broad masses of people in all the different aspects of ruling and transforming society, which is not a short-term thing but a long and very wrenching process of

overcoming inequalities—which even as they exist are working to undermine your advancing toward a new form of society.”

A very important point to note here is the phrase “a long and very wrenching process of overcoming inequalities.” One of the possible reasons why the catchphrase “good idea, but doesn’t work in practice” in bourgeois society is always associated with communism may be because this “wrenching process” is ever overlooked. In reality, this process of overcoming inequalities, abolishing class relations and all relations of oppression that even as they still exist under socialism work to undermine the advancement to communism, is neither a smooth nor terse process. Getting to a point where there is no place for a state or the classes that dictate its power, involves not only radically changing the distribution and production patterns of resources and value, but leading the masses to be masters of society and masters of the science of material reality.

Overcoming the Differences between Mental and Manual Work

For instance, Avakian goes into the contradiction of mental and manual labor, the minority of people who

do intellectual work and the broad mass of people who do manual labor, and how essential it is to overcome this is in the process of a socialist revolution. It is a fact that today there are huge masses of people excluded from the domain of intellectual work, and working with complex ideas in general. And of course this is not because of some predetermined and natural caste system that says some people are just meant to do manual labor, and the intellectual sphere is reserved for only those with cognitive prominence. But this division has a material basis in the way in which production and distribution is organized in society, and further, has social ramifications in how much people are actually able to know about how the world works. And in order for the broad masses of people to be able to engage in the ruling and transforming of society, the masses must not only have the *opportunity* to do so, but they need to be *able to grapple* with the issues of how the world works in its motion and development. Avakian states:

“Not only is there a question of extending formal rights and equality to the masses of people in a way that can never happen under any form of exploitative rule, but there is the question of the masses of people actually having the right to concern themselves with and to influence and to play a decisive role in affairs of state and the direction of society, as well as to organize themselves to carry out all kinds of political activity—even political activity independent of, and in some ways even opposed to, the state.”

In order for the masses to be able to utilize this right to the fullest and most effectual way, they need the freedom and ability to work with ideas; moreover, in order for them to have this freedom and ability, this contradiction of mental and manual labor must be worked through. To illustrate this contradiction, Avakian further states how:

“This cannot be overcome all at once. Not only is this a question of what’s left over from the old society, there is also a question of where you are at in the process of building the new society and transforming it. Because, in order for everybody to be able to engage in all these different spheres of society, you have to be able to produce the material requirements of life with a small amount of the total labor that would go into all the activity in society.”

This points to the reality that labor power and labor-time are finite at any given moment. Amidst the necessity to bring the broad masses into working with ideas and consciously directing society, material needs must be met, and this takes manual labor, and a significant portion of a day for people to engage in this. It takes time to understand ideas and theory and, at the same time, it takes time to produce material resources for society. All the while, this production won’t be taking place in the context of profit being in command. So here the contradiction is sharp and real, and that “long and wrenching process” of a socialist transition entails overcoming this.

Avakian points out many more real contradictions that have to be confronted and resolved throughout the tortuous process of abolishing class relations. But once again, we have to step back and ask: what is the basic purpose and intent of reaching a genuine communist society, even beyond Marx’s “4 ells”?*

Why are Chairman Avakian and those who follow him struggling so vigorously over these ideas, relentlessly criticizing past socialist movements and, while upholding their unprecedented achievements, insisting that simply repeating them would be nowhere near enough? I believe the answer points to being able to find and understand the truth about reality. Even beyond a classless society, there will be, there must be, broad debate, critique of ideas, and ferment over the infinite questions of reality. And from that future back to now, the goal is to invite the broad masses of people into the discussion of what is really true, and how to use that truth to change the world.

*The “Four Alls” are a concentration of communist aims. They are drawn from a summary by Marx of what the communist revolution aims for and leads to: the abolition of all class distinctions (or “class distinctions generally”); the abolition of all the relations of production on which these class distinctions rest; the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production; and the revolutionizing of all the ideas that result from these social relations.

When the American Taliban Came to Louisville

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megachurch, says we should be scared when churches start sounding like they can take on Godzilla. Well-dressed parishioners are escorted in from the other end of the walk, none of them make eye contact.

A polite young man walks by with a box of chips and an armful of coffee. At first I am impressed at the forethought and concern of the protest organizers, but then I realize the young man is from the megachurch.

I joke loudly, "Hmmm, women as full and liberated human beings...or reproductive slavery and a bag of chips?" When he comes back with a garbage bag to collect wrappers and cups, a protester yells, "All the trash is inside." He replies earnestly, "There is no such thing as human trash."

I get the sense that he means it, so when he walks by I challenge him that the Bible treats many people like trash. I point out the kinds of things (rape, religious slaughter, stoning to death of women) you have to uphold if you follow people who promise to enforce the codes of the Bible literally. And when I get to the part where Moses, the bearer of the Ten Commandments, demanded the massacre of the Midianites, he patiently explains that I am taking things out of context. He tells me that Jesus loves me "so much" even though I, like him, am a sinner.

I try again, this time citing the first Bible quote that stung me as a child,

attending a family wedding, "Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord." (Ephesians 5:22) His response is jumbled and makes no sense. He doesn't even acknowledge what I am raising, so I begin to interject. He is forceful now, "I let you speak. Now you quiet down and listen to me." Soon he's explaining that God *does* want men to have authority over women, but that I don't understand what he means by *authority*.

It occurs to me that it really is okay with him if I am enslaved by reproduction, as long as I get some chips and coffee with it.

By now the cold has driven away all the other protesters, but we are still locked in conversation.

He has spun off in every direction, bringing up wars, famines, diseases like AIDS, threats to the environment—but all of it only reinforces his belief that man has fallen and the horrors of this planet are punishment for sin.

I am trying to understand how it all fits together for him. I ask about everything. In particular I press him to explain the realities not spoken of in the Bible: dinosaurs, imperialism, outer space, atoms, and epilepsy.

I keep probing him further, finally asking what he makes of all the thousands of years of human societies that existed before the Bible—did all those people just go to hell?

"What people?" he asks, "There were no people."

His words hit me hard. He actually does not grasp the obvious contradiction posed by the fact that humans inhabited the earth long before the Bible was written. He is really living in the land of lies.

How much history, how much reality, how many people have to be made invisible for his worldview to hold up? How many more people would he allow to "disappear" and how much destruction would be justified if this worldview is consolidated in power?

A photo I saw once at an art museum flashes before me. It is a dump in China entirely filled with computer parts. The caption explains that whole villages of people live off these dumps and these villages are now named after the type of computer that the people make a living recycling bits of.

But I don't bring it up. It doesn't fit into his universe. Or, if it does, at this point, it will only be another example of the need he feels to turn away from the horrors and challenges of the real world.

To make sense of these villages you need to talk about reality, history, imperialism, and globalization. To envision a way out of this mess you need to know that once the elders of these villages stood up and made socialist revolution. Before this revolution was reversed, they had driven out the foreign powers and begun master-

ing science, philosophy, art, and the economy and now a challenge exists to go beyond what they had done.

I appreciate anew the difference between the progressive clergy I listened to this morning and the variety of ignorance and self-righteous madness being fostered in the megachurch behind us.

In particular I appreciate those who realize that the gulf between this man and me cannot be bridged by talking about a loving Jesus rather than a vengeful Jesus.

To make sense out of the global cabal of contradictions he keeps raising, he needs a whole different worldview. He needs to know about evolution and change, about science and thinking critically, about human history and natural history. This is not as comforting as the simple answers he has been provided with. It takes work and confronting uncertainties about the world.

But it also holds open the only possibility that we can solve these problems.

From his side of the universe he notices that my body is shaking in the cold. He is polite again. He looks back to the church that could take on Godzilla and offers to get me a hot cup of coffee. "We serve Starbucks," he adds. Apparently he does not consider Starbucks a sign that man has fallen.

I leave without the Starbucks coffee but with a renewed appreciation for the challenge to come.

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