



REVOLUTION

voice of the
revolutionary
communist
party, usa

*the newspaper
formerly known as
the Revolutionary Worker*

**Bob Avakian:
A Way To
Understand
What's Going On:
The Two Pats, And
Andrew Sullivan...
And Cornel West**

8

**Oscar Brown Jr.
1926 - 2005
Remembering Oscar
by Michael Slate**

5

**Los Angeles:
From Ike to Mao:
Beginning a New
Conversation**

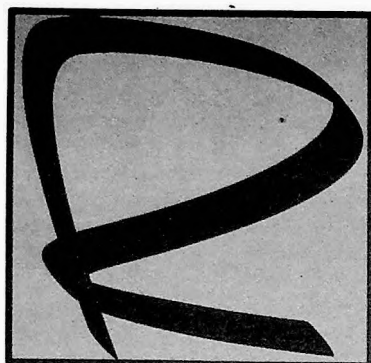
11

**Stem Cells, Snowfakes
and Lunacy**

14

The United States of Torture

3



REVOLUTION

In This Issue



Editorial:
The United States of Torture
3

The Torturers and the Tortured
4



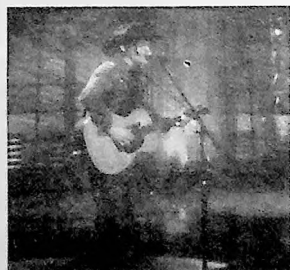
Remembering Oscar Brown Jr.
by Michael Slate
5

The Brutal Logic Behind the
Torture Madness
7

A Way To Understand What's
Going On: The Two Pats,
And Andrew Sullivan...
And Cornel West
by Bob Avakian
8

Los Angeles
From Ike to Mao:
Beginning a New Conversation
11

Bush-Whacked at Calvin College
12



Cheers and Jeers:
Nine Inch Nails vs. MTV:
Bright Eyes Lights Up Tonight Show,
Malcolm X on the Detroit Pistons
13

Stem Cells, Snowflakes and Lunacy
by Orpheus
14

The Ordeal of Gabriela Flores
by Linda Flores
15

To our readers:

This is Issue No. 4 of *Revolution/Revolución*, formerly known as the *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. 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 in March for new masthead designs.

DESIGN A NEW MASTHEAD FOR REVOLUTION NEWSPAPER

Design elements should include:

Title: REVOLUTION
Subhead: Voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party
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.

Subscribe! 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 (rwor.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 United States of Torture

Dilawar, a 22-year-old Afghani taxi driver, was taken to “Bagram Collection Point”—the U.S. center for interrogation and torture in Afghanistan. We now know some of what happened to him in 2002, because details from a secret U.S. Army report have leaked out.

The guards beat Dilawar over and over, especially on his legs. Then for almost four days, he was chained to the ceiling of his cell by his wrists.

Finally, at 2 a.m. one morning, he was taken again for interrogation. As Dilawar was forced down into a chair, his legs were twitching uncontrollably and his hands were completely numb. And the questioning started again.

When Dilawar asked for water, U.S. Specialist Joshua R. Claus mocked him, and squirted water hard into his face, shouting, “Come on, drink! Drink!” as the young man gagged.

A guard tried to force Dilawar to his knees, but his beaten legs could simply no longer bend.

Eventually, Dilawar was dragged back to his cell. “Leave him up,” Specialist Claus barked. And the guards chained Dilawar to the ceiling again by his wrists.

A doctor was sent by, but by then Dilawar was already dead and his body had begun to stiffen.

The base coroner wrote that the tissues in Dilawar’s legs had been “pulpified”—in the way seen when someone is run over by a bus. And interrogators later noted that they believed Dilawar never had any information to tell them, that he had just been driving his taxi past a U.S. base when he was seized.

The United States of Torture

The story of Dilawar’s murder, and much more about the U.S. torture around the world, is now out in public view—including with detailed documentation right on the front pages of the leading newspapers in the U.S.

And as all this tumbles out, a whole *other* layer of outrages unfolds—as all these crimes are coldly justified.

“Absurd,” said the President, to charges of American brutality. “The United States is a country that promotes freedom around the world.”

Secretary of War Rumsfeld, who deserves nothing but a jail cell, insisted: “No force in the world has done more to liberate people that they have never met than the men and women of the United States military.”

They invoke their carefully constructed “plausible deniability” and insist it *can’t be so*.

And meanwhile, they insist that *everything* the U.S. does is for lofty purposes of “freedom” (and of course has the blessing of their god himself).

America is (they say) a force for absolute moral good. And so, they argue, *anything* the “good guys” do to their enemies, no matter how brutal, must be accepted by the world.

And it must be willingly embraced by the American people, with silent acceptance and a sense of safety—or even moral righteousness.

What an upside-down and deceitful picture of the U.S., its history and its role in the world!

This country has always been the land of the thief and home of the slave. In a place built on such oppression and ruthless expansion, atrocities, including torture, are deeply built into the American Way of Life and the American Way of War—so much so, that this country *fully* deserves the name the *United States of Torture*.

How many Black men were castrated and then publicly burned alive?

How many youth were beaten *yesterday* in the back rooms of American police stations?

In 1861, Colorado’s mounted militia swept into a village of “friendly” Cheyenne along Sand Creek—massacring hundreds of men, women and children. The soldiers rode home with their saddles decorated with breasts and private parts carved from their female victims. And then these gruesome “trophies” were proudly displayed in the public theater of Denver for all to see.

Who can argue that such brutalities were a *rarity* during the creation of these United States? Or that they are just in some distant past?

A whole generation can still remember how in 1971 a thousand prisoners stood up together in Attica’s hellhole prison. And then came the horrible news that Governor Rockefeller’s men had swept in, leaving dead prisoners and guards in their wake and, yes, *torturing* those they recaptured.

And that same generation remembers how some U.S. commandos returning from Vietnam brought necklaces of human ears as trophies.

Who can forget how Abner Louima was brutally raped by New York police in 1997, sending people into the streets carrying *plungers*?

This so-called system of justice proclaims “equality before the law”—while it has, in reality, protected

those who use atrocities to defend the system and its “way of life.”

Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge tortured confessions out of Black men—by suffocation, electric shock and burning—for years! And yet he still lives out his retirement in comfort, unpunished.

A gang of white men tortured 15-year-old Emmett Till to death in 1955 for “whistling at a white woman.” They were coldly acquitted by a racist court. Just this month Emmett’s body was exhumed for a new examination — all because, *fifty years after his death*, there is *still* no justice!

And as America became an empire, all this homegrown brutality was systematized into an ugly art, and exported across the globe.

How many Vietnamese were questioned as a bayonet (slowly, slowly!) cut into their flesh?

How many torturers graduated from the U.S. Army’s School of the Americas at Fort Benning—and then did their grisly work in Guatemala, El Salvador, Chile, Honduras, and Argentina—or today in Colombia and Peru?

How many disappear without a trace into Bagram, Guantánamo and the CIA’s out-sourced torture centers in Egypt, Syria, Uzbekistan, and Pakistan?

Claiming a Mandate for Torture... Or What is an Election Good For?

After all those crimes over all the years, there is now something shockingly new.

The commanders and apologists of this empire insist that they are the champions of freedom—and at the *same time* they now often *openly* insist that torture is justified and necessary. And they accuse anyone who can’t stomach it of flirting with treason.

John C. Yoo was the Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the days after 9/11. He (with the new Attorney General Alberto Gonzales) helped write a series of memos that said the U.S. could and should simply disregard all laws that forbid the torture of prisoners.

And now this same John Yoo argues: “*President Bush’s victory in the 2004 election, along with the relatively mild challenge to Gonzales mounted by the Democrats in Congress, was proof that the debate is over. The issue is dying out. The public has had its referendum.*”

There it is, in black-and-white. Debate over “the issue” of U.S. torture “is over,” Yoo says. Global torture of captives has been *legitimized* by the last U.S. elections and (so he claims) *by the people themselves*.

It is now being done, openly, in our names. And it is intolerable.

When the story of Dilawar, the taxi driver, appeared on the front page of the *New York Times*, its vivid details had sent bitter tears down people’s faces. And I felt it hard too, as I read what the U.S. Army had done.

And a comrade shared with me how the haunting lyrics of “The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carol” kept moving through his head.

In that song, Bob Dylan describes one of those all-American atrocities. William Zantzing, a rich tobacco farmer, took his cane and coldly killed Hattie Carol—a Black maid who had done him nothing.

And at each point in the awful story, Dylan cautions us to hold back our grief and weeping because something still more horrible, and deep, is yet to come.

And then, in his last verse, Dylan describes that final outrage. William Zantzing walks out of that courtroom with a slap on the wrist—with all the weight of this system legitimizing him and his actions.

Dylan spits out his closing lines:

“Oh, but you who philosophize disgrace and criticize all fears,

Bury the rag deep in your face

For now’s the time for your tears.”

Here we now stand.

New horrors of American torture are leaking out, including the pictures of Abu Ghraib. The reality is there to be seen by everyone who dares to look.

And then here comes one more outrage:

They claim to do all this *in our name*. The election of Bush is openly celebrated as a *mandate for that torture!*

They claim that any debate or challenge over this is to be silenced—in *our name!* It cannot be allowed to stand.

Yes, now’s truly the time for our tears.



A lynching in Indiana, 1930s.



U.S. soldiers using a knife to “interrogate” a Vietnamese liberation fighter, 1969.



U.S. Base at Guantánamo, Cuba.

The Torturers

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Memo to Combatant Commanders, January 19, 2002

"The United States has determined that al-Qaida and Taliban individuals under the control of the Department of Defense are not entitled to prisoner of war status for the purposes of the Geneva Conventions of 1949."

Rumsfeld, asked about conditions of U.S. prisoners in Guantánamo Bay, January 15, 2002

"I do not feel even the slightest concern about their treatment."

Unnamed U.S. official, Washington Post, December 26, 2002

"We don't kick the shit out of them. We send them to other countries so they can kick the shit out of them."

Unnamed CIA official, Washington Post, December 26, 2002:

"If you don't violate someone's human rights some of the time, you probably aren't doing your job."

George Bush, UN Torture Victims Recognition Day, June 2003

"The United States is committed to the worldwide elimination of torture and we are leading this fight by example."

Alberto Gonzales, then White House Counsel (now Attorney General), June 22, 2004

"The President has given no order or directive that would immunize from prosecution anyone engaged in conduct that constitutes torture... All interrogation techniques actually authorized have been carefully vetted, are lawful and do not constitute torture."

George W. Bush after the Abu Ghraib pictures surfaced, June 2004

"I have never ordered torture."

and the Tortured

Based on interview with Haj Ali, the prisoner in Abu Ghraib photographed with wires and hood, Vanity Fair, May 2005

"One night as he was praying, Haj Ali was taken hooded by [U.S. army guard] Graner and led to another room. 'I felt there were 8 or 10 people standing around,' he says. He was then made to stand on a food box and lift his hands, as electrical wires were clipped between his fingers. 'They would give me electric shocks. I could feel the pulses going even into my eyeballs. I would collapse and faint.' Upon each collapse, the guards would kick and hit Haj Ali with boots and sticks, saying, 'Get up! Get up!' He believes he was shocked five times."

Interview with prisoners released from Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, Telegraph, May 15, 2004

"Abu Mustafa, 24, said he was arrested 10 months ago by U.S. forces who accused him of being a leader of a terrorist group. He said that early in his detention he was hung from a wall by his hands for about five hours. On another occasion two American soldiers had sex in front of him while he was in the prison hospital. Another inmate said he saw wires being attached to the tongue and genitals of his cousin."

Description of a leaked U.S. Army report on Afghanistan's Bagram Collection Point, New York Times, May 20, 2005

"In sworn statements to Army investigators, soldiers describe one female interrogator with a taste for humiliation stepping on the neck of one prostrate detainee and kicking another in the genitals. They tell of a shackled prisoner being forced to roll back and forth on the floor of a cell, kissing the boots of his two interrogators as he went. Yet another prisoner is made to pick plastic bottle caps out of a drum mixed with excrement and water as part of a strategy to soften him up for questioning."

The Guardian (UK), reported how six inmates had been seized by the U.S. military in Sarajevo, hooded and then taken to Guantánamo, April 14, 2005

"One prisoner, Mustafa Aid Idir, a computer technician who was on the Bosnian national karate team, suffered repeated beatings. A garden hose, running full blast, was forced into his mouth until he feared suffocation. His finger and thumb were broken, and his head was driven into the ground with such force that he suffered facial paralysis. 'His eyes didn't blink, he couldn't eat, food was leaking from his mouth,' said Melissa Hoffer, his attorney."

Vanity Fair, May 2005

"The Pentagon has declined to identify all the detention centers it is using in the War on Terror, but at least 17 are known to exist in Iraq; there is also the Guantánamo facility, in Cuba, and other centers in Afghanistan and Jordan."

New York Times, March 6, 2005

"The Bush administration's secret program to transfer suspected terrorists to foreign countries for interrogation has been carried out by the Central Intelligence Agency under broad authority that has allowed it to act without case-by-case approval from the White House or the State or Justice Departments, according to current and former government officials. The unusually expansive authority for the CIA to operate independently was provided by the White House under a still-classified directive signed by President Bush within days of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the officials said."

Human Rights Watch, on the U.S. out-sourcing of prisoners to allied governments for torture, April 2005

"There are anywhere from 100 to 150 cases of 'extraordinary renditions.'"



Haj Ali being tortured at Abu Ghraib



U.S. base at Guantánamo, Cuba



Maher Arar describes how he was rendered to a prison in Syria where he was tortured.

CBC, November 4, 2003, Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen seized by the U.S. while switching planes at JFK airport, is one of the few "rendered" prisoners who has been released and able to describe what happened to him. Here he describes arriving in a Syrian prison.

"We went into the basement, and they opened a door, and I looked in. I could not believe what I saw. I asked how long I would be kept in this place. He did not answer, but put me in and closed the door. It was like a grave. It had no light. It was three feet wide. It was six feet deep. It was seven feet high. It had a metal door, with a small opening in the door, which did not let in light because there was a piece of metal on the outside for sliding things into the cell. On the third day, the interrogation lasted about 18 hours. They beat me from time to time and made me wait in the waiting room for one to two hours before resuming the interrogation. While in the waiting room I heard a lot of people screaming. They wanted me to say I went to Afghanistan. This was a surprise to me."

AP Photo/courtesy of The New Yorker

Oscar Brown Jr., 1926-2005

Remembering Oscar

by Michael Slate

I think the planet sighed shortly before noon on Sunday, May 29 as Oscar Brown Jr., an extraordinary artist and a dear friend, drew his final breath surrounded by family and friends in a Chicago hospital.

Oscar had been sick for a month but his death came much quicker than anyone imagined it would. Oscar was 78 when he died and he had lived a rich, full life centered around his art, his commitment to fighting the oppression of Black people, and a ceaseless quest for a just world. And he managed to do all that with an ever-sharpening wit and a warm and deep humor.

I spoke with him shortly before he died. We had talked about dying before—with me arguing from a communist perspective that the universe was matter in motion, and Oscar arguing that there was some kind of governing force in the universe (his latest version was that gravity was a godlike, spiritual force that he could tap into for his creative vibe). He and I both knew he was going to die soon and after one of the most touching conversations I ever had with him, Oscar marshaled up all the strength he could to make one last joke: "Listen. Red, remember how I said that old age was like moving into a bad neighborhood that you can't move out of—well, there is a way to move out but it's a little problematic. Why don't you work on that for me. And if it turns out that you all are wrong, I'll give your best to Mao."

Oscar was a jazz vocalist and songwriter, a playwright, poet, and actor. He wrote more than a thousand songs and recorded at least a dozen albums. He toured with just about every great jazz musician you can name. He penned dozens of operas and plays. He wrote adaptations of Greek tragedies, including one based on the myth of Oedipus Rex where Oedipus was a freed slave who killed his slave-owning father. This play was never produced and Oscar used to like to joke that its title—*Motherfucker*—might have been a rock around its neck. And he wrote literally thousands of poems on every subject imaginable. And, as if that wasn't more than enough, Oscar also hosted and helped

develop two television series centered on jazz.

Oscar Brown Jr. began his public life as an actor in a radio series called *Secret City* when he was 15. By the time he was 21 he was hosting a daily radio show called the *Negro Newsfront*. This show was one of the first radio shows dedicated to bringing out the stories of Black people in America. And this was a theme that he continued to mine in his art for the rest of his life.

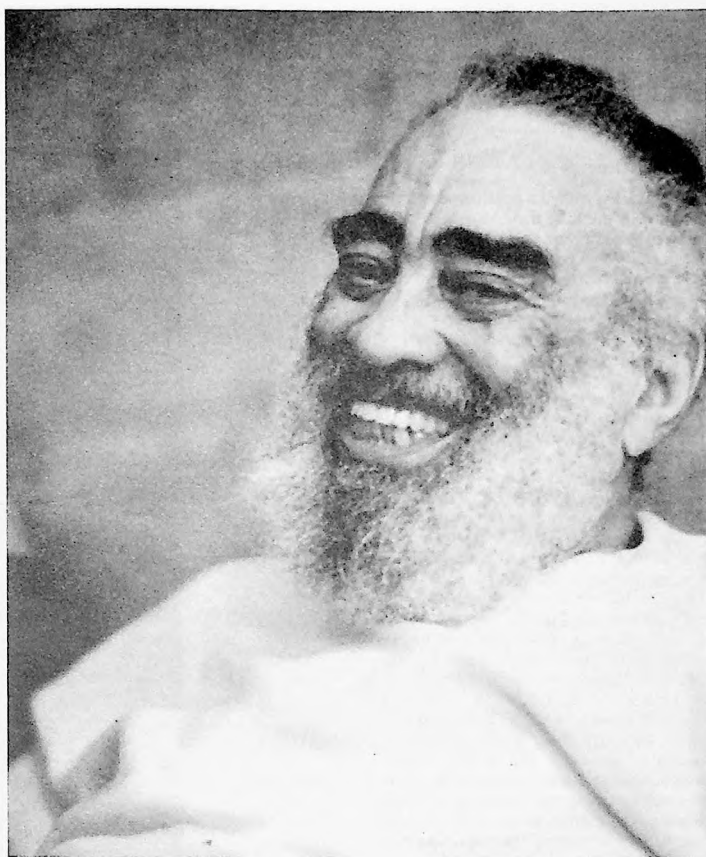
Inspired by Paul Robeson, Oscar often talked about his work coming from and going back to the people. He talked about wanting to inspire people to do great and good things—and he wanted to do it with a smile, a joke, and a wink.

When he sang "Rags and Old Iron" or "Watermelon Man" you were right there with him in the alleys of 1930s Chicago. In "Bid 'Em In" he put you right in the middle of a South Carolina slave auction. "Work Song" told the story of how "the crime of being hungry and poor" put many a Black man on a Southern chain gang a hundred years later. But Oscar also sang about hope for a better world. "Brown Baby" was a song Oscar created while he was rocking his newborn son, and it was a song he sang to his babies at home for awhile before he recorded it. It's a song whose power and beauty was timeless, and any time he performed "Brown Baby" the song brought the audience to tears and then to their feet in wild applause.

*As years go by I want you to go with
your head up high
I want you to live by the justice code
And I want you to walk down freedom's
road
You little brown baby*

Oscar told me how the first time "Brown Baby" was played on the radio, the DJ was told to remove it from his rotation list and it was removed from the shelves of record stores along the East Coast. That was 1961!

Oscar wrote other similar songs for the musical he brought to Broadway, *Big Time Buck White* starring Muhammad Ali, shortly after the U.S. government took away Ali's championship belt. In that musical Oscar featured Ali singing the song "It's All Over Now Mighty Whitey"—a



song where Ali declares he would rather die fighting for his people than die like so many Black men before him, "a grease spot on the highway."

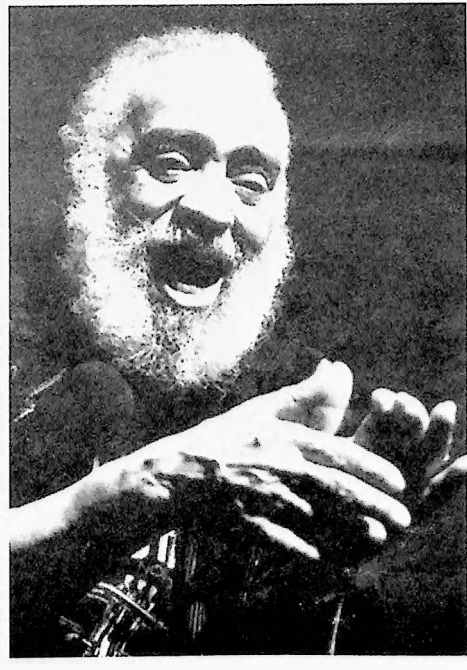
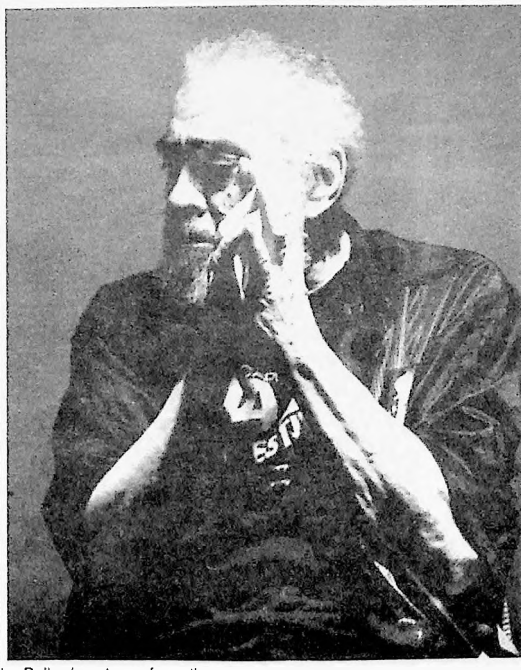
Oscar once told me that the title and theme of this song was inspired by a conversation he had with a friend in L.A. shortly after the 1965 Watts Rebellion. As Oscar's friend described how people were taking care of one another and just going and taking what they needed from the stores and so on, Oscar asked how the police reacted. After his friend told him that the police were nowhere to be found, Oscar said he laughed out loud and said, "It's over now, mighty whitey!"

And there were plenty of other songs, poems and plays that brought Oscar's humor and wit to bear on all kinds of questions, from relations between men and women to physics and the law of gravity (inspired by watching little girls play Double Dutch). Broadly called the Father of Hip-Hop, Oscar was especially pleased to see the development and growth of rap with its love of the word and the melding of the word and the beats. And he was scathing whenever he got the opportunity to rip into the hypocrisy and lies of the government. His classic "40 Acres and a Mule" was a biting and hilarious exposure of how the U.S. government stabbed Black people in the back after the Civil War. After struggling for years against the record compa-

nies and theater establishment, which had turned a deaf ear and blind eye to his work, not to mention giving him a lot of grief, his recent television appearances on Russell Simmons, Def Poetry Jam brought his work out to millions from a whole new generation. And only months before he died, Oscar performed at the opening of Jazz Lincoln Center.

After 9/11 Oscar was proud to be one of the signers of the Not In Our Name Statement of Conscience and he turned in a wicked performance of his tune "Bullshit," in the Evening of Conscience in New York City in October of 2002, just before the first big nationwide anti-war demonstrations. And only a year ago I got a 2 a.m. phone call from Oscar telling me that he hadn't been able to sleep very much for about a week. He said that some kind of muse had taken over, and over the course of a week he had written 200 Shakespearean sonnets all around the question, "When they opened up the cage door after the Civil War how come Black people didn't leave?" This was a question Oscar chewed on for most of his life. Oscar used to rant about the Dred Scott decision—that a Black man has no rights that a white person is required to honor—and would talk passionately about how Black people didn't come to this coun-

Continued on page 6



Remembering Oscar

Continued from page 5

try voluntarily, were not considered citizens for most of the time they have been here, and were never even asked if they wanted to become citizens, yet they were supposed to have allegiance to and pay taxes to the U.S. government. Oscar not only refused to do this but he periodically would call the IRS up and try to provoke them into taking him to court. He used to tell them that he was prepared to fight this out in open court but they always refused.

Oscar was always ready and eager to fight the injustice brought down by U.S. imperialism and he always hoped to be part of a broad community aiming to do that and bring into being a better world. That—and a love of the word and writing—was one of the strong bonds between us. But within that, man, did we have our differences on how we looked at the world, the ways to change it and what kind of society would really liberate all of humanity.

I can't even guess how many nights we walked on the beach or sat in hotel rooms arguing for hours about our different views on women and the relationships between men and women. Sometimes I'd make a critical comment about a song he had performed or recorded. And it never failed, we'd argue and Oscar would always get to the point of telling me I was a puritanical, commie writer blind to the reality of the "war between the sexes" and me telling him that if he didn't watch out somebody might send him a pair of pajamas, monogrammed "Osc" and invite him to hang out at the Playboy mansion. I can still hear him laughing.

Yeah, we had our differences but we never failed to talk about them: we loved and respected each other too much to do that. We would roll around the floor for hours on end arguing about spirituality, Malcolm vs. MLK or what kind of work revolutionaries need to be doing among the people today if they are serious about getting to revolution. And revolution itself was a big subject because as much as Oscar wanted to see a revolution, he just couldn't see how it could succeed up against a monster like America.

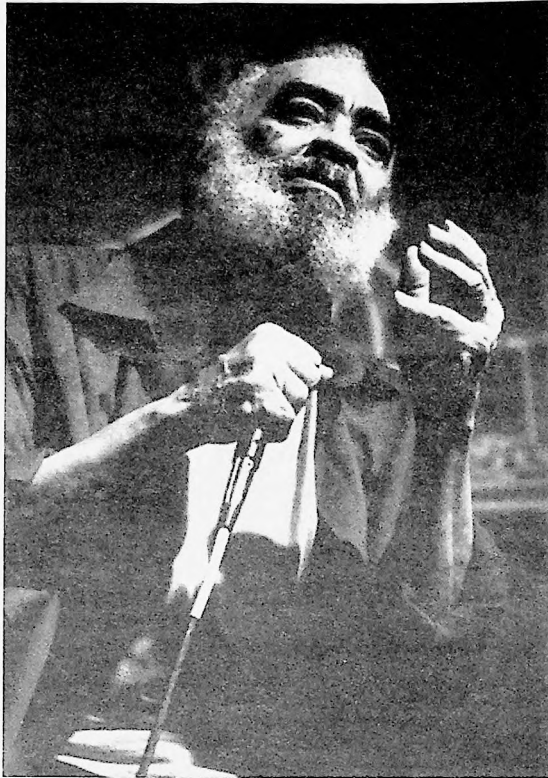
Oscar had been a member of the old revisionist Communist Party up until the mid-1950s. He got thrown out—and as he liked to put it, it was at the same time as he quit—for being a troublemaker, especially around the question of how to end the oppression of Black people. Oscar found the reformism of the old Communist Party deadening but he never really knew what a real communist was all about. He was intrigued by Mao and revolutionary China and liked the idea of socialism and communism in theory but he had a lot of questions about artistic creativity in a socialist society—like "would he be able to do his Adam and Eve songs?"—and

we wrestled for hours about how we needed a new kind of revolutionary socialist state and a new revolutionary morality or we would never get to communism.

When Oscar left the old Communist Party he took up a "cool, always cool" meld of 1960s hipster-ism and Black nationalism. In 2000 Oscar traveled to Cuba, hoping to find some semblance of a liberated society. He was bitterly disappointed—spent a week in a Miami hotel room crying—and came home to write songs and poems about the experience. But Oscar was a man who never stopped looking for answers. His mind never quit probing or provoking. When the Revolutionary Communist Party came out with the new Draft Programme, Oscar read it from cover to cover and offered up his comments. Just before he got sick he was especially intrigued by Bob Avakian's re-envisioning of socialism. He had just gotten Avakian's memoir *From Ike to Mao and Beyond—My Journey from Mainstream America to Revolutionary Communist*, and was really anxious to sit down and read the talk *Dictatorship and Democracy, and the Socialist Transition to Communism*. And I was really looking forward to this conversa-

tion cuz I was confident that this talk would open up Oscar's eyes to a whole new way of looking at the possibilities of a world he would want to live in.

When Oscar died there was a huge hole in my chest. It was like losing a father, an older brother, a best friend and a comrade. I'm gonna miss Oscar a terrible amount, probably more than I've missed anybody for a long time. I'll probably write some more about him and his work. I'll do a special on my radio show. But, as I sat listening to some of the hours and hours of interviews I've done with Oscar, I knew that the hole would heal and then I'd be left with the memories of the laughter, the arguments, the long crazy talks, the music and the writing and most of all the utter defiance and the refusal to give up that made Oscar so dear to so many people. I think I'll end this here with his poem *I Apologize* that he first performed on Def Poetry Jam and then again on my radio show. There's a whole lot of Oscar in this poem and that's the Oscar I'll always hold dear.



I Apologize

*I apologize
for being black
For all I am
Plus all I lack
Please, sir, please ma'am
Give me some slack
Cause I apologize*

*I apologize
For being poor
For being sick
And tired and sore
Since I ain't slick
Don't know the score
I must apologize*

*I apologize
Because I bear
Resemblance mos'
Black people share
Thick lips, flat nose
And nappy hair
So I apologize*

*I apologize
For how I look
For all the lows
And blows I took
On those, Lord knows
I'd close the book
As I apologize*

*I apologize
For all I gave
For letting you
Make me your slave
And going to
My early grave
I do apologize*

*I apologize
For all I've done
For all my toil
Out in the sun
Don't want to spoil
Your righteous fun
So I apologize*

*I apologize
For being caught
For being sold
For being bought
While being told
I count for naught*

*I apologize
And curse my kind
For being fooled
For being blind
For being ruled
And in your bind
Why not apologize*

*I apologize
And curse my fate
For being slow
For being late
Because I know
It's me you hate
I must apologize*

*I apologize
And tip my hat
'Cause you're so rich
And free, and fat
Son of a bitch
That's where it's at
And I APOLOGIZE*

The Brutal Logic Behind the Torture Madness

One long hard look at the pictures from Abu Ghraib—and you *know* the kind of sick sadists who make torture happen at the ground level. All the pathology of a Charles Graner gets puffed up and turned loose on prisoners.

But WHY is all that happening? Why exactly is the U.S. government selecting such thugs, training them, funding them, organizing them—and on a world scale!

And why is all this coming out of the shadows? Why have the heads of the world's most powerful military machine now made torture an open and official cornerstone of their operations?

The U.S. has, of course, always tortured its opponents—but from behind a screen of “plausible deniability” with its CIA “advisors” standing in the background as the dirty work gets done.

But now there is that raw and deliberate openness about torture. The U.S. has openly created a Guantánamo prison camp—no trial, no charges, no contact—kidnapping people all over the world, without law or legal procedure, and bringing them to that hellhole to be isolated for years, brutalized and driven mad.

Why did this White House so deliberately defy and reject the Geneva Accords on the treatment of prisoners? Why have they crudely brushed aside international law and world public opinion?

Why have they so obviously refused to expose or prosecute the interrogators who ran the cellblocks of Abu Ghraib? Why have they blanketly dismissed charges against the commanders who organized the torture on a global scale?

Why have they set all this up? And why are they so determined to justify and continue it?

First of all, it is about raw gangster logic. The U.S. ruling class saw itself as “the king of the world”—and then someone, out of the blue, attacked on 9/11 right in their own “homeland.”

The deaths of 3,000 people (whether in New York or Baghdad) mean nothing to the men like Bush, Cheney and Rumsfeld—but as world class gangsters they felt they *couldn't* allow such a hit to go down without retaliation.

And so their response was ruthless and extremely brutal. Many people died in the relentless U.S. bombings of Afghanistan. Thousands were rounded up—and many of

them killed on the spot, others packed into metal containers in the hot sun and left to bake to death.

Still others were herded to camps, and then airlifted to camps like Guantánamo. And as is now obvious—many of them had little or nothing to do with politics, warfare or al-Qaida.

U.S. military reports admit that very little “intelligence” has emerged from Guantánamo's interrogation cells—but the brutality continues, to make a point.

These gangsters are pounding the earth—and they want all of humanity to fall back in fear.

On another level, the team now running the White House had been *looking* for an opportunity to change all the rules of the game. They wanted to *come out hard* as the sole rulers of the whole world. And had been planning *that* for years.

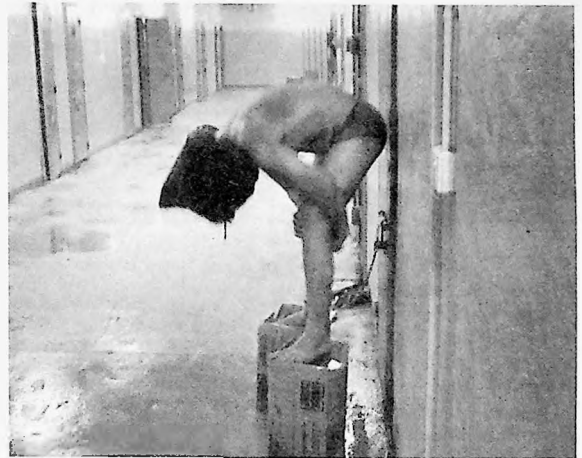
And this Bush crew thinks *it is about time* that the U.S. broke out of the previous framework of alliances and treaties—and imposed *itself* as the sole superpower, to be obeyed and feared. They want other countries and governments to simply fall in line—and “do the math” about whether to risk angering or defying the U.S.

And look: These guys head a political movement that thinks “bleeding heart” is a curse word! They think upholding “human rights” is for wimps. They think it is “coddling” to give arrested people lawyers, or read them their rights. They think the death penalty will help save their “civilization.” They think “international law” and the UN are a plot of “socialists and one-worlders”—and just a way the “Euro-weenies” hold them back.

In other words, these guys *really are* fascists. What they are doing in Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib shows what their “values” *really are*, and what they will do *wherever* they get the chance.

And so, in many ways they want *all this out in the open*—including the extreme brutality of Guantánamo. They want to *train* a whole section of the U.S. population to *beligerently embrace* all the brutality—and embrace the moronic “good guys, bad guys” cartoon-view of the world. And they want that so that there are even more forces trained to uphold and *carry out* the gruesome actions *yet to come*.

That's what the thinking is at the top of the White House and the Pentagon—and



Iraqi prisoner tortured in Abu Ghraib.

that's what these guys were plotting, long, long before 9/11.

At the same time, let's be clear: this torture and brutality is not just a *Republican* thang.

The CIA renditions—the moving of prisoners to other countries to be tortured—took a huge leap under Clinton. And there are presidential decrees about all that with *his* signature on them.

And think about exactly what it *means* when John Kerry stands up and announces that, if he gets to the White House, he will “hunt down and kill” enemies.

What does it mean when such ugly talk is *expected* of anyone trying for the presidency? What exactly is involved in Kerry's talk of “hunt down” if not all this machinery of torture, kidnapping, isolation, and U.S. commando raids? And what does the “kill” part mean if not assassinations, executions and death-by-torture?

The leading Democrats and Republicans are at knife-point over many things, but they have a deep unity on the importance of preserving U.S. supremacy in the world, and on pursuing a relentless capitalist exploitation of the planet.

And the need for both torture and unjust war arise from the most fundamental features of their *imperialist* system. All of this (the bullying of weaker countries, the intrusion by U.S. troops, the torture of cap-

tives.... and also the demands for privatization, transparency and even U.S.-style “democratic” forms of governing)... *all* of it is, ultimately and fundamentally, about exploiting the labor and resources of the world.

And as Bob Avakian discusses in “A Way to Understand What's Going On: The Two Pats. And Andrew Sullivan... And Cornel West” there are both political and economic reasons why the Bushites have the initiative now.

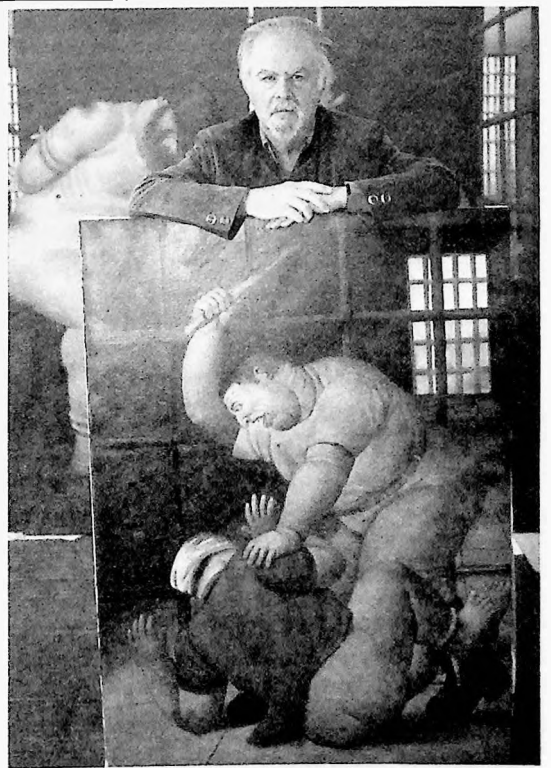
As you read these words, dragnets are sweeping through Baghdad neighborhoods. Prisoners are being strung up in their cells. Exhausted people are being questioned and beaten, jolted by electric shock, burned by cigarettes, and sexually humiliated in disgusting ways.

And the men who ordered all this, in the White House and Pentagon, are more and more open in justifying it—*because they intend to have this be a permanent and expanding feature of their new world order*.

It will not fade away just because pictures have surfaced or because prisoners are speaking out.

This is where the capitalist system has brought us. This is what imperialism means today. And it will be like this, and worse, until the masses of people sweep away this awful global system.

Fernando Botero, Latin America's best known living artist, recently completed a series of 48 paintings and sketches depicting the torture of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib. Botero, who is from Colombia, said in an interview, “This conduct by the Americans was a total shock for me. I am increasingly sensitive to injustice, which makes my blood boil, and these paintings were born from the anger provoked by this horror.” These works are being exhibited in Europe in June. Botero says he hopes the series will be shown in the U.S. since “the matter concerns that country above all.”



A Way To Understand What's Going On: The Two Pats, and Andrew Sullivan ...and Cornel West

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.

I can get at the point I want to make here more or less with the formulation: "The Two Pats and Andrew Sullivan...and Cornel West." I'll explain what I mean by that, as I go along.

Let's take the Bush circle. First of all, there is this Christian Fascist element in it. In reading that Esther Kaplan book (*With God on Their Side: How Christian Fundamentalists Trampled Science, Policy and Democracy in George W. Bush's White House*), you can really see this: Kaplan examines and amplifies further how deeply this has spread—and is being spread even as we speak—through the different agencies and institutions of the ruling structures of society. This is very real, it's very far along and it's very deep. On the other hand, what has actually been driving the foreign policy, or the international dimension, of the Bush regime? It has been not so much the Christian Fascists but this "neocoon" ("neo-conservative") bunch. A number of them are Jewish, for one thing, and therefore they are not Christian Fascists, although there is this whole Book of Revelation thing with Israel—that the existence of the state of Israel is a pre-condition for the second coming of the Christian Lord. There is what some people call (I think Kaplan calls them this) "Christian Zionists"—Christian fundamentalists who are the most ardent defenders of Israel, at this point—until the time comes for the Jews to convert to Christianity! But right now, the Christian fundamentalists are the most ardent defenders of Israel; there is no one who is a more fanatical defender of Israel—and even "the greater Israel"—than these Christian Fascists. ("Greater Israel" refers to territory supposedly guaranteed to Israel by god, beyond just the present boundaries of the state of Israel.) There is no one more opposed to making concessions in the occupied territories than the Christian Fascists, based on their interpretation of "Revelation."¹

As for the Wolfowitzes and people like him (this refers to Paul Wolfowitz, deputy secretary in the Department of Defense, and a major policy maker, particularly with regard to foreign policy and war, in the Bush regime)

many of them are Jewish but most—or certainly many—of them are secular, actually, from what one can tell. And they are, in any case, not motivated by a religious fundamentalism. If you read *The Rise of the Vulcans* (a book by James Mann), a lot of them are, as someone referred to, "Straussians" ideologically. (This refers to Leo Strauss, a conservative thinker who has had a lot of influence among people in the Bush administration and similar types.) I haven't really studied Strauss, so I'll make that proviso and caveat right off the bat. But, from what I understand from reading *The Rise of the Vulcans*, and a few other things, there is an element ideologically, in terms of opposition to relativism and the promotion of absolutism, which is part of Straussian thought too—as well as Christian Fascist fundamentalism. And that overlaps with but is not by any means identical to—and in some ways is in contradiction to—the Christian Fascist form of absolutism and Christian Fascist ideology generally.

So, right now, in the persona of not only Bush but Cheney, and the Bush-Cheney combo, these things are being held together, so to speak. And right now their unity and identity is much greater than their opposition. But they are not identical, not the same. So that's one thing to understand. The dynamics are more complex than that. Pat Buchanan comes up here, in that I've given him credit previously for being far-seeing. He's not the only one, but he was prescient, we should give him credit [BA laughs]. He started writing his book *The Death of the West* before, and then finished writing it after, September 11, 2001, and he commented, in the part of that book written after September 11: There is all this national unity right now (right after the events of September 11) but it is not going to last; there are deep social and cultural and other divides in this society, and they are going to reassert themselves.

And he was right—U.S. society did repolarize very sharply, I raised this also in connection with a point that I made in "New Situation/Great Challenges"² where it talks about how the Christian Fascist element was the driving element in the Clinton impeachment thing, but then after September 11 it was enveloped within this larger juggernaut while still remaining a core and driving force within it. And I think this speaks to the point that a comrade in our Party raised about the shifting of this from time to time and how different elements of this whole package—which we can, for shorthand, characterize as the Bush-Cheney package—may be at the forefront at different times. Cheney is not a Christian Fascist—I don't know if he's really a Christian or not, but that's not his particular

1. The "occupied territories" refers to the areas outside of the formal boundaries of the state of Israel which are occupied and controlled by the Israeli military.

2. "The New Situation and the Great Challenges" by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP/USA, *Revolutionary Worker* #1143, March 17, 2002, available online at revcom.us

Let's take the Bush circle. First of all, there is this Christian Fascist element in it. Esther Kaplan examines and amplifies further how deeply this has spread—and is being spread even as we speak—through the different agencies and institutions of the ruling structures of society. This is very real, it's very far along and it's very deep. On the other hand, what has actually been driving the foreign policy, or the international dimension, of the Bush regime? It has been not so much the Christian Fascists but this "neocoon" ("neo-conservative") bunch.

In the persona of not only Bush but Cheney, and the Bush-Cheney combo, these things are being held together, so to speak. And right now their unity and identity is much greater than their opposition. But they are not identical, not the same.

thing, Christian Fascism—although, in his own way, he's certainly a diehard reactionary. Edwards did bring out a few things that illustrate this in that one debate, the Vice Presidential debate: how reactionary Cheney has been, and how proud he is of how reactionary he's been. He voted against making Martin Luther King's birthday a holiday, he voted against a resolution calling for the release of Nelson Mandela from prison in South Africa—these are a few things Edwards brought out. Cheney has a whole record along these lines, of which he is very proud. It can't help but dovetail and overlap with the Christian Fascist program, including on things near and dear to their hearts, but it's not the same. There is the particularity of Cheney's daughter (who is openly a lesbian), but more generally the position Cheney has voiced on the question of homosexuality is not the same as the Christian Fascist position. And Cheney articulates his position on that, in part at least, because there are some people whom the Republican Party and that general section of the ruling class want to appeal to who don't share the views of the Christian Fascists on gay marriage (or on homosexuality more broadly) and on questions like abortion.

There is this tension, and different aspects of this program can come more to the fore or recede more to the background depending on what's happening in the world. But the Christian Fascist element has its own dynamic within this, which is not absolutely identical to the "neocoon" ("neo-conservative") program and the international strategy embodied in that National Security document of 2002.³ Condoleezza Rice is a Christian daughter of a minister, but I don't know that she's a Christian Fascist exactly. So, it is more complex, and we have to understand the dynamics. But the reason I raise Pat Buchanan is because what has happened is that as that repolarization that he (Buchanan) spoke of re-emerged, and as the "war on terror" took what to many people appeared to be a "detour" into Iraq, that brought out, or brought to the fore, more opposition to the Iraq war. This was Kerry's position, of a sort—that Iraq was a "detour" from the "war on terror"—although Kerry definitely took the stand that, "now that we are into this war in Iraq, we have to win it...and I can do that better than Bush." In actuality, Iraq is not a "detour." It's part of a larger strategy. But if you buy the line about the "war on terror"—that somehow this is really what Bush and company are waging, or should be waging—then perhaps the war against Iraq doesn't make sense. And that's partly why the repolarization has asserted itself too, because a lot of people, including some people who should

3. The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, available on the web at www.whitehouse.gov

have known better, took the position, if not of supporting at least of standing aside from and not opposing, the war in Afghanistan, because they bought into the propaganda that this was waged as a justified and necessary response to the September 11 attacks, even though in reality the war in Afghanistan, too, was part of the whole strategy of more aggressively asserting U.S. imperial rule around the world, and more forcefully recasting the world under U.S. imperial domination—a strategy that was formulated well before September 11. But with Iraq, it was more clear how that war was not in line with the proclaimed rationalizations for the "war on terror."

The point is that part of the reason this repolarization reasserted itself so quickly and so strongly is that the contradiction between the appearance of a "war on terror" and the essence of a war to expand and reify empire asserted itself very powerfully around Iraq. But then there comes the Andrew Sullivan point, which is cited in "Right-Wing Conspiracy,"⁴ where Sullivan, himself an avowed "conservative" and admirer of Ronald Reagan, makes the point that even "fiscal conservatives" (referring to people who favor cutting taxes and keeping government spending down for social programs, etc.)—even, if they aren't particularly religious, they have to wrap up what they are fighting for in the terminology of social conservatism and essentially merge it with this

These "neocoons" insist on an aggressive imperialist expansion in the world. These are people who are on a mission for "democratization" in the world—in other words, for reshaping the world in the image of the U.S., even reshaping certain countries with some of the outer forms of rule as it takes shape in the U.S.—elections, and so on and so forth.

Christian Fascist thrust. They can't get over within the Republican Party, for example, simply by arguing for fiscal conservatism—and in fact, fiscal conservatism is out the window with this Bush regime. This has got a lot of these traditional libertarian types very upset; they're writing books, too—not just Buchanan, other people are writing books, criticizing Bush for, among other things, his government spending and the huge deficit that has been piling up under his regime. Buchanan has a new book, *Where the Right Went Wrong*, and these other people are writing books about the betrayal by Bush of the conservative cause.

So that touches on something very real about the Christian Fascist phenomenon, which is that it's not the sum total, even of the Bush-Cheney regime. And one should not fall into reductionism and try to explain everything that's happening in the world, including the major move they are making for unchallenged world domination, by looking through the prism of Christian Fascism. What you definitely do get is Christian Fascist rationalizations for this drive for world domination—that is a very significant phenomenon in ruling class politics these days.

But there is not an identity in all this, and it is not even that the strategically operative program for what they are doing in the world right now is flowing out of Christian Fascism.

4. See "The Truth About Right-Wing Conspiracy...And Why Clinton and the Democrats Are No Answer" (RW #1255, October 17, 2004).

but actually more out of the "neocoon" people, many of whom were "Rooseveltian Democrats" who don't believe in a small state or a small government. And they don't believe in using the state just "for national defense" in some more traditional sense—even though that always meant imperialism. Rather, these "neocoons" insist on an aggressive imperialist expansion in the world. These are people who are on mission for "democratization" in the world—in other words, for reshaping the world in the image of the U.S., even reshaping certain countries with some of the outer forms of rule as it takes shape in the U.S.—elections, and so on and so forth.

For example, Christopher Hitchens was on Amy Goodman's program *Democracy Now* not long ago. She asked him, "Have you become a 'neocoon'—you seem to be supporting these neocoons." He answered, "Well, I'm supporting people like Wolfowitz." And—I've heard this on other occasions, for example in debates where Hitchens has taken part—he went on to argue that Wolfowitz is different than Henry Kissinger: Kissinger said we should support any despot in order to pursue our interests, but Wolfowitz thinks we should bring in democracy and not support despots. I have seen where Hitchens has made that point in debates, and he repeated that basic point on Amy Goodman's show, and then he cited the Philippines as an example of where Wolfowitz took the position that we should not keep supporting Marcos (the brutal pro-imperialist dictator in the Philippines, in the 1970s and up until the mid-1980s). And Hitchens cited *The Rise of the Vulcans* as a source for this view of

Wolfowitz. Well, I've been reading *The Rise of the Vulcans*, so I went to the book to confirm my sense of this, and then said to myself, "Somebody should send an e-mail to Amy Goodman pointing out: 'Even the guy (James Mann) who wrote *The Rise of the Vulcans* says that Wolfowitz was late in coming to this position—he hung with Marcos for a long time. So, sorry Christopher, even on that count you can't get over. You can't slide even on that point.'" Even though we have our differences, politically and ideologically, with Amy Goodman, she does a lot of very important exposure, and we should be helping people like her politically combat hackish apologists for this imperialist juggernaut, like Hitchens, and expose their hypocrisy even more fully. That's all a part of what we needed to be doing.

These people (the "neocoons") are on a mission for their own view of democracy—but, of course, they do the "Kissinger" thing too. In all these Central Asian republics where U.S. military forces are setting up bases—those are not democracies [BA laughs]—by the "neocoons" own account, they are brutal bourgeois dictatorships... openly brutal dictatorships, by anybody's account. But, nevertheless, ideologically there is sort of a crusading missionary zeal here of "spreading democracy in the world," of which Wolfowitz, in particular, is an architect.

And this is causing a lot of conflicts. Buchanan, as well as "Anonymous" (the long-time CIA operative who is the author of the book *Imperial Hubris*) and other people,

The Christian Fascist element, within the ruling class and more broadly in society—is a powerful force in its own right, and it's not going away....No other ruling class program is going to win out which doesn't, at a minimum, deliver a heavy political defeat to Christian Fascism. You're not going to do it in the way that some key forces within the Democratic Party are talking about—being "Christian Fascist lite," or whatever.

are saying, in essence: "What the fuck is this 'democratizing mission'—what does this have to do with our interests as imperialists?!" Buchanan is arguing that the U.S. should be "a republic not an empire," even though he's all for imperialism as long as it is "in the national interests"—as he sees those interests. But Buchanan insists, in effect: "This zeal to spread democracy around the world is going to land us in a big shit-load of trouble." That's also the argument of "Anonymous," and other significant ruling class figures are putting this forward as well.

So, it's not all Christian Fascism that is driving things, particularly in the international arena, but there is "the Andrew Sullivan point"—or two points in this connection: First, you cannot get things through, so to speak, within the Republican Party in particular—which is the ruling party now—you cannot get things through without some accommodation, at a minimum, to the Christian Fascist forces and program. That's the point of Sullivan's emphasizing that even "fiscal conservatives" have to wrap their program up in a "social conservatism" and Christian Fascist package in some form or other. And, while he was saying that a few years ago, in the context of what became the Clinton impeachment scandal, what he says about this is still true—it's very true right now. Even though the juggernaut of war and repression that was unleashed fully after September 11, 2001, has sort of "enveloped" this Christian Fascism within a broader package, Christian Fascism has remained at the core within all this and, even if you aren't actually a Christian Fascist yourself, it is still necessary to accommodate to that to get things done within the current regime.

That's one point. The second point is something else we've been stressing: Christian Fascism—the Christian Fascist element, within the ruling class and more broadly in society—is a powerful force in its own right, and it's not going away. Very much related to the fact that it's not identical with the whole Republican Party, it's not going to simply tail in the wake of these other programs within that Party. It has its own dynamic, while it overlaps with other "conservative" programs. Presently there's overwhelming unity between these programs, but not complete unity, and the differences are there also. I made the point in the talk "Elections, Democracy and Dictatorship, Resistance and Revolution" about how Al Gore says what he's saying—sharply criticizing Bush and even making some criticism of the Iraq war—and why he says it. He says this because he's not running for president. At the same time, you've got Schwarzenegger in California, who's supporting funding for stem cell research, and he's not for gay marriage but he's not a virulently anti-gay person either, and he's pro-choice. But, if he runs for president, you'll hear a different tune—if he wants to be like Bush the senior was pro-choice—just like Bush the senior was pro-choice until he ran for president on the Republican ticket, or got associated with Reagan (as Reagan's vice presidential running mate) even before that.

These are the dynamics. Certainly at this point, I don't think it's possible to get the

nomination of the Republican Party for president and be pro-choice. They'll talk about how they have pro-choice elements in their party when it's convenient for them to say that. But I don't believe that at this point you can get the nomination of the Republican Party and be pro-choice.

Is it possible that there could be a reconfiguration within the ruling class in which the Christian Fascists would actually be smashed? Yes, that is at least theoretically possible—they could be smashed, or pushed back significantly. Gingrich's point can be understood just in terms of conflicts within the ruling class, although I think it would be very difficult to confine such conflicts within those terms ultimately. (This refers to Newt Gingrich's comparison of the present period in the U.S. to the 1840s and 1850s, the decades in which the conflicts that eventually led to the Civil War, in the 1860s, were sharpening.) In other words, there could be a reconfiguration within the ruling class in which what is represented by the Christian Fascists—and, more generally, what is represented by the "conservatives" (including Gingrich)—takes a real blow and some other program comes to the fore. That's what some of these billionaire Democrats are aiming for. (This refers to a group of very wealthy Democratic Party backers who are talking about taking up, from their side, the strategy of the "conservatives" in the Republican Party: aiming to build up institutions, etc., that would be parallel to, and oppose—within the framework of mainstream bourgeois politics—the institutions built up over decades by right-wing forces.) But is this likely to be achieved, in the immediate context at least? I

Is it possible that there could be a reconfiguration within the ruling class in which the Christian Fascists would actually be smashed? Yes, that is at least theoretically possible—they could be smashed, or pushed back significantly.... But it would take a major struggle in the ruling class, with someone coming up with a whole different coherent program, and actually aggressively going after these right-wing forces, for that to happen. And I think you can look around, and look at the dynamics in the society and in the world, and think that's not very likely. Not impossible, but not very likely.

don't think so. There may well be attempts at that. But it would take a major struggle in the ruling class, with someone coming up with a whole different coherent program, and actually aggressively going after these right-wing forces, for that to happen. And I think you can look around, and look at the dynamics in the society and in the world, and think that's not very likely. Not impossible, but not very likely.

But let me put it this way: No other ruling class program is going to win out which doesn't, at a minimum, deliver a heavy political defeat to Christian Fascism. You're not going

to do it in the way that some key forces within the Democratic Party are talking about—being "Christian Fascist lite," or whatever. That's just grist to the mill of the Christian Fascists, and the "conservatives" generally. The author of *The Rise of the Vulcans* makes a provocative point, which I think is really worth thinking about. Toward the end of the book, he argues that in this period—he's talking about what we mean by "period of major transition with the potential for great upheaval," what's been set in motion as a result of the resolution of the Cold War—both the Democrats and the Republicans have a broad unity in terms of the further globalization of the economy and the military power to back that up. He uses a musical metaphor: They're both playing the same tune, but, as he puts it, "When Democrats held the White House, they turned up the economic treble. When the Republicans took over, they turned up the military bass." (*The Rise of the Vulcans*, p. 215)

And then he makes a further comment, which I do believe speaks to what was a significant factor in the recent election, besides the Christian Fascist element. He characterizes it this way (you know how they put these things—they put it off on the people, they don't present things in terms of how the ruling class controls and shapes these politics): When the American people perceive that the war aspect of this has come to the fore, he says, they will vote mainly for the Republicans, because they believe the Republicans are more resolute and consistent about being hawks, basically, and the Democrats really can't convince people, in this day and age, that they are just as good at waging war. The Democrats were able to do this back in the day of LBJ and all that, but nowadays they cannot really do it. Why? Because of the configuration of things in society, because (this is a point that's made in the "Pyramid" article)⁵ the Democratic Party does have this contradiction in its ranks, which came out at its convention and explains the Howard Dean phenomenon, that its base, or a large part of it, doesn't support these wars, doesn't want to live in the new Rome, and therefore you can't convince people that you're going to be as resolute as the Republicans in waging war, no matter how many times Kerry says "reporting for duty"

and "I'll be a better commander-in-chief and I'll kill the terrorists."

By the way, people have pointed out what a remarkable election it is when a candidate running for President of the United States gets up and says, "I'm going to track down and kill" people. Kerry didn't just say, "I'm going to wage a war"—that's one thing—but he said, "I'm going to track down and kill"

Continued on page 10

5. Bob Avakian, "The Pyramid of Power and the Struggle to Turn This World Thing Upside Down," RW No. 1237 (April 25, 2004).

A Way To Understand What's Going On: The Two Pats, and Andrew Sullivan ...and Cornel West

Continued from page 9

people. Someone who is seeking to be the president, the head of state, of a country like this one, said: "I'm going to go around the world and track down and kill people." And this is the "good guy" in the election, right?—the candidate that many peace forces rallied behind, in any case. [B.A. laughs] Yet and still, the point is that it's a hard sell—not that you cannot do it, but it's a hard sell—to convince people that the Democrats will be better as the war party, under the present circumstances and the present configuration in American society and politics. And it's certainly a hard sell to convince them you will be the better religious party. It just doesn't conform to what people know is the reality. So that's not the way the Christian Fascists are going to get defeated, even within the confines of ruling class politics.

Which gets to the Cornel West point. Cornel West, in his book *Democracy Matters* (his latest book) has this argument about "Constantinian Christianity." He says he himself is an evangelical Christian but not a Constantinian Christian. What he means by that is Christianity as an instrument of the state and of imperial policy—Christianity in the mode of Constantine (a ruler in the Roman Empire, in the 4th century, who adopted Christianity, fought battles under the banner of Christianity, and dictated to the Church a lot of Christian doctrine). A lot of people use the Roman Empire metaphor these days, and it's very apt in a lot of ways. So Cornel West is talking about Christianity as an instrument of state power and of imperial power when he speaks of "Constantinian Christianity." But I think he misses something important here, because he is an evangelical Christian himself, at the same time as he describes himself sometimes as a "Gramscian Marxist" (referring to the ideas of Antonio Gramsci, a somewhat "unorthodox" Italian Marxist in the first part of the 20th century). Perhaps Cornel West does not see the real danger, or at least the full danger, posed by the fundamentalist Christian Fascist element in all this—he only sees the negative aspect in the "Constantinian" element, which is very real and very significant but I don't think he fully appreciates the great danger of Christian fundamentalism as such.

And this finally brings me around to the other Pat—Pat Robertson. Pat Robertson represents in a real sense the *merging* of fundamentalist and Constantinian Christianity. He is a high level political operative of the imperialist system who is at one and the same time a genuine nut case—a fundamentalist religious fanatic—and a Constantinian Christian.

But it is still the case that the interests of these different ruling class factions don't run absolutely together: Christian Fascism and *Imperial Hubris*, if you will, don't run

smoothly together; nor does the "neocon" mission for "democratizing the world" fit so well with the position of people like Buchanan as well as the author of *Imperial Hubris*. There is this basic point: These days you cannot get anywhere in the configuration of ruling class politics, and in particular Republican Party politics, without at least accommodating yourself to the Christian Fascist element. At the same time, I believe it is the case that the whole thrust of what they are doing in the world, as embodied for example, in that National Security document of 2002, is not proceeding primarily from the dynamic of Christian Fascism. But even in the international dimension, let alone in the U.S. itself, you cannot push things through and carry them out, without at least accommodating to the Christian Fascist program. And, again, Christian Fascism is a real force in its own right, it has its own dynamic, within the ruling class and within society broadly. As Esther Kaplan points out in *With God on Their Side*, Christian Fascism is becoming deeply entrenched and suffused, widely spread, throughout the ruling institutions and agencies of government and the state. It is beginning to affect every sphere, and it is seeking to "close the circle" of institutions inside and outside government—and at some point that distinction (inside and outside of government) could be obliterated, and Christian Fascist institutions could become *the* institutions of state and government.

Now, some people will say that's crazy. How can you have science, how can you do NASA, how can you keep the population from becoming sick and dying if you interfere with science and medicine in this kind of way? But that's the "not a perfect fit" point. (This refers to the discussion, following the talk *Dictatorship and Democracy, and the Socialist Transition to Communism*, about whether the Christian Fascist program is a "perfect fit" with the interests of the ruling class as a whole at this point.⁶) This is an extremely volatile, unstable compound, so to speak, but that doesn't mean that it couldn't come to pass (to use Biblical terms) that theocratic rule by Christian Fascists would be the form in which bourgeois dictatorship would be exercised in the U.S. These are the dynamics, and we have to understand them more fully.

I do believe this Christian Fascist element, in and of itself, is the leading and essential aspect of this. Yes, the whole imperial extension could become over-extension and could get them in trouble, and that could be the form in which everything gets called into question, and even a revolutionary situation arises. But I still

6. See "The Enemy's Solid Core." *RW* #1261 (December 12, 2004).

Remember that movie ... *The Contender*, with Joan Allen (as the Vice President)? Remember when she comes under fire and she goes to a Congressional hearing and says, "My chapel is the chapel of democracy." Well, that's the "religion" of many secular bourgeois democrats—a "religion" which is being upended and challenged by this Christian Fascism. When those fundamental things get called into question and challenged in this way, then, for one, people who "hold those things dear" will rally to the defense of those things; but, at the same time—this is the way these dynamics work—many of them will also open up to big questions, even about those assumptions. That's what we're seeing in microcosm, and on even on a bigger scale, in some of our own work and more largely in the society. This is what you see. Somebody, a force of Christian fundamentalist fanatics and other fascists, is coming to destroy that "chapel" of democracy—which is ultimately and fundamentally bourgeois democracy. Yes, many want to still keep worshipping there, but all this makes you question your beliefs, especially if something is brought forward with a different synthesis, which can resonate with you. This is one of the big challenges we face—to really bring forward that radically different synthesis in a living way.

think that what is unrelenting in this, in the most concentrated way, is this Christian Fascist element. It is both, at one and the same time, unrelenting *and* a fundamental challenge to and opposition to the consensus that's ruled this country in one form or another throughout its history.

This has always been a religious country, but it's always essentially had a secular government. That's a sometimes acute contradiction—which now is becoming extremely acute. Separation of church and state, abortion, the homosexuality question—but, beyond that, science, education—everything is being brought into the sights of the Christian Fascists, not just in a theoretical way but in a practical way now, and in an increasing way, and it probably will be in a geometrically increasing way in the period ahead.

At the same time, once again, this is enveloped in a larger juggernaut at this point, while not being identical to that larger juggernaut. These, I believe, are the dynamics within the ruling class, and also within the society and the world in the larger sense.

Remember that movie with Jeff Bridges (as the President), *The Contender*, with Joan Allen (as the Vice President)? Remember when she comes under fire and she goes to a Congressional hearing and says, "My chapel is the chapel of democracy." Remember that? Well, that's the "religion" of many secular bourgeois democrats—a "religion" which is being upended and challenged by this Christian Fascism. When those fundamental things get called into question and challenged in this way, then, for one, people who "hold those things dear" will rally to the defense of those things; but, at the same time—this is the way these dynamics work—many of them will also open up to big questions, even about those assumptions. That's what we're seeing in microcosm, and on even on

a bigger scale, in some of our own work and more largely in the society. This is what you see. Somebody, a force of Christian fundamentalist fanatics and other fascists, is coming to destroy that "chapel" of democracy—which is ultimately and fundamentally *bourgeois democracy*. Yes, many want to still keep worshipping there, but all this makes you question your beliefs, especially if something is brought forward with a *different synthesis*, which can resonate with you. This is one of the big challenges we face—to really bring forward that radically different synthesis in a living way.

This situation could recede or change significantly, while still remaining within the confines of bourgeois politics and bourgeois rule. Things are not set in stone: dynamics could emerge that are larger than whatever is happening at a given time—that's the point about unexpected, unanticipated, and in some ways "unanticipatable" events—and even what we can look at and anticipate now could shift the terms of this. But none of this is going to get shifted, even within ruling class parameters, without a wrenching process and struggle. And I don't believe that can actually go on without all of society getting drawn into it. And certainly we don't want that to go on without all of society getting drawn into it.

And then there's the question of what comes out of all of it. That is not pre-set.

So, those are some thoughts that I wanted to lay out, because this is extremely important for us to understand, in a scientific, dialectical materialist way—to understand, as best we can, the dynamics and have the best possible method and approach for digging further into these dynamics and grasping them more fully, in all their complexity as well as in their essence, in order to wage the struggle to radically transform things in a positive way.

Los Angeles From Ike to Mao: Beginning a New Conversation

Bob Avakian travels a journey from a certain yesterday to a possible tomorrow in From Ike to Mao and Beyond. This diary of hopes and journal of lessons narrates how some youth went from troubling days to challenging actions to sharing dreams. Bob Avakian imagines and knows he is not the only one and he is ready to share dreams, his and ours. His memories are sharp and clear, and hence the lessons he has learned are that much more compelling as maps for those who demand a better world. His shared experiences, with unflinching candor and generous warmth, are his respects for those of strong heart and clear mind, those ready to do the work of getting to the other side of history.

— From a letter written by Dr. Juan Gomez-Quiñones, historian and writer, UCLA

On the evening of Wednesday, May 25, people crowded into the Taper Auditorium at the Los Angeles Central Library for a book release celebration of *From Ike to Mao and Beyond—My Journey from Mainstream America to Revolutionary Communism, a Memoir by Bob Avakian*.

Doo-wop music drifted through the trees as people mingled in the Spanish tiled courtyard, checking out an exhibition of photographs, passages from the *Memoir*, newspaper reprints from the '60s, and letters of remembrance.

A hint of communism was in the air.

Through this memoir, Bob Avakian has connected with people on many levels, as an innovative revolutionary communist leader, a leading critical thinker, a storyteller, and a fascinating, and oftentimes humorous, human being.

Lucia Marano, a TV, stage and film actor, and one of the special guest readers, told *Revolution*, "I appreciate any individ-

ual who wants to make humanity a better place. That's someone we need to talk about and we need to listen to. I want to be a part of that discussion, and I want to be part of raising consciousness."

The celebration, co-sponsored by librarians from the Social Science Department and Friends of Insight Press, brought you into the life of Bob Avakian.

Mark Gonzales pounded out the story, in slam style, of one of Bob Avakian's earliest experiences with the nature of this system. He read how Bob Avakian had gone to the library to read and re-read and re-read the United Nations charter looking for what President John F. Kennedy had so passionately insisted was a violation of that charter by the Soviet Union when it installed missiles in Cuba. This lie was the justification for taking the world to the brink of nuclear annihilation. "...there was so much at stake that I felt like, 'I have to know the truth, and just because it's the leader of my country, I can't accept what he says when something this big is at stake.'"

As you heard Reg E. Gaines, renowned playwright, poet and writer, read from the memoir and reminisce about his afternoon lunch with Bob Avakian, you were transported there with them—the talk of art, culture, communism—and you could almost taste the avocados and tomatoes they ate, too.

"We spoke about influences, some good, some bad. One thing we both agreed on is that you learn from these influences, be they good or bad. And you have to have the wherewithal to take the bad or the good and make it work for you. One of our major influences and how we really connected was Malcolm X.

"1965 became a very pivotal year in our conversation because Malcolm X was assassinated, but it was also the year that my mother died.



Bob Avakian at the Wall of the Communards, Paris, France, 1981.

"It was also the year that John Coltrane's 'A Love Supreme' was released. My mother was playing it in the house the day we heard Malcolm X was assassinated. My mother said, had the men who shot him listened to 'Love Supreme' that morning they wouldn't have shot him."

He went on to read Bob Avakian's recollection of the assassination:

"This hit me as a devastating loss for Black people, and also for people generally fighting against injustice, not just in the U.S., but throughout the world.... First, I saw Kennedy blatantly lying, before the whole world with the fate of the world literally hanging in the balance around the Cuban Missile Crisis, then you see something like this, the assassination of Malcolm X, and you know that somehow the U.S. government was involved in this. I hadn't studied the issue, and a lot of the exposure of how they were involved hadn't come out yet, obviously. But I just sensed this—I knew they hated Malcolm X and saw him as very dangerous to them—and it made me really sad but very angry too." (*From Ike to Mao and Beyond*, p. 136)

Then Reg E. Gaines was off again, onto a riff about a grandfather with a shop around the corner from the Audubon Ballroom where Malcolm X was killed, and his recollection of Malcolm and jazz and that day.

After the readings, Raymond Lotta, Maoist political economist and author of *America in Decline*, and Dr. Juan Gómez-Quiñones, author of numerous works on Chicano history joined Martha Quetzal Ceja, managing editor of Insight Press, on stage to share their impressions and insights about the memoir.

Dr. Gómez-Quiñones: I thought of storytelling [when I read the memoir], and the way that Native Americans talk about the importance and the positive power of storytelling. Storytelling involves both a voice and a certain tenor to the voice. It involves a speaker and a listener. The storytelling comes together as a synthesis that goes beyond the facts that are being detailed or the artfulness of the argument in that it conjures a new vista, a new way of looking at things, not in an otherness kind of way, but of making what is imagined yours, by the fact that you shared in its imaginative creating. What I see in [*From Ike to Mao*] is a very powerful updating of storytelling of our times. The point of storytelling in the tradition is not the past, even though the past is what is being recalled and is that vehicle into a new vista. Storytelling is geared to the future. The effectiveness has to do with giving us understanding about our times and the understanding then being actual tools to shape the times of tomorrow by dealing with today.

Raymond Lotta: What you learn about him through this book, the kind of searching and questing of that generation, when you get your way through this book and let

it wash over you, what comes out about Bob is his passion, his rage, and his scientific approach to the world—his passion for the truth, his passion for revolution, his deep and abiding love for the masses, his intolerance for and his impatience with the present order and all of the hateful crimes that it perpetrates—and science, the science that comes through in everything that he's doing....

Dr. Gómez-Quiñones: If you were to lay out the literature—and much of it has value—that has been done on the '60s and the '70s, you can pick out some patterns. What is really valuable is when somebody gives you a summing up and not nostalgia or some true-ism about what might have been. What Bob Avakian gives you is a positive step forward. One of the things that happens is that the people have come to a compromise in the sense of standing still at best, rather than ready for the next step forward. This is a very different autobiography of someone who has lived the times up to the present, and not of someone who has folded the cards, an autobiography of someone who is still in the game.

After the program, a teacher told *Revolution*, "I keep on buying the book and I only hold on to it for so long, it's so good. I give it away but people give me the money for it, so I buy another copy and I can't hold on to it for too long. He is who he is, as a leader. He's someone who belongs to the masses and that's shaped him to become who he is. You have to deal with him in one manner or another, whether you have a disagreement. If you have a problem with it, you still have to deal with what he is saying. He's someone who's got something to do with getting us forward to the future."

Lucia Marano ended the evening by reading from the concluding chapter: "... If you have had a chance to see the world as it really is, there are profoundly different roads you can take with your life. You can just get into the dog-eat-dog... You can put your snout into the trough and try to scarf up as much as you can, while scrambling desperately to get more than others. Or you can try to do something that would change the whole direction of society and the whole way the world is. When you put those things alongside each other, which has any meaning, which one really contributes to anything worthwhile? Your life is going to be about something—or it's going to be about nothing. And there is nothing greater your life can be about than contributing whatever you can to the revolutionary transformation of society and the world, to put an end to all systems and relations of oppression and exploitation and all the unnecessary suffering and destruction that goes along with them... So this is what my life will continue to be devoted to, and this is what the ongoing story of my life will be about."



Bob Avakian singing doo-wop with 9th grade best friend.

Correspondence

Bush-Whacked at Calvin College



Calvin College, May 21, 2005.

We received this correspondence from comrades in Detroit:

On Saturday, May 21, 400 people came from across Michigan to join a very significant protest against Bush's commencement speech at Calvin College, a small Christian liberal arts college in Grand Rapids, a west Michigan city that many consider to be in a "red zone" of wealthy, conservative Christian Republicans. Calvin College's alums include many prominent Republicans, including Betsy DeVos, former chairman of the Republican Party, and Richard DeVos and Jay Van Andel, founders of Alticor, the successor to Amway Corporation.

Calvin is in the evangelical Christian tradition, and there are daily and Sunday worship services and religious counselors in every campus dorm. But far from a warm welcome, Bush's planned visit generated a storm of opposition, including protest ads in the *Grand Rapids Press*.

One statement was signed by more than 800 Calvin students, faculty and alumni. It read, in part: "We are alumni, students, faculty and friends of Calvin College who are deeply troubled that you will be the commencement speaker at Calvin. In our view, the policies and actions of your administration, both domestically and internationally, over the past four years, violate many deeply held principles of Calvin College."

Another ad, signed by a third of the Calvin faculty, read: "As Christians, we are called to be peacemakers and to initiate war only as a last resort. We believe your administration has launched an unjust and unjustified war in Iraq."

One professor felt he had to speak out, even though he is scheduled to get tenure this summer. David Crump, a professor of religion at the college for eight years, said, "The largest part of our concern is the way in which our religious discourse in this country has largely been co-opted by the religious right and their wholesale endorsement of this administration."

Bush's speech at Calvin College was one of only two commencement speeches he gave this year—the other was at the U.S. Naval Academy. Bush actually invited himself to speak, bumping a philosophy professor, Nick Wolsteroff, who taught at Calvin for 30 years. In an article in the *Grand Rapids Press* (May 20), Calvin's provost was quoted as saying, "I think the White House knows Calvin is not a clone of the more fundamental universities, like Bob Jones University. It's an opportunity to extend their constituency." In other words, Bush wanted to shove a Christian-fascist biblical-literalism-in-the-service-of-imperialism down the throats of those who have a different view of religion. But it didn't turn out exactly as the Bush team had planned.

The protest was organized by a group called Confronting Empire and the West Michigan Justice and Peace Coalition. There were many Calvin alumni at the

protest. One man, who carried a sign protesting "the dumbing down of Calvin," said he felt that the college had taught people "how to think for yourself, dialogue about the world, and change it for the better." He felt that Bush was leading "the dumbing down of America, a politics based on fear." A fellow alum with him said the war in Iraq was being waged "like a holy war, a throwback to the Middle Ages."

A common thread among many protesters was a desire to take on the attacks on science and critical thinking. A teacher decried how Bush plays on the fact that

"some people don't want to know, don't want to think, because then they'd have to change."

One important aspect of the protest was the presence of veterans and families of soldiers. We met people like a West Point graduate who has many friends who are high-ranking military officers in Iraq, and a woman who has a son in the Navy.

Many of the protesters were Christians who felt that Bush is "hijacking Christianity." One Calvin grad said, "They're trying to steal Christianity and mask their politics with religion." Another

said that "god despises those who take innocent life." On the one hand, it was positive that these Christians were drawing the line against Bush and Christian absolutism. At the same time, there were those who believed it was still possible to "dialogue" with the Christian fascists about what was "the real Christianity"—which revealed continuing illusions about the real danger of Christian fundamentalist theocracy in this country.

The Bible Taken Literally Is A Horror

If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother; and [that], when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son [is] stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; [he is] a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

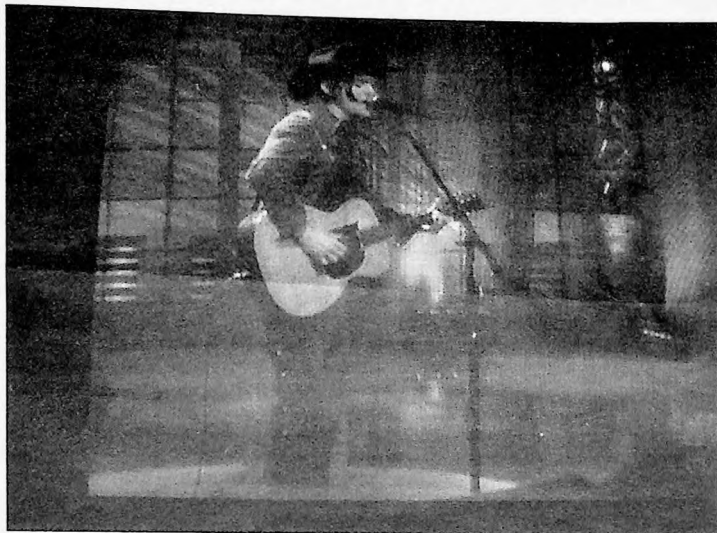
Deuteronomy 21:18-21

For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

Matthew 15:4



CHEERS & JEERS?



Bright Eyes performing on the Jay Leno Show.

Bright Eyes Lights Up Tonight Show

In just three minutes of stripped-down strumming and scathing lyrics, the disgust of half the country with a president who fancies himself on a mission from God was finally blurted out before a viewing audience of millions. This immediately spread to many more through internet bloggers and the controversy it generated. Cheers to Conor Oberst of Bright Eyes - whose songs have tapped into the alienation of a generation in a way uniquely infused with hope and connection, even responsibility, to others. The young Nebraskan wrote "When the President Talks to God," which calls out Bush's (and his God's) wars on women, other countries, the ghettos and the truth, in the bitter hours of Bush's re-inauguration. On May 2nd he performed it on Jay Leno's show sounding a bit like Dylan mixed with The Cure with daring, defiant anger, and—rather poetically—a cowboy hat perched on his head. Touché George Bush! Looks like you are one butt-naked emperor.

View video here: <http://homepage.mac.com/one-goodmove/movies/lcno050205brighteyes.html>

When The President Talks To God

*When the president talks to God
Are the conversations brief or long?
Does he ask to rape our women's rights
And send poor farm kids off to die?
Does God suggest an oil hike
When the president talks to God?*

*When the president talks to God
Are the consonants all hard or soft?
Is he resolute all down the line?
Is every issue black or white?*

*Does what God say ever change his mind
When the president talks to God?
When the president talks to God
Does he fake that drawl or merely nod?
Agree which convicts should be killed?
Where prisons should be built and filled?
Which voter fraud must be concealed
When the president talks to God?*

*When the president talks to God
I wonder which one plays the better cop
We should find some jobs, the ghetto's broke
No, they're lazy, George, I say we don't
Just give 'em more liquor stores and dirty coke
That's what God recommends*

*When the president talks to God
Do they drink near beer and go play golf
While they pick which countries to invade
Which Muslim souls still can be saved?
I guess god just calls a spade a spade
When the president talks to God*

*When the president talks to God
Does he ever think that maybe he's not?
That that voice is just inside his head
When he kneels next to the presidential bed
Does he ever smell his own bullshit
When the president talks to God?*

I doubt it

I doubt it

Nine Inch Nails vs. MTV

Nine Inch Nails refused to play the MTV Movie Awards after MTV decided to act as political censors. The band was scheduled to play the song "The Hand That Feeds" from their new top-selling album *With Teeth*. Apparently MTV had a problem with the scheduled performance.

The song "The Hand that Feeds" is a hard-rocking, timely, and provocative challenge to the war, holy crusades, not going along with the program and biting "The Hand That Feeds" you shit. Nine Inch Nails planned to play the song with a photo of Bush as a backdrop.

JEERS to MTV who felt "uncomfortable" with Nine Inch Nails' "performance being built around a partisan political statement." Who in the Bush administration delegated the role of political culture police to MTV?!

CHEERS to Trent Reznor, lead singer of Nine Inch Nails, for standing on the very principles being called for in their song "The Hand That Feeds." Reznor stated on their website: "Nine Inch Nails will not be performing at the MTV movie awards as previously announced. We were set to perform 'The Hand That Feeds' with an unmolested straightforward image of George W. Bush as the backdrop. Apparently the image of our president is as offensive to MTV as it is to me. See you on tour this fall when we return to play in America."

In the context of a society increasingly demanding blind acquiescence to war and empire and rising Christian Fascism, Nine Inch Nails' "The Hand That Feeds" is right on time.

The Hand That Feeds

*You're keeping in step
In the line
Got your chin held high and you feel just fine
Because you do
What you're told
But inside your heart it is black and it's hollow and it's cold*

*Just how deep do you believe?
Will you bite the hand that feeds?
Will you chew until it bleeds?
Can you get up off your knees?
Are you brave enough to see?
Do you want to change it?*

*What if this whole crusade's
A charade
And behind it all there's a price to be paid
For the blood
On which we dine
Justified in the name of the holy and the divine*

*Just how deep do you believe?
Will you bite the hand that feeds?
Will you chew until it bleeds?
Can you get up off your knees?
Are you brave enough to see?
Do you want to change it?*

*So naïve
I keep holding on to what I want to believe
I can see
But I keep holding on and on and on and on*

*Will you bite the hand that feeds you?
Will you stay down on your knees?.....*

*"He invites them
for a coffee...and
those uncle toms
can't pass up the
coffee."*

—Malcolm X



2004 NBA Champion Detroit Pistons at the White House with Bush.

Stem Cells, Snowflakes and Lunacy

by Orpheus

On May 20, an article in the journal *Science* announced that a South Korean research group headed by Dr. Woo Suk Hwang made an astonishing breakthrough in stem cell research.

Hwang's research group succeeded in inserting DNA from a human body cell into a human egg cell, leading to the development of embryonic stem cells. This new procedure is called therapeutic cloning, or somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT). It holds the potential of leading to the treatment, and even solution, of serious medical problems affecting tens of millions of people.

In any sane and critically thinking society not run by religious lunatics, this major breakthrough would have been celebrated and hailed.

Instead, the fundamentalist president of the world's most technologically developed imperialist power announced that further research on this crucial question was dangerous and unacceptable.

Instead of moving quickly to support further research needed to work out many of the questions involved with realizing the potential of this and other embryonic stem cell research, President Bush threatened to veto a House bill that would relax certain restrictions on human embryonic stem cell research.

George Bush and His Embryos

The House bill would simply allow federal funding (now prohibited) for research using excess embryos developed through in-vitro fertilization (IVF) that are now routinely thrown away.*

Bush appeared at a White House news conference on May 23. He was surrounded by families with babies pro-

* It's been estimated that there are at least 400,000 frozen human embryos generated through IVF that will not be used by couples in trying to have children themselves. Almost all of these excess embryos are eventually discarded. (It normally takes many implantations of embryos to even have one successful implantation in a woman leading to pregnancy.) Against the advice of almost every medical and scientific expert, Bush has ruled that the use of these embryos, which will be discarded anyway, means the "destruction of life."

duced by IVF from excess frozen human embryos donated by other couples. Also on hand were ghouls of the Christian right. Bush used this scene as a photo-op to spread fundamentalist nonsense and suppression of medical research.

The scene reminded me of pictures I've seen of Hitler with "Aryan" children gathered around him during the lead-up to war and the holocaust in Nazi Germany.

Here was the fascist butcher Bush—who is directing the destruction of hundreds of thousands of lives in Iraq and Afghanistan, who as governor of Texas executed more inmates than any other governor, and who stands on top of a world order where up to 50,000 people die each day from disease and hunger—speaking again of his support for a "culture of life."

Apparently this "culture of life" does not extend to the millions of people in the U.S. alone who have died from diseases that embryonic stem cells have the potential to treat, or the literally hundreds of millions worldwide who could benefit from advances in the research.

The man who denies the truth of evolution and the reality of global warming, as the economic system he leads strangles the life out of the planet, talked about doing only medical research with "the highest moral standards." Bush said that the bill before the House that he threatened to veto would cross a "critical ethical line" by "creating incentives for the ongoing destruction of emerging human life."

Instead, said Bush, the excess frozen embryos produced by IVF—which are now being called "snowflake babies"—should be "adopted" by parents who can't have kids of their own. I could only picture Bush with his own "adopted embryo" in hand—smaller than a dot on his finger tip. It took me back to the hilarious Monty Python routine in "The Meaning of Life" where fools parade around singing "every sperm is sacred" as Catholic women pop out one baby after another while not even stopping from doing dishes.

It is shocking and outrageous that the ruling policy on stem cell research in this country is based on religious fundamentalist morality, in opposition to sound medical fact and reasoning. And if this policy stands it will have terrible consequences for those for whom embryonic stem cell research may hold great

promise.

Human Embryos and "Human Life"

Bush and his cronies portray embryos as the same thing as a human child. House Majority leader and leading Christian fascist Tom DeLay said that the approval of the House bill would fund "the dismemberment of living, distinct human beings."

Let's demystify this—these embryos are a ball of cells, smaller than a grain of sand and frozen four to five days after fertilization. To call such a tiny mix of cells at such an early stage—before any differentiation into even specific cell types—a "human life" is just know-nothing lunacy.

Equating a frozen embryo with a fully human child is to deny that the embryo must be first successfully implanted in a woman's uterus and then go through a nine-month process of development as part of a woman's body. And it's also to deny that what makes us human is our social life and independent existence in the world—which require being born!

As long as reproduction is only possible by this developmental process, the life and needs of women as fully human individuals must come first and before the subsidiary process of fetal development. Women are not incubators!

Stem Cell Research, Science, and the Future

What is needed is an expansion of the vital research around human embryonic stem cells, guided by a morality that is consistent with a scientific understanding of the world and that actually promotes the interests of humanity.

What will it mean if all the things that might possibly arise from this research are prevented from happening? How will it affect the lives of people now and in the future who are suffering, who can't walk, who may die from the diseases that stem cell research may someday help overcome? What kind of society will this be if know-nothing religious absolutism is allowed to replace science and critical thinking in one sphere after another?

It's a horror that the direction of things in the U.S. is toward a fundamentalist theocracy—especially at a time when new breakthroughs are opening up new vistas for human potential. This can't be allowed to take place! We need to unleash the creative human spirit in science, in art, and in every sphere. We need a revolutionary society leading to real communism that could develop critical, questioning, and scientific thought in a way now only imagined.



Dr. Woo Suk Hwang being interviewed by journalists, May 2005.

Glossary of Terms

Embryonic stem cells are undifferentiated cells from three to five-day-old embryos (generated after a sperm fertilizes an egg or therapeutic cloning—see below). While adult stem cells and stem cells from umbilical cord fluid can also be used in research, these cells in general don't have the same advantages as embryonic stem cells, which can potentially differentiate into any cell type in the body. Embryonic stem cells grow and divide much more easily than adult stem cells. So there is a much greater chance of developing both the number and type of cells necessary for research or therapy through use of embryonic stem cells as opposed to other stem cells.

Therapeutic cloning, or somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT), is a new technique using human or animal cells. When done with human cells, the DNA from a "somatic" (normal body) cell of a person who may have a certain serious medical problem is extracted and injected inside a human egg cell that has had its nucleus removed. The egg is put in a culture dish and coaxed into dividing, creating a clump of cells called a blastocyst after four to five

days. Cells that are removed from the blastocyst and cultured become embryonic stem cells. These cells could potentially be treated so they differentiate into any type of new healthy cell or even tissue and whole new organs to replace damaged cells and tissues in that person. Cloning means making copies of DNA or of a cell, virus or bacteria. It is a technique routinely used in science and medicine.

Because this technique uses the person's own DNA, the stem cells that are developed are genetically identical to (have the same DNA make-up as) all the cells in that particular person. This means the new stem cells (and tissues or organs that develop from them) shouldn't be rejected by the body. So this technique thus has great potential to solve the problem of tissue or organ rejection, which affects millions of people.

For further info see:
www.isscr.org
<http://stemcells.nih.gov/info/basics/basics6.asp>

Women Are Not Incubators!

The Ordeal of Gabriela Flores

by Linda Flores

A young immigrant woman in South Carolina was jailed for four months and may face two years more in jail for performing an abortion on herself. Yes, you heard that right.

Last October, Gabriela Flores ended her 16-week pregnancy by taking misoprostol pills sent by her sister from Mexico. She had no choice but to risk her life by taking illegally imported drugs, without any doctor's supervision, because although abortion is technically legal in South Carolina, in Gabriela's situation it may as well have been illegal.

South Carolina laws force women to get permission from their husbands, listen to biased anti-abortion "counseling" riddled with misinformation, and to undergo a mandatory waiting period. And abortions after 13 weeks are so restricted that no provider in the state will offer them.

Gabriela would have had to travel to another state, two and-a-half hours away, and since such a procedure is done over two days, she most likely would have lost her job. Gabriela was working in the fields sup-

porting three children and herself on \$150 per week. There is no way she could have afforded the \$700 procedure.

The pills caused her to expel the dead fetus, which she buried in her back yard. One can only imagine the stress and pain of her whole situation. But her suffering was far from over.

She was reported to the police, who were told that the four-month-old fetus was born alive. Rather than showing concern for her health, sheriff's obtained a warrant and dug up the fetus. Prosecutors wanted to charge Gabriela with *murder*. They would have been legally able to do it if they'd been able to prove that the fetus would have survived on its own. Since there's no way a four-month-old fetus could do this, they couldn't get away with that charge. But had she been further along—say, five or six months pregnant—they probably would have been able to get away with it. Instead, they charged her with performing an abortion on herself—which is illegal under South Carolina law.

And they weren't done yet. They

charged her friend, who helped her to bury the fetus, with obstruction of justice. And they also charged Gabriela with failure to notify a coroner. But why, in a state where abortion is legal, did she need to notify anyone? Because they wouldn't believe her until a coroner certified the fetus was dead when she expelled it from her body. By this logic, if you had a three-month miscarriage you would have to notify a coroner to come and inspect the remains!

The irony is that Gabriela said she didn't notify anyone of the abortion because she was afraid she'd end up in jail—and she was right! In her statement to police, she said, "Please forgive me." For what? She didn't do anything wrong!

There are still too many people who don't understand what horrors women face when trying to get an abortion in places like South Carolina. Too many think that things like "informed consent" laws and mandatory waiting periods aren't really that big of a problem. What happened to Gabriela Flores should serve as a real wakeup call.

If you step back and look at this whole

heart-wrenching story, it brings to life in a thousand ways the worthlessness and cruelty of this whole system. Forced to come to this country in order to survive, Gabriela had to leave two of her children behind on the other side of the razor wire and death fields of the border.

She broke her back in the fields for the privilege of trying to feed herself and her family on \$150 a week and still have enough to send money to her children back home.

She had to endanger her health and her life to get an abortion. A snitch landed her in jail. The woman that helped her was arrested.

And now, she has been criminalized; she faces two years in prison and will likely face deportation. It's unclear what will happen to her children she has here. Her whole life—never valued anyway—is being destroyed. What kind of a world is this? And why should things remain this way a second longer than they have to?

Get Revolution Out to the People!

Contact the RCP Publications Public Relations Office:

- To become a distributor of *Revolution* and receive regular bundles of this newspaper.
- To order the works by Bob Avakian and other RCP publications
- To talk to a *Revolution* correspondent.
- To submit an article to *Revolution*.
- To arrange interviews or public appearances by RCP Publications speakers and spokespeople.
- To report about struggles, conferences, and other developments.
- To inform us about legal and political attacks on the RCP and other acts of repression.
- To volunteer for the PR Office's activities (including media work, literature promotion and distribution, web site development, the Prisoners' Revolutionary Literature Fund, Spanish translation, and the design of materials).

RCP Publications Public Relations Office

P.O. Box 3486, Merchandise Mart

Chicago, IL 60654

Phone: (773) 227-4066 Fax: (773) 227-4497

Email: rcppubs@hotmail.com

Promote the *Revolution* web site: revcom.us

MUCH MONEY IS NEEDED NOW

TO STEP UP *REVOLUTION* COVERAGE, DISTRIBUTION AND THE WORK OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE

Send checks or money order marked for "*Revolution* Reporters Emergency Travel Fund" or "RCP Publications Public Relations."

Volume 27, No. 5 June 12, 2005

Contact *Revolution*, Box 3486, Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654
In your area call or write:

California:

Los Angeles: c/o Libros Revolution, 312 W. 8th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90014
213/488-1303

Berkeley: c/o Revolution Books, 2425C Channing Way, Berkeley, CA 94704
510/848-1196

Georgia: c/o Revolution Books Outlet, P.O. Box 5333, Atlanta, GA 31107
404/577-4656

Hawaii: c/o Revolution Books, 2626 South King Street, Honolulu, HI 96826
808/944-3106. (Send mail to: P.O. Box 11228, Honolulu, HI 96828)

Illinois: c/o Revolution Books, 1103 N. Ashland, Chicago, IL 60622
773/489-0930

Massachusetts: c/o Revolution Books, 1156 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02138
617/492-5443

Michigan: c/o Revolution Books Outlet, 406 West Willis, Detroit, MI 48201
313/833-7310 (Send mail to: P.O. Box 0083, Detroit, MI 48231)

New York & New Jersey: c/o Revolution Books-NYC, 9 West 19th St., NY, NY 10011
212/691-3345; FAX 212/645-1952

Ohio: c/o Revolution Books, 2804 Mayfield Rd., Cleveland Heights, OH 44118
216/932-2543

Oregon: P.O. Box 3821, Portland, OR 97208


Pennsylvania: Revolutionary Worker, P.O. Box 44024, Philadelphia, PA 19144
215/552-8584

Texas: P.O. Box 230112, Houston, TX 77223 713/684-4701

Washington State: c/o Revolution Books, 1833 Nagle Pl., Seattle, WA 98122
206/325-7415

Revolution (ISSN 0193-3485) is published weekly, except for the 1st week of January, 4th week of February, 2nd week of April, last week of May, last week of June, 1st week of July, last week of August, 1st week of September, 3rd week of September, 1st week of November, 1st week of December, and last week of December by RCP Publications, 1103 N. Ashland, Chicago, IL 60622. Periodicals postage paid at Chicago, IL. Subscriptions and address changes, or correspondence regarding subscription problems, can be mailed to RCP Publications, Attention Central Circulation, P.O. Box 3486, Chicago, IL 60654, or phoned in to (773) 227-4188. *Revolution* reserves the right to print all or part of any the U.S., Canada and Mexico (\$52 for institutions). *Revolution* specifically request otherwise. correspondence sent to it, unless the authors of the correspondence specifically request otherwise.

Postmaster: Send all changes of address to *Revolution*, P.O. Box 3486, Chicago, IL 60654.
9/12/04



Subscribe to
**Revolution/
Revolución:**

3 months – \$12
One year – \$40
1 year, U.S. institution – \$52
Indicate English or Spanish edition

Write to:
**Box 3486,
Merchandise Mart,
Chicago, IL 60654.**

Send inquiries regarding bulk and international rates c/o RCP Publications, to the above address.

Revolution Online
revcom.us

REVOLUTION

WHY IT'S NECESSARY • WHY IT'S POSSIBLE • WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT

A FILM
OF A TALK BY

BOB AVAKIAN

AVAILABLE IN
DVD or VHS
4 Disks 5 Tapes

"In times like these, this clear voice for social change is a welcome relief from all the confusion and lies. Listen, and you will truly hear a voice of reason, with sharp analysis and deep understanding, going up against the tide of injustice and oppression. Of crucial importance is the fearless opposition to the rise of the Christian right and its pernicious effect on the political and cultural life in this country. While you might not agree with everything he says, he will challenge you with his insights and a clarion call to what must be done."

[Reverend Earl Kooperkamp, Pastor,
St. Marys Church, Harlem, NYC]

In 2003 Chairman Bob Avakian delivered an historic talk in the United States, now available in video. This talk is a wide-ranging revolutionary journey. It breaks down the very nature of the society we live in and how humanity has come to a time where a radically different society is possible. Full of heart and soul, humor and seriousness, it will challenge you and set your heart and mind to flight.

BOB AVAKIAN is a creative and wide-ranging thinker who maintains a profound sense of the actual struggles, trends and sentiments among the masses, the movements of opposition, and society broadly. And, he is the leader of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA, which is seriously setting its sight on the seizure of power right within the U.S. itself, and the revolutionary transformation of society as part of the world proletarian revolution. He will take you on a journey that can change your life.

Visit our website & order online:
threeQvideo.com

\$34.95 + \$4 shipping. Check/MO to Three Q Productions.
Specify format: DVD (ENG/SPAN); VHS (ENG); or VHS (SPAN).
THREE Q, 2038 W. Chicago Ave, #126D, Chicago, IL 60622.