



REVOLUTION

voice of the
revolutionary
communist
party, usa

*the newspaper formerly known
as the Revolutionary Worker*

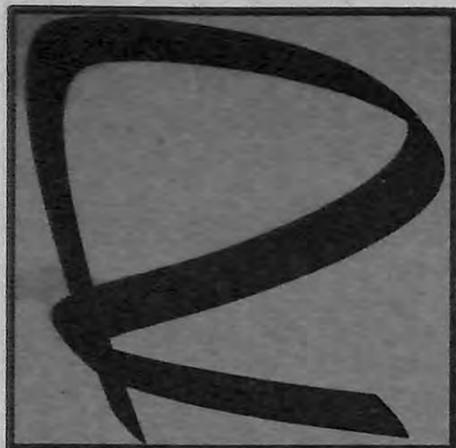
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May 1, 2005, International Workers Day



REVOLUTION

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Welcome to Issue No. 1 of *Revolution* Newspaper!

To our readers:

This special May 1, 2005 issue of our newspaper marks the end of 26 years of *Revolutionary Worker/Obrero Revolucionario*—and the beginning of *Revolution/Revolución*.

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, this May Day issue has a special masthead on the front page. The masthead is a very important element of any publication. The masthead that appears in *Revolution* No. 1 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 several weeks ago 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. 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

Create Public Opinion for Revolution on a Grand Scale

We encourage you to join in the special May First effort to distribute

100,000 copies of this issue of *Revolution* newspaper, and
5,000 copies of the DVD samplers of Bob Avakian's talk "Revolution:
Why It's Necessary, Why It's Possible, What It's All About"

- Contact RCP Publications or your local Revolution Books to order bundles of *Revolution* and stacks of the DVD samplers.
- Organize your friends and comrades to make and carry out plans to get *Revolution* out broadly—among the proletarian people and all strata of society.
- Develop networks for expanding waves of distribution throughout this summer and fall, so that *Revolution* becomes a reference point for millions.
- Contribute generously to make this effort possible and successful.

Our Ideology is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

Our Vanguard is the
Revolutionary Communist Party

Our Leader is Chairman Avakian

revcom.us

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

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

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

This special issue of *Revolution* will be on the streets for two weeks. Issue #2 of our weekly newspaper will be dated May 15, 2005, and will appear in print and on the web during the week of May 9, 2005.

EDITORIAL Invitation to Revolution

On this occasion of the May 1st holiday—we in the Revolutionary Communist Party are proud to introduce the first issue of **Revolution** newspaper! What you have in your hands is no ordinary newspaper.

This newspaper is the voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA and exists for no other reason than to play a role in the emancipation of humanity.

As comrades and students of RCP Chairman Bob Avakian we are *passionate* about the truth and we are *passionate* about revolution. Our press is objective—committed to the idea that only by confronting reality *as it is* can the masses of people know and change the world. And we are partisan—committed to the idea that the people can free humanity from all kinds of enslaving economic and social relations and enslaving ideas.

Formerly called the *Revolutionary Worker*, **Revolution** is coming out swinging—hitting the streets with 100,000 copies and daring to dream of a whole different world.

This first issue comes in a time of great polarization in U.S. society.

The promise of unending war on the world made by George W. Bush and company is being delivered with a vengeance. One hundred thousand lives and three hundred billion dollars later, there is no end in sight. At the same time powerful rightwing Christian fundamentalist forces are aggressively seeking to transform the U.S. into a high-tech theocratic state.

There are millions who oppose all of this. Still, there is a major battle to be waged over what kind of world we will live in. It is our analysis that if the people do not oppose the current direction of society with massive resistance, and things are left in the hands of those in power, we *could* be living in a world where old traditional shackles meet new technology, where rotten fundamentalist ideas serve and legitimate an insatiable bloodlust for profit. This horrible vision would be a society where modern-day U.S. imperialism would be run by religious fanatics. *Your worst nightmare meets your worst nightmare.*

But today, at the very moment we are haunted by a new “Dark Ages” mentality, the communist project is going through a Renaissance, as Bob Avakian has reimagined the process of socialist revolution.

We have a fighting chance for another future. This future *could* take human potential and human society to untold heights. An impossible dream? No. If we get way up on the mountaintop of history and look down on the march of humanity, the potential for such a world becomes clear. From this sweeping vantage point we can see that there is the basis for a world without classes, without oppressive social divisions. A *communist world*.

Revolution newspaper dares to imagine just that. While society today is deeply polarized—and some have even talked of a pre-Civil War atmosphere—there is a need to recast this polarization, to repolarize society so that *real* solutions are increasingly contending with reactionary forces and ideas, to repolarize society so that the interests of the people are a much stronger, battling force. From the standpoint of making communist revolution and transforming the world this repolarization is essential. Central to this is the role of **Revolution** newspaper, as truth in preparation for revolutionary struggle and the transformation of society.

But how does a mere newspaper play such a role? Is it really that central to the resistance of the people and beyond that bringing into being a new kind of society? Who should be checking out such a newspaper?

Up on the Mountain and Down on the Ground

We aim to surprise you.

In these pages, you will find a unique mix of the fascinating and must-read “life and death” questions confronting the people and the planet: science, economics, politics, philosophy, art, sexuality, women’s liberation, national oppression, atheism, religion, ecology, epistemology—and a new morality for a revolutionary people.

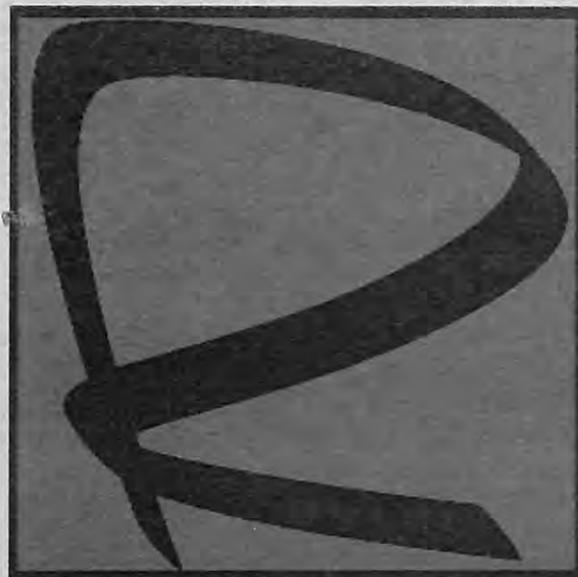
One of the few weekly bilingual newspapers in the U.S., **Revolution** aims to be a vehicle that gives voice to the voiceless.

From prisoners to people in the housing projects to the immigrants along the U.S./Mexico border, from the young women caught in the international sex trade to the peasants trapped in the sweatshops of Sri Lanka to the

dispossessed dying of AIDS in Africa: **Revolution** will vividly bring to the surface the life-and-death stories and conditions of those on the bottom of society—around the world—the hidden realities that reveal a scandalous system and the potential of the people.

Our motto is “no secret upsurges”: We aim to be a vehicle for news of every outbreak of protest and rebellion in every sphere of society.

We are internationalists. **Revolution** will feature the stories of people fighting for liberation throughout the world—often against our own rulers in the U.S.—combating the slanders and reporting the true goals of insurgencies. Stories in the tradition of widely-read series featured in the *Revolutionary Worker* such as Li Onesto’s



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“Dispatches” on the people’s war in Nepal and Michael Slate’s series on the “War Stories” about South Africa.

At the same time **Revolution** aims to engage with artists, scientists, progressive thinkers and writers, forward-looking intellectuals and innovators—young and old. Through the pages of this newspaper, readers will be able to learn about different fields of inquiry, like the stunning series on evolution in the *Revolutionary Worker* by Ardea Skybreak, and those making new breakthroughs—amazing us with their works and challenging traditional ideas. As communists, we see this process of engaging in discussion and learning from those who hold different views as vital to our whole project.

Revolution will be enriched by the writings and talks of the leader of the Revolutionary Communist Party, Chairman Bob Avakian. His works—which challenge and inspire, provoke and break new ground—will appear regularly in this press. And this press will also fight to reflect this far-seeing, scientific outlook, method and approach—cutting edge, poetic, and fun.

Exposing the Inner Workings of an Outmoded System

Revolution takes as its mission sharply *exposing* the inner workings of this so-called “best of all possible worlds.” Breaking the spell of misinformation, lies and deceit that cover over the true nature of the U.S. system, this newspaper will pull no punches.

What about the devastation of the Iraqi and Afghani people—where are those weapons of mass destruction?! What about the kids in the ghettos and barrios whose lives are snuffed out by trigger-happy cops?! What about government-sanctioned torture of prisoners from Guantánamo to Pelican Bay?! What about the all-

American vigilantes hunting immigrants on the border?!

Revolution will show how all these oppressive things are tied to a particular system that is based on exploiting the labor of billions of people all over the world... a system that is *fundamentally worthless*. Further, **Revolution** will show how all this is particularly outrageous, *since the world doesn’t have to be this way*.

Revolution will also reveal the true nature of different events in society, the different and conflicting class interests and class forces involved. Take the Terri Schiavo case—what did this tell us about the rise and power of the Christian rightwing fundamentalists? Where is this trend toward imposing religious standards on all of society heading? Or take the last presidential election—why is the Democratic Party fundamentally unable to answer the demands of its base, who largely opposed the Iraq war and the bible-based moral crusades of the right-wing?

Millions of people are raising huge questions regarding the nature and direction of society. As old assumptions are torn apart, **Revolution** will be in the mix, stretching a line to different corners of society, making the case that what is fundamentally needed is a revolutionary transformation of society—*yes*—a revolution and a whole new organization of society.

An Enriched Understanding of the Revolutionary Press

The mission of **Revolution** is not just to tell it like it is, as important as that is. The mission of **Revolution** is also to enable its readers to make a scientific assessment and analysis of all events in society and the world. Its mission and role is to enable its readers to see how all different strata and classes respond to the events of the day—the big earthshaking events and the things that people are talking about in whispers.

In this way, an ever-expanding network of conscious thinkers, dreamers, and fighters will gather around this newspaper, and we will be able to prepare—not only to take the streets against the outrages of today, but for a time when a real revolution is possible. This is a basic communist understanding of the role of a revolutionary newspaper, and through his works, method and approach, the Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party, Bob Avakian, has deepened and enriched this understanding of the role of a revolutionary newspaper and communists generally.

Revolution aims to be a tribune of the people—a living link between all that we are doing now, the work and struggle against the injustices of this system at any given point and our final goal of a communist world. In this sense, **Revolution** plays a role of not only keeping people’s “eyes on the prize” of a communist future, but also where we are at in the game.

Revolution aims to bring the masses of people into the whole revolutionary process—to be at the center of a big conversation about what is the core problem in the world and the essential solution to that problem. How is that solution achievable, and how can it be achieved? How are we going to get to a revolutionary situation? How will we know when such a time is right? What will revolutionary society look like? And how will people be fit to run society when the revolution comes?

Revolution has very ambitious plans—we plan to change the world! Corresponding to the radical future we aim to bring into being we see the role of a newspaper like this as critical. In times like these, the need for such a newspaper takes on an even greater role. And **Revolution** will assume even greater importance as the revolutionary situation develops, when people in their millions will be looking for guidance on how to live and how to die, and when the changing shape of public opinion will have very direct implications for the timing of a revolutionary uprising.

We invite you into this process. We invite readers into this critical discussion over the very future of humanity. We invite readers to dream with us, struggle with us and learn from us. We invite readers to get to know our Chairman, Bob Avakian, and why we hold him in such high regard. We wish to learn from you as well and look forward to your thoughts and criticisms, suggestions and ideas.

If You Want to Change the World... You Need to Know Bob Avakian

Bob Avakian is the leader of the Revolutionary Communist Party and a pathbreaking Marxist thinker. He follows the truth wherever it goes—and he's not afraid to put it out there, either. He calls out the powers-that-be with a fire, depth, and humor that is one-of-a-kind. He boldly defends the experience and ideas of communism...and he just as boldly criticizes its shortcomings and points to a whole new vision for the future. He analyzes how a real revolution could be made in a country like this, in a time like today.

In short, Bob Avakian is bringing something really new onto the scene, and you've got to find out what it's all about.

There's two places to start the process. The first is the DVD/Video *Revolution: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Possible, and What It's All About*. Bob Avakian breaks down those questions on this video, before a live audience. You'll see him go at these things in a way that's both very deep and very accessible. The second place is his memoir, *From Ike to Mao and Beyond: My Journey from Mainstream America to Revolutionary Communist*. You learn about the people, the experiences, and the times

that shaped Bob Avakian. You see how he came to be a revolutionary leader, and how he's managed to stay true to his revolutionary ideals through the challenges of over three decades. You come to know him as a person. And you learn a hell of a lot about communist politics and ideology in the process!

The next place to go is to your computer, to burn a few CDs off the Internet. Online, bobavakian.net contains speeches, complete with questions and answers, focusing on religion and democracy—and resistance, revolution, and liberation. You've never heard anyone call things out like this before. You can also listen to revolutionary journalist Michael Slate ask—and Chairman Avakian answer—the toughest questions about revolution and communism. Also, on the Revolution website, revcom.us, you can hear Carl Dix interview the Chairman shortly after 9/11 on war and revolution, and on being a revolutionary and changing the world.

To learn about how Bob Avakian has revived and re-shaped the whole idea of communist revolution, you need to download the talk "Dictatorship and Democracy and the Socialist Transition to Commun-

ism," available online at revcom.us. The Chairman gets into the great achievements of past revolutions, even as he critically sums up their weaknesses. Beyond that, he sets forth a vision of a society moving toward the elimination of all oppression and providing the vibrancy that would make it a place where people would really want to live.

Some similar themes—along with a whole range of philosophical and cultural issues—are taken up in the new book co-written by Bob Avakian and Bill Martin, *Marxism and the Call of the Future*—available from Open Court's website at www.opencourtbooks.com.

You've also got to read or hear Bob Avakian's analysis of the dynamics of the heavy events of today, the real forces shaping them...and the actual "fighting chance" that people may have to wrench a better future out of it all. In addition to the talks on bobavakian.net, check out the articles "The Truth About Right-Wing Conspiracy... And Why Clinton and the Democrats Are No Answer" and "The Pyramid of Power and the Struggle To Turn This Whole Thing Upside Down." And there's the important new series "The

Coming Civil War and Repolarization for Revolution in the Present Era," now appearing in *Revolution* newspaper, where the Chairman's work appears almost every week. All of these are available at revcom.us.

And that's just the beginning. He's written a host of important books and pamphlets on a wide range of subjects, including *Democracy: Can't We Do Better Than That?*, *Preaching from a Pulpit of Bones* (on religion and Christian fascism), *Could We Really Win?* (on military strategy), *Phony Communism Is Dead...Long Live Real Communism!* and many more.

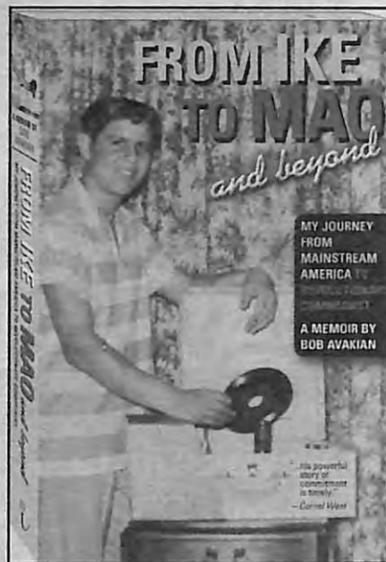
A leader like this only comes along once in a great while. When we get one, we need to cherish him and defend him against the powers-that-be, and we definitely need to get into what he's saying. That's how we see Bob Avakian. So check him out, and see what you think.

One last thing. Don't just read, or listen to, or watch this stuff alone. Get some people together who are also losing sleep over the future. Play the DVD. Talk about the memoir. Dig into it. Debate it. Share it with everyone you know who is thinking about where the planet is headed.

How to Get Works by Bob Avakian



Revolution: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Possible, What It's All About
Three Q Productions
\$34.95 + \$4 shipping
Check/MO to Three Q Productions
Specify format: DVD (Eng/Spa);
VHS (Eng); or VHS (Span)
Three Q,
2038 W. Chicago Ave, #126D,
Chicago, IL 60622
Or order online at
threeQvideo.com

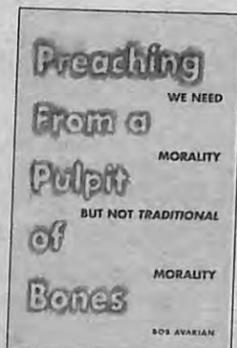


From Ike to Mao and Beyond: My Journey from Mainstream America to Revolutionary Communist
Insight Press
\$18.95
(Illinois residents must add 8.75% sales tax)
Available for ordering online at Amazon.com
Also available at Revolution Books stores and outlets

Marxism and the Call of the Future: Conversations on Ethics, History, and Politics by Bob Avakian and Bill Martin
Open Court Press
\$37.95
Available online at www.opencourtbooks.com
Also available online at Amazon.com and at Borders, Barnes & Noble, and other bookstores

Could We Really Win Phony Communism Is Dead...Long Live Real Communism
Preaching from a Pulpit of Bones
Democracy: Can't We Do Better Than That?
...and other books and pamphlets are available from RCP Publications (PO Box 3486, Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654) and at Revolution Books stores and outlets

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



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

Book Release Celebration

Richard Aoki, social activist · Bob Bloom, Attorney · Larry Everest, Author, *Revolution* correspondent · Gabe, DJ Riddm (Funky Riddms) · Yuri Kochiyama · Barbara Lubin, Middle East Children's Alliance* · Tanya Mayo, Not in Our Name* · Refa One, Oaklandish · Mary Prophet, Women for Peace* retired educator · C. Zadick Shapiro, Attorney · Nima Shokat, Analog Bookstore, Berkeley (*for identification purposes only) ...

Invite you to a special evening of readings, reflections, music, installations, and video—from "back in the day" til now—to celebrate the national release of Bob Avakian's new memoir, *From Ike to Mao and Beyond: My Journey from Mainstream America to Revolutionary Communist*. The evening will reflect the people, places, times, experiences, and culture chronicled in Bob's memoir; the unique mix that created 1960s Berkeley; the struggles he and many of us were part of; the music and culture that helped shape his—and our—lives; and the timelines of what Cornel West calls Bob's "powerful story of commitment."

Coming from diverse outlooks and perspectives, we are proud to serve as honorary hosts for this celebration—a multimedia evening of poetry, jazz, exhibits, anecdotes and insights from those who've known him and watched him grow. Berkeley and the San Francisco Bay Area play a vital role in this story of dedication, and today it's crucial that progressive and alternative voices be heard. So there's no better place—or time—for this celebration. We hope you can attend on May 6.

Friday May 6th 7:00 p.m.
King Middle School Auditorium
1781 Rose St. (at Grant),
Berkeley
Doors open at 6 p.m.
\$5-10 sliding scale
No one turned away for lack of funds
Sponsored by
Bob Avakian Promo Committee
510-467-3426
memoirperson@yahoo.com

Wanted:

A Massive Movement to Drive the Bush Regime from Power

We received the following from comrades who see an urgent need for a major leap in the people's resistance.

Other countries have driven hated regimes from power—why not here? Is there any country whose direction has a more disproportionate impact on the future of the whole planet?

Too Radical?

Today, just six months since the November election and the "revolution" called for by Bush's right-wing Christian supporters, we are witnessing the most radical assault on the separation of church and state that this country has ever experienced. In a word: this country sits on the verge of theocracy. Yesterday's "lunatic fringe" now sits securely in the halls of power. When powerful senators threaten federal judges on the Schiavo case and then to go on to single out a Supreme Court justice for citing international law in a recent decision barring the execution of minors, you get a whiff not just of flagrant hypocrisy but the stench of crimes against humanity and where this agenda is headed.

These are not ordinary Christians or Conservatives but Christian Fascists and they are stalking not just the red states for the control of people's minds. Under the now famous "moral values" exit polls of 2004 lurk traditional values that have uniquely American strains of puritanism, slavery, and genocide. These are theocrats who actually believe that God is speaking through the presidency of George Bush, and Bush has appointed them at every level of his administration. They intend to put their stamp on society and everyone in it—and they have already gone very far. Whether they succeed or fail to get their "nuclear option" today, they are a monster demanding to be fed who will not stop until their agenda of theocracy is fulfilled.

Whether they get their way depends hugely on if people face what is unfolding and snap out of a denial that such a thing could happen here. History is far too haunted with the memories of people from Germany to Rwanda who never thought that neighbors living side by side and intermarried for generations could possibly be on opposite sides or taken off in the night.

Writing in *The New York Times*, cultural critic Frank Rich aptly put it this way, "the majority of American colonists didn't believe in witches during the Salem trials either—any more than the Taliban reflected the views of a majority of Afghans. At a certain point, and we seem to be nearing that point, fear takes over, allowing a mob to bully the majority over the short term. (Of course if you think the end is near there is no long term.)"

This country now stands before the world and history with a president who condones torture. No wonder the subjects of the new empire in other countries feel they should have had a vote in this election. This is an utterly intolerable situation and one that growing numbers of people are ready to massively repudiate—including thousands if not millions of people who voted for George Bush and are waking up to the ugly reality of what they bought and what it's wrought.

This regime has to be driven from power and it could happen! It is important to recall the millions who were present in the streets with people across the planet to oppose the Iraq war and that just six months ago millions engaged in a groundswell of hopeful political activity to drive Bush from office through voting. But no vision, no coherent alternative to Bush was ever on the electoral playing field.

The world can't wait until 2008 to put a halt to this.

We don't want to tell future generations "we were waiting for the pendulum to swing." We want to tell them we were the people who said NOT IN OUR NAME! What is needed is to launch the kind of massive resistance that can drive this regime out.

November 2, 2005, the anniversary of Bush and Cheney's re-election. How will the first year of the Christian fundamentalist "revolution" look? Will the country continue to pitch more and more to the right, with opposition so ineffective that there will be no choice but to be swept along? Or will the whole world witness the opening rounds of an upsurge that can conjure up the specter of Spain and the Ukraine, the fall of the Berlin Wall, or Nixon? It can—if people conceive of themselves as politically at war in an all-out battle for the future.

Anything less is not commensurate with the challenge we face.

We in the RCP are approaching this as repolarizing society for revolution, and we are sincere about learning from and uniting with people from many different perspectives who also see the need to rid the world of the Bush regime. We can tell you from our personal experience, talking to people across the country as we passed out millions of the statement "The Battle of the Future Will be Fought from Here Forward," that people are waiting for the next wave of protest to be unleashed...but they want to know that it will really make a difference.

Very Radical!

Let's talk about how to make it happen—contact us at whynothere@yahoo.com

All the Reasons Why "We can't leave Iraq"

.... and Why All Those Reasons are Wrong

The cold injustice of the U.S. invasion of Iraq stands out starkly. The justifications for war were lies: Iraq had no nukes or bio-weapons. It had no ties with groups like al-Qaida. The British medical journal *The Lancet* estimates 100,000 Iraqi civilians have died in this war—while over 1,500 U.S. troops have also been killed. And there is no end in sight.

The people of Iraq overwhelmingly see the U.S. as brutal occupiers—and these sentiments fuel the armed resistance. On April 9, over 300,000 people in Baghdad demanded that U.S. forces leave their country—many from the city's massive Shi'ite slums.

And yet...within the U.S., it is far too common to hear people say, "The invasion was wrong, but we can't just leave before stability is restored."

This meshes closely with the main remaining claim of the Bush administration itself—that U.S. troops are bringing "freedom" to Iraq and so must stay until pro-U.S. forces are strong enough to take over. Former Secretary of State Colin Powell has said all along that a conquered Iraq would "crack like a goblin" and has argued for the Pottery Barn Rule: "If you break it, you own it."

What a convenient "rule" for aggressors who go around breaking things! Break enough, and you can "own" the whole friggin' world!

Leading Democrat Howard Dean recently argued for a very similar view: "Now that we're there," he told an ACLU audience, "we're there and we can't get out."

Dean argued that an early pullout could endanger U.S. interests: by allowing a pro-Iranian Shi'ite theocracy to come to power, by creating an independent Kurdistan that destabilizes Turkey and Iran, or by creating potential base areas for al-Qaida-like forces.

Dean's imperialist world-view nakedly upholds the right of the U.S. to conquer—even while he quibbles over the wisdom of the spe-

cific invasion plans of March 2003. He's obviously looking at Iraq from the global interests of the U.S. government and capitalists—and so "stability" means arrangements that serve these interests.

Bob Avakian remarked that living in the U.S. is a little like living in Tony Soprano's house. People have some idea that all this stuff in the house has something to do with what he does "out there"—but they don't generally confront the details of all that.

But we clearly *can't* just look away. We have to dig (rather fearlessly) into precisely those fundamental power and property relationships that define our world.

The key problem facing humanity is that all the wealth and technology is controlled by a very few and is used in *their* interests (not in the interests of the vast majority of people). That is why incredible oil wealth can be pumped out of the ground in Iraq and the surrounding regions, while the people live in bitter poverty.

U.S. troops won't "make the people of the U.S. safe," or "make the people of Iraq free." That's not what those armies are about. They are precisely about enforcing this control by the few—specifically those few who rule the U.S. and have ambitions of ruling the whole world.

This occupation of Iraq emerged from *decades* of scheming to more tightly dominate the strategic Persian Gulf and to dictate terms to those countries (like France and Japan) that *rely* on the Gulf's oil resources. That is why occupied Iraq so quickly became a launching pad for bullying neighboring Iran and Syria.

Why did this occupation lead to torture in Abu Ghraib and the massive burning of Fallujah? Because this U.S. invasion is not about "making the people free" but is opposed to the deepest interests of the people of this region.

And yet...people still sometimes say "Isn't a U.S. occupation better than civil war or victory by Islamic

Continued on page 15



Tens of thousands protest at the Republican National Convention, NYC, 2004.

The Bible Taken Literally Is A Horror

The Revolutionary Communist 4 (RC4) Speaking Tour



Los Angeles There is Something Beginning Here

We received the following from Carl Dix and Comrade X.

Revolution?
In these dangerous times, we need to kick off a big conversation about the dire situation we are confronting and what needs to be done. Is revolution really possible? What does it mean to emancipate all of humanity and what does that have to do with Black people's experience of slavery and oppression which continues down to today? Why is communism the answer and what does it mean for people to be communists and to get involved in a communist movement?

Interested? Well, the RC4 Tour is headed your way.

What kind of leadership do we need? How do you judge revolutionary leadership—is it based on nationality or is it based on a vision of where we need to go and how we look at people and the whole process of getting out of the nightmare and into our dreams?

Is communism a European ideology? Are Black people too much into religion to be attracted to communism? What about spirituality: is it true that communism is cold and devoid of soul?

What future does the Bush team have for the youth in the ghettos and barrios? Military uniforms and prayer books—killing people like us in other countries, dying for an empire that is treating us like trash and getting down on our knees to thank a non-existent god for it. And what's up with Bill Cosby's tirade about personal responsibility and why is he objectively playing the role of a flunkie for the ruling class (the powers-that-be) with all that drivel?

Can we really rise up and actually get our freedom?

These are all big questions. And the RC4 tour is hitting the road, coming your way to get into all this and more—with no holds barred.

If we are going to be liberators of humanity, we gotta have a revolutionary, scientific way of looking at the world and approaching all questions. We need the leadership of Bob Avakian, the Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party. We say straight up that Bob Avakian is a visionary and creative revolutionary communist thinker and leader who is serious about leading a revolution in this country. Listen to the love he has for the people:

"One of the things that I see, something that I haven't lost sight of, is this: I see all the strength of the ruling class,

but I also see all the way through all this shit, all the contradictions in society—I actually see a force in this society that, if it were developed into a revolutionary people, actually could have a go at it, could have a real chance of making revolution, of being the backbone force for revolution, when the conditions were ripe. I see a force of millions and millions and millions—youth and others—for whom this system is a horror."

The RC4 tour is aiming to connect that potential and creativity with revolutionary science—a powerful combo that could actually mean that we would have a fighting chance to really change things.

We are revolutionary communists and we do not believe in gods or saviors. We look reality in the face and we are passionate about changing the world. We are:

Carl Dix: RCP National Spokesperson. In 1970 Carl was one of six active duty GI's at Ft. Lewis who refused orders to Vietnam. A veteran revolutionary political activist, Carl was formerly with the Black Workers Congress and the African Liberation Day Support Committee. He represented the RCP, USA at the founding press conference for the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement in London in 1984. And he helped co-found the October 22nd Coalition to Stop Police Brutality in 1996.

Comrade X: In 1990, the *Revolutionary Worker* newspaper published a lengthy interview with Comrade X. As a young man Comrade X spent many years behind bars in "correctional" institutions and became a revolutionary while in prison — leading prison rebellions and other political activity. Influenced by the revolutionary leaders and movements of the 1960s, including Malcolm X, George Jackson and the Black Panther Party, Mao and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) in China, upon his release from prison Comrade X met Bob Avakian and recognized in him unique and special qualities as a leader and also his enormous sense of humor. Comrade X's writings for the revolutionary press range from an essay on Martin Luther King and the Vietnam War to commentary on Muhammad Ali and boxing to a major analysis of demographic changes in the 1980s, "Class Polarization Among Black People."

Akil Bomani: Akil Bomani is a member of the Chicago Revolutionary Writers and Artists Collective and a correspondent to *Revolution* newspaper. Growing up in the streets of Chicago in the 1990s with his Pentecostal mom, Akil searched for answers. He speaks powerfully to how he came to be a revolutionary communist in his article

"Losing My Religion." He is a writer, poet, rapper, and actor. Akil is currently studying for a masters degree in linguistics and writing a book on Black culture.

Joe Veale: Joe Veale is the spokesperson for the Los Angeles branch of the RCP. Joe arrived in L.A. during the '92 Rebellion determined to link up with the courageous fighters there and fuse their determination to confront injustice with the science of MLM and the cause of communist revolution. Joe is a veteran of the Black Panther Party.

On the tour we will also be dealing with some things that are really vexing the people: for example, what's up will all those crucifixes—gold or otherwise—that are so popular? Why is the "Preacherman" speaking for and representing Black people, including some preachers who are hanging out with the Christian Fascists and the Bush crowd, skinning and grinning and spreading that poison among Black people?

What about all that dissin' and disrespectin' the sisters and all that "manhood" shit? Why do young women with so much creativity and potential think that the only thing they can do in life is to make babies?

What about all that hip-hop capitalism and entrepreneurialism? How can the masses change the world if the very people who need revolution the most are caught up in all that "bling-bling" and "gettin' paid and gettin' rich" and "pimpin' and playin'" and "bangin' and slangin'?"

Our beautiful sisters and brothers need to start "fighting the powers that be"—"sang it" Public Enemy—and start being revolutionaries and communists and emancipators of humanity!

This tour is right on time. We are restless and we are ready to hit the road. So look out, here we come, dropping science as we travel from one end of the country to another.

We need **big funds** right away to make this important speaking tour a reality. We call on everyone—masses in the ghettos and barrios, youth and students, and revolutionary-minded people in the arts, sciences, sports, hip hop, the Black media, teachers, lawyers, doctors—to **donate generously** to make it possible for this speaking tour to happen. Get in touch. Help us spread the word. And invite us to your town.

Contact:
The Revolutionary Communist 4
Speaking Tour
P.O. Box 941, Knickerbocker Station
New York, NY 10003-0900
Email: rc_speaks@yahoo.com
Phone/Fax: 866-841-9139 x2670

Watch the Internet for our website.

You can also contact Carl Dix
c/o Revolution Books, 9 West 19th
Street, New York, NY 10011
or call 866-841-9139 x2670,
or email comradecarl@hotmail.com

The following is from a correspondent in Los Angeles:

Panning the city of Los Angeles from afar, your eyes are drawn to the many bright centers—not a massive downtown business district like New York or Chicago, but pockets of tall buildings sparkling on the skyline. Panning away from the bright lights reveals vast stretches of dilapidated neighborhoods—old houses and stucco apartment buildings dotted with churches, liquor stores, and run-down markets. Lining the edges of these neighborhoods are factory and warehouse districts—not the huge factories of the 1970s, but small mini-factories where people do work like packaging coffee, making furniture, sewing clothes, or assembling machine parts. In the most impoverished places of the city there is almost nothing you can see from a far-away glance—and when you focus in and move down into these neighborhoods you feel the oppressiveness of the surroundings.

A young Black security guard lives in one of these neighborhoods and works at a warehouse some distance away. He takes the train and the bus to work, always listening to the beats in his head that he's dreaming up to rap over. He works and supports a family and is a firm believer in Islam.

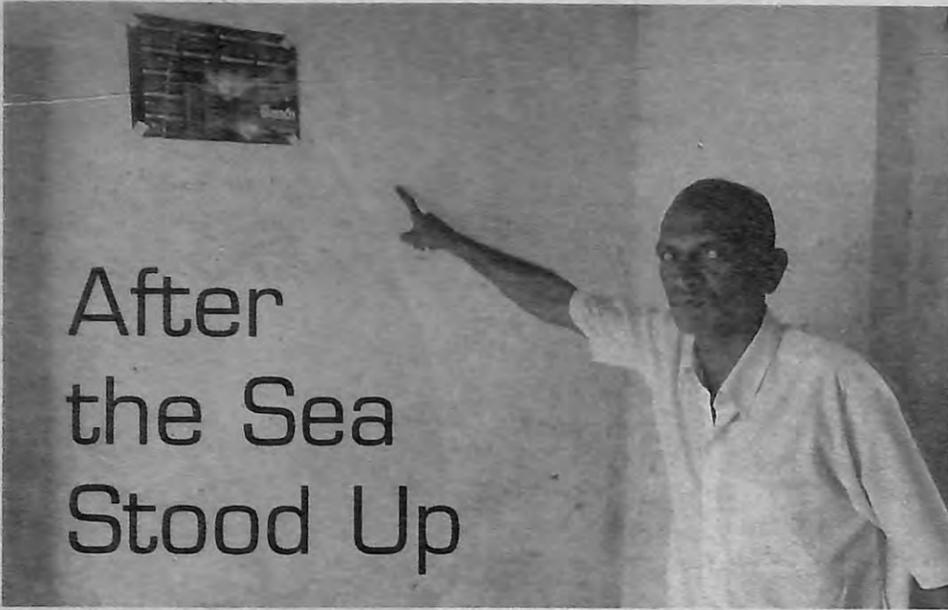
Today his backpack is full of leaflets—in English and in Spanish—of the statement from the Revolutionary Communist Party: "The Battle for the Future Will Be Fought From Here Forward."

On his way to work he stops at the gas station where he always picks up snacks. The cashier smiles and warmly welcomes him as he opens his backpack to take out the leaflets. Her first language is Spanish, but she says in English that he's come just in time because she's run out of Spanish leaflets. She points to the counter where there are some English ones left and an empty space where the Spanish had been. He stacks the refills for her and tells her he'll bring more Spanish next time. She explains that the trucker from Mexicali came to pick up more than usual for the truck stops on his route. He asks if she's watched the DVD of Bob Avakian, *Revolution: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Possible, What's It All About*, that he brought her last time. She says it's great and that she's passing it around to her family members.

I asked this young spreader-of-leaflets how he happened to connect with this immigrant woman at the gas station. He said that after some conversations, she told him he wasn't like most of the Black people she sees come through there. Her impression of Black people had been that they don't like to work and they don't like immigrants. When she said he was different, she meant because he works every day and because he treats her as an equal. He talked to her about the history of Black people in this country and how Black people and immigrants from Mexico have ended up in the same poor neighborhoods together, oppressed by the same system. He told her that Black people need to fight not just for themselves but for everybody and that Black and Latino people need to learn each other's histories. He was drawing inspiration from one of his favorite parts of the *Revolution* DVD.

In a neighborhood nearby, a Black high school student is studying another part of that DVD, which he got from his uncle in the projects. He's already seen it once. But when his teacher gave an assignment to write about a leader he looks up to, Avakian was the first one to come to mind. So he's going back over some parts of the DVD to write the paper.

The student's uncle is also fairly young and wants to help move people in a revolutionary direction. When he read the "Battle for the Future" leaflet, his imagination took flight. He answered with a resounding "YES!" to the question posed at the end: "Are YOU ready to *make a real difference*—to not only spread the word of resistance and revolution, but make that a *real* alternative in society?"



After the Sea Stood Up

A man pointing to how high the flood waters reached in his house, Galle.



Galle

Introducing a new series from the tsunami zone of Sri Lanka

by Michael Slate

I have been back inside the U.S. for less than a day. Over the last six weeks I traveled all over Sri Lanka and talked with all kinds of people about the tsunami and the oppression and suffering that is still unfolding — four months after the giant waves smashed the shoreline and the lives of hundreds of thousands of Sri Lankan people.

To celebrate the birth of Revolution newspaper, I wanted to contribute a few paragraphs to introduce a new series of articles and to complement the photos taken by my traveling companion, the photographer Mukai.

There is a beach just north of the town of Trincomalee on the northeast coast of Sri Lanka. It's one of the most beautiful beaches in the world with miles of soft white sand, the warm waters of the Indian Ocean, coconut trees and monkeys. During low tide you can walk hundreds of yards out into the ocean across a soft sand seabed and still be standing in water only five feet deep.

On a hot evening I stood talking with Ramasamy, a boatman who lived in a village a couple of hundred yards away from a beach-front resort hotel. Ramasamy is Tamil, an oppressed nationality in Sri Lanka. He talked about his life as a boatman—sometimes carrying cargo along the coast, or local people to other villages, and sometimes operating coast-line tours for tourists. Business was never good. Much of the northeast had been devastated by 20 years of war between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil fighters. The local people often had to seek shelter from the guns. During the daytime the government soldiers searched for the Tamil rebels and fired their guns from sea onto the beaches while the rebels found shelter in the villages. At night the fighters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam emerged to attack army positions. In between all this the people found ways to eke out a living.

Then, on December 26, 2004, the tsunami came. Ramasamy described what he saw.

"It was early morning. I walked on the beach wondering if there would be work. I looked at the sea. Something was strange, but I didn't know what it was. It was quiet. They say the sea disappeared, but I don't think I saw that. I will never forget what I did see when I looked out from the beach. It was something I never saw before, no one in our village ever saw it before. The sea was standing up. It stood up and ran to the beach. It was 10 or 15

meters high.

"I ran far before the water reached me. My wife and child were with her brother inland and were safe. I was eaten by the sea. I found myself on top of a coconut tree after the tsunami. My village was destroyed. We were a small village, but now there is nothing, not even tents for shelter. Our village is gone, and now the government says we can't rebuild because there is a law that says we can't live in a house so close to the beach. My boat was destroyed so I have no work."

Ramasamy pointed to a huge tree trunk—maybe 20 feet long with a diameter of about 4 feet—and explained that it appeared on the beach about a month after the tsunami.

"People came to look at it, and they said it came from Indonesia. Then came the body of a little girl. She also came from Indonesia. Then came coconuts, Indonesian coconuts; there were coconuts all along the beach. The government said we shouldn't eat them, that they were dangerous. We were hungry and now we have nothing, so many of us ate the coconuts."

As nightfall crept up, Ramasamy's two friends joined our conversation. They showed me photos of their families and pointed out a wife, an uncle and a child lost to the tsunami. One of them pointed to his village and then to the hotel. In an angry voice he demanded to know why the village was destroyed and why no one will talk about rebuilding it or even building temporary shelters for them, yet the hotel was repaired in a month. He thinks the tourist business wants the village erased. More than anything he wants answers. "What was it? I still don't know what tsunami is. Will it come again? No one knows... I want to know how I will live. How will my village live? The tsunami came and left and we still suffer. Why?"

These are the questions and contradictions I explored as I traveled the island and spoke to all kinds of people—from plantation workers on the tea estates to fisherman up and down the coastline, from German doctors working in tsunami-devastated villages to Sri Lankan environmental activists, from Maoist revolutionaries to Buddhist priests, from supporters and members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to academics and engineers. I am extremely excited to have the opportunity to unfold over the next weeks a new series based on this visit in the pages of *Revolution* newspaper.



A woman with her child.



Tree trunk from Indonesia that washed onto the coast of Sri Lanka



Galle



Galle



All photos by Mukai

Dewata

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.

Just briefly, let's talk about the dialectical relation between the international and the domestic dimensions of what is going on, and what has gone on over several decades. Let's look at some key conjunctures and nodal points. Where did all this stuff that the '60s was part of come from, what was the underlying basis of that? It was the resolution of World War 2, and what arose out of that on an international scale, and what became the principal contradiction in the world—between the oppressed nations of the Third World and imperialism—and other things we've analyzed in connection with that. The transformations in the southern U.S. were related to that—the changes in southern agriculture and related political, social, and cultural changes—and this, in turn, was related to what was going on in the world as a whole, both economically but also superstructurally (in terms of politics, ideology, and culture). There was the civil rights movement that arose in that context, and the Vietnam war also arose in that context. In other words, without being mechanical, there's plenty of international dimension that has played and ultimately is playing a determining role in all this.

And then go to the situation today. What sets the context for all this is the resolution of the contradiction with the Soviet Union—"the end of the Cold War," as it is put—by highly unexpected means: the collapse of the Soviet Union. And then there is superstructural stuff going on in relation to and in the context of that, in all different kinds of ways, including different sections of the ruling class in the U.S. trying to forge new strategies and new consensus. And it's true that, as a comrade pointed out, Clinton did try to bring forward a new consensus; but it was within the same fundamental framework as has historically existed within the U.S. What Clinton was doing was objectively bringing greater hardship for masses of people, but frankly it was not bringing a "clash of civilizations" right within *this* civilization, if you want to put it that way. It was not bringing two different "irreconcilable"—or, to put it in different and perhaps better terms, philosophically, two antagonistically opposed worlds and world-views directly up against each other. And that is what's being posed now.

Now, the fact is, if there is another event like September 11, the configuration and the

dynamics are going to change dramatically again. Some people, including some generally progressive people, left to their own devices, are perhaps going to join the Christopher Hitchens' in deciding to cast their lot with the *Christian* theocratic fascists of U.S. imperialism rather than the Islamic theocratic fascists. Now, that is a metaphor for saying that a lot of the forces who right now don't think they can live in the same world with these Christian Fascists will, in those circumstances (of further attacks on U.S. soil) be inclined to go under the umbrella of whatever the government in the U.S. is, even if it's a Christian Fascist one, to protect themselves. If we allow that dynamic to go on, things will become worse, even much worse, than they are now. And, on the other hand, not only progressive people but even people like Andrew Sullivan, who is gay, should be reminded of the Niemöller statement (in Nazi Germany: First they came for the communists, but he was not a communist so he did nothing...) and think about whose wing they believe they can crawl up under.

That was the point that came up sharply in a recent Bill Maher show—in particular the comments by D.L. Hughley, who insisted: I believe in Jesus, but I don't believe Jesus resides only in the "red states" (where Bush and the Republicans carried the vote). Andrew Sullivan, who was also on that show, was getting all puffed up, and so Bill Maher says to him: "Well, try going into one of those churches in Mississippi and see how you..." And Sullivan cut in: "I do belong to a church, and I'm quite welcome in it." And they both, Hughley and Maher, responded: "In Mississippi?!" That's where the gay question and the Black national question come together—in Mississippi (literally and metaphorically).

1. "First they came for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist.
"Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew.
"Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist.
"Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant.
"Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up."

—Pastor Martin Niemöller, imprisoned by the Nazis from 1937-1945. Initially a supporter of Hitler, Niemöller realized too late what the Nazis were all about. Niemöller criticized himself in this now famous quote and gave many speeches criticizing his fellow clergy, and other progressive people, for not opposing the Nazis when they had a chance.

There is going to be a battle over what is truth and how do you arrive at the truth. There is so-called "biblically-based" truth vs. actual truth. There is going to be fierce struggle over these epistemological questions as well as political struggle.



Bob Avakian at the Wall of the Communards, Paris, 1983.



Changes in the and the "Clash of Civiliza Within This Civi

by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Revolutionary C

There is a particularity that they're talking about with Mississippi too. Andrew Sullivan can find a church in New York or Washington, but he will have a hard time finding one in Mississippi. There's still a particularity to Mississippi. Malcolm X was right in making the point, "Stop talking about the South—as long as you're south of the Canadian border, you're south." But still there is another side to it. There is still a South. My point about the Bible belt and the lynching belt—how they are the same—is not that the South is the only place they have ever lynched people, but there *is* a point there.

In any case, this is the dynamic that's in play now, and it is important to understand that there is a difference between Hitler getting appointed Chancellor and the Nazis having totally consolidated power and crushing and eliminating the opposition. Without being mechanical, that analogy is indeed very relevant to what is going on in the U.S. now.

I agree with the point (made by another comrade), I do think Bush actually believes this fundamentalist shit, but he is also the president of the United States and he can't *simply* be a Christian Fascist. I believe he is a Christian Fascist, but at this point he can't *simply* be a Christian Fascist. That makes for (and reflects) another complexity. And there is a difference between what is the leading edge in the Republican Party and what is the character of the society overall, at this point at least.

We can't be reductionist: The leading edge in the Republican Party is this Christian Fascism, the Republican Party is the leading party, and right now the ruling party, in the U.S. and bourgeois politics in this country is increasingly dominated by one party, the Republicans...so therefore the country is already fascist. That is not a correct way of reasoning, not correct methodologically. You can't go mathematically—by mathematical reduction—to arrive at a conclusion like that. In fact, it is not even the case that a Christian Fascist consensus has won out within the ruling class at this point. That has not happened yet, and we should not confuse things. This is not being ruled as a Christian Fascist biblically based country—at this point.

But there are forces fighting for that who are not going to be satisfied until that *is* the way the country is being ruled. It's got to be a biblically based, militarized, patriarchal and male supremacist, and, yes, white supremacist society—that is in essence the Christian Fascist program. And, yes, this means that their religious fundamentalist epistemology must be in command.

There is going to be a battle over what is truth and how do you arrive at the truth. There is so-called "biblically based" truth vs. actual truth. There is going to be fierce struggle over these epistemological questions as well as political struggle. What is truth? These right-wingers write things like, "People claim Bush 'lied'"—and they put "lied" in quotes—about Iraq and WMD [BA laughs]. I mean, here you see clearly that this is a battle of epistemology.



World tensions"— lization

Communist Party, USA

Bush lied *without* the quotes, okay?—and everybody saw him do it. But, as another comrade was pointing out, this is not true in the worldview of these people who put forward, or take up, this fascist, and in particular Christian Fascist, epistemology. What Bush says is true: even if it's a lie, it is true—or it doesn't matter, because it's subsumed by a larger "Truth," with a capital T.

This superstructural stuff does matter a great deal. What was Pat Buchanan talking about in speaking of a great division in American society that will reassert itself?² This is a division that has developed out of all the upheaval of the '60s—and everything else that's happened

2. For example, in his book *The Death of the West*, published after the September 11 attacks, Pat Buchanan accurately predicted the following: The sense of national unity which existed right after September 11 would not last; he argued that there are deep social and cultural and other divides in this society, and they were going to reassert themselves.

All this makes for a very volatile situation, and one that requires us to grasp it—and to act on it, to transform it—in all its complexity and its potential for an extreme resolution, one way or the other.

This Christian Fascist element is not going to go away. That is the point I keep coming back to: They are not going to go away, and they are not going to give up. As other people have said, this is a monster that's demanding to be fed. It's stayed on its leash pretty much because it's been promised to be fed. But it has its own dynamics.

since. If you read the supplement on the Clinton impeachment ("The Truth About Right-Wing Conspiracy... and Why Clinton and the Democrats Are No Answer")³ it talks about two phenomena at work, in terms of the problems the ruling class has in promoting patriotism, especially blind patriotism—people not being patriotic enough, from the point of view of the ruling class. One is the '60s thing—everything that millions of people learned through that whole experience, which makes them not want to be very patriotic, or certainly not blindly and unquestioningly patriotic—and the other is precisely the '90s thing—all this "gold rush" (get rich quick) shit makes for a lot of individualism, and it doesn't make for much self-sacrifice for the "larger imperialist good." It isn't just the one phenomena that's being talked about there. We should understand the nuances, the gradations, the levels, the contradictory character, the particularity, all of that.

There is right now this whole battle shaping up over these two different worlds and world-views. And there are millions and millions of people, right now, non-religious and religious people, who are deeply troubled by what is happening—and there are a lot of people who are religious among the basic masses who are saying, "We are fucked by this Bush thing." That doesn't mean inroads can't be made among them by the Bushites and Christian Fascists—we have been talking about that, and we should definitely be aware of that. But many among the masses who are religious are saying, "we're fucked"—not because Bush is religious but because of what he is actually doing. The appeal to religious fundamentalism doesn't have the same impact, it doesn't have the same political effect, right now at least, on many of these masses, because they have different material interests, and—without being mechanical materialist—there is a point to material interests. But it would be very wrong to think that this religious fundamentalism doesn't have an effect on these basic masses.

In fact, there is a tug between some of this superstructural stuff, and in particular religion, on the one hand, and material factors, on the other hand. Part of the problem with Thomas Frank's reasoning in his book *What's the Matter with Kansas?*—his argument that people who are getting screwed economically by the policies of the Republicans shouldn't be supporting the Republicans, although they are supporting them now—part of the problem is that actually many of the people Frank is talking about are present or former labor aristocrats, bourgeoisified workers, and lower level and working petty bourgeois. They don't have a whole history of being fucked over in this country, by the system, in the same way as people at the base of society, people in the inner cities and so on—people who have a whole history of this, so when they get fucked again, they respond on the basis of that whole history. Whereas these other people that Thomas Frank is talking about respond differently, because their history and their place in society has been and is still different—and part of the picture is that their self-identity, to use that term, has involved trying to *set themselves apart* from the people who are held down at the base of society.

This is not to argue that Frank is wasting his time agonizing over what is happening with these strata of people, or that it is not important

3. "The Truth About Right Wing Conspiracy... And Why Clinton and the Democrats Are No Answer" by Bob Avakian was first published in the *Revolutionary Worker*, November 1998, in the midst of the attempts to impeach Clinton. It was republished in October 2004, on the eve of the election of 2004. It is available in issue 1255 of the *Revolutionary Worker* and online at revcom.us.

to try to win them over to a progressive, and indeed to a revolutionary, position. But, precisely in order to do that to the maximum extent possible, it is necessary to understand, in a thoroughly materialist way, what their social position is, and what it has been, how that is changing and what are the, very contradictory, responses this calls forth among them, rather than just looking at them through some generally populist lens that fails to take note of important economic, social, cultural and ideological distinctions among different sections of the people. For example, within a broad category like "working people," there are impoverished proletarians, who are bitterly exploited by the capitalists who employ them, or are denied employment altogether, at least much of the time; and there are, on the other hand, self-employed working people and even small business people who may do some work themselves but also employ, and exploit, a few others. While the people in all these categories are in a vastly different position from the truly rich and powerful ruling class of capitalists, at the same time there are significant differences among these different strata among the people, and these differences have a definite effect on their outlook and how they respond to being further pushed down.

There is a rich tapestry involved in all this—not all of it is good, I don't mean "rich" in that sense, but a very complex tapestry with a lot of different things tugging and pulling on different sections of people in contradictory directions.

Even with the Christian Fascist social base, as we pointed out in our statement right after the election ("The Will of the People Was *Not* Expressed in This Election"), they have kids getting killed in the war in Iraq, and more of them are going to get killed as this global war for empire is carried on. And they have kids who go out of this confined world (of Christian fundamentalism, etc.), into another world, for example when they go into the military. Yes, they go into another Christian Fascist universe within the military, but they can't erect complete barriers around the rest of the world they send these kids out into. It's more complex than that. And these strata are going to take economic hits. There is constantly a complex interplay between the base and superstructure—between underlying economic factors, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, political, ideological, and cultural factors. And we have to approach this with a dialectical materialist, not a vulgar materialist, method. There has been enough vulgar materialism in the world, and there is a need to thoroughly rupture with that.

This configuration within U.S. society could change. International events could change the character back toward what was happening at the time of the "New Situation/ Great Challenges" supplement,⁴ soon after September 11, 2001. But this Christian Fascist element is not going to go away. That is the point I keep coming back to: They are not going to go away, and they are not going to give up. As other people have said, this is a monster that's demanding to be fed. It's stayed on its leash pretty much because it's been promised to be fed. But it has its own dynamics.

So all this makes for a very volatile situation, and one that requires us to grasp it—and to act on it, to transform it—in all its complexity and its potential for an extreme resolution, one way or the other.

4. "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

Remembering The Gates

by Dread Scott

You are walking down a promenade of saffron, miles long. Dreamlike. You've been here, but it is different now. Walking through a changed space. Golden billows of fabric surround you. In front, behind, and hovering just above your head. Gleaming sunlight filters through the fabric. There are no leaves on the trees and the fabric dances against the branches. You are not alone. Thousands and thousands of people, many smiling, some talking, some playing, are meandering with you. In the distance you notice the contours of a walkway, defined by the river of saffron, but invisible days before.

The scene changes. It is night. It is mysterious and unfamiliar, but safe and welcoming. There are still miles of fabric in front of you, only the texture is different. Instead of sunlight, blue and pink halogen streetlights reflect off the cloth, giving it another feeling. In the distance you see a red stoplight next to a billowing orange curtain. There is a fog in the air. Now there is snow and the orange yellow changes again, set against the sea of white. Your senses are aware. You notice things you haven't seen before.

For 16 days, beginning February 12, 2005, New York was home to *The Gates, Central Park, New York City, 1979-2005*, a magnificent artwork by Christo and Jeanne-Claude. It consisted of 7,503 16' tall gates situated along the 23 miles of Central Park's walkways, each gate spanning the width of the path and positioned about 12' from the next gate. Hanging from the top of each gate was a 9' pleated saffron-colored fabric that spanned the

width of the gate. The fabric was only attached at the top so it was free to blow in the wind. The entire park was transformed into a giant artwork, which was to be seen and experienced by walking through it. It was one of the most significant artworks in the city for years.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude produce site-specific public installations all over the world whose meaning is wide-ranging. Often their work encourages viewers to think about monuments, icons, public space, and tradition in unexpected ways. They work on a scale which artists rarely think of, and few, if any, ever realize. Using fabric, they have wrapped the Reichstag in Germany, surrounded islands in Biscayne Bay near Miami, and run a curtain 24fi miles from the Pacific Ocean along the rolling hills of Sonoma and Marin counties. These transformations and others they have made by wrapping bridges, monuments and trees, creating walls with oil drums, and placing gigantic umbrellas in the landscape, create a magical new beauty and enable viewers to perceive the space in new ways and with new understanding. They have created works of joy that have been seen for free by literally millions of people and have changed the way many see art itself.

Most of their work utilizes fabric, and the work is generally abstract on some level. Like their other work, *The Gates* doesn't have one meaning or a literal interpretation. Work that is abstracted like this allows viewers to bring a range of experience to the work. Attempting to fix one and only one reading of the work both misses the point and does the work an injustice.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude often talk about their work in purely technical and formal terms (1,067,330 miles of fabric, 5,290 tons of steel for the bases, 315,491 linear feet of vinyl for the poles of the gates, etc.) While talk in these terms gives a sense of the enormous scale of the work—a scale which few viewers get to see—it seems to miss one of the essential points of the work—its beauty.

The Gates was a work of awesome beauty. And it was available for all residents and visitors to NY to see.

Though there is not only one particular reading or meaning to the work, *The Gates* does touch on and explore *memory*. People who were fortunate enough to see this art will probably never view Central Park in the same way again. There will always be the memory of the amazing gates. Viewers perception of the Park was forever changed—there will always be an absence—something always missing. But we were changed for the better for both the experience and the absence that is now in the park. It is like the memory of a loved grandparent who has died, the reminiscences of a friend from youth, your wedding day, the first time you made love. All are in the past; by a day, a week, perhaps years—but the memory remains. You are changed by the experience and *The Gates* was a fleeting thing that you couldn't hold in your hand or fix in time, but which continues to live in your mind. And knowing that it would be gone even as you walked through it, you had the sense of experiencing something you knew would not last.

The temporary nature of the work is essential to it and to all the large-scale public work of Christo and Jeanne-Claude. *The Gates* was like the life a butterfly. It lasted a mere 16 days. The fleeting duration encouraged people to rush to it and to really look at and appreciate the art itself, but also the importance and beauty of other temporary things. When a child is born, friends and family rush to see the new boy or girl. At age 3 or 7 or 15, or even 4 months, the child will be special and loved, but they will never be 3 days old again—and the special moment surrounding their birth will be gone. *The Gates* encouraged viewers to appreciate things that are really unique and special and recognize that change is constant so we must be attuned to what is rare when we have the chance.

The Gates was larger than a major airport and it cost as much as a low-budget Hollywood film to make. Some have commented that this is an extreme expense (which the artists paid for entirely themselves from the sale of other art) when people don't have homes and food and have argued that only intellectuals would understand it.

But I think it is important to appreciate art, science, and other intellectual works that are not tied in such a direct way to the ongoing struggles of the people.

This art doesn't house or clothe people and it doesn't directly address such social questions. And that is fine. We need work that exposes the horrors of the day and work that imagines a whole different future. But the world and art would be lifeless and boring without a broad range of work that allows us to see, hear, and imagine the world dif-

Dread Scott is a multidisciplinary artist whose work addresses questions that are part of the public discourse. He first received national attention in 1989, when his art became the center of controversy over its use of the American flag. President Bush (the first) declared his artwork *What is the Proper Way to Display a U.S. Flag?* "disgraceful" and the entire U.S. Senate denounced this work as they passed legislation to "protect the flag." His work is exhibited in galleries and museums in the U.S. and internationally.

ferently.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude have confidence in ordinary people's ability to grasp and enjoy contemporary art—at least the kind of work that they make. And their confidence is well founded. A million people saw *The Gates* and clearly the overwhelming majority who saw it enjoyed the work and grasped the essence of it. People with more familiarity with contemporary art may see different aspects of it, but this is true with many great works; they operate and function on different levels and address questions in complex ways that leave room for a range of audiences to experience and discuss.

The public nature of the work, that it was in the heart of New York for all to see for free, poses real questions of who art is for and who the public parks and space are for.

Central Park was conceived of as a *commons*—a public space



Photo: Dread Scott



Photo: Dread Scott

accessible to all. This use has been contested over the years—it was the park that hosted Be-Ins, happenings, and concerts in the '70s and which the powers that be tried to prevent people from gathering in to oppose the Republican National Convention in 2004. In an increasingly privatized and restricted world, *The Gates* called on all manner of people to collectively experience this public space and art. This work was a real gift to the people.

Recently, Bruce Springsteen inducted U2 into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. In that speech, he said: "A great rock band searches for the same kind of combustible force that fueled the expansion of the universe after the big bang. You want the earth to shake and spit fire. You want the sky to split apart and for God to pour out. It's embarrassing to want so much and to expect so much from music, except sometimes it happens: the Sun Sessions, Highway 61, Sgt. Peppers, the Band, Robert

Johnson, Exile On Main Street, Born To Run...the Sex Pistols, Aretha Franklin, the Clash, James Brown; the proud and Public Enemy's It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back. This is music meant to take on not only the powers that be, but on a good day, the universe and God himself if he was listening."

While Springsteen was referring to music, in its own way all great art strives to tap into this spirit. While there is no god, the audaciousness of such artists inspires us, challenges long-held beliefs, threatens status quos large and small, shakes us to our cores and bring us great joy in unexpected ways.

Art has been essential to humanity ever since we had the time to tell stories, write poems, or paint on cave walls. Art is an essential part of what makes us human. And visual art like *The Gates* opens up ways of thinking that other forms of communication do not. It is often non-literal and non-linear, requiring an audi-

ence to utilize their own perception and thinking to draw conclusions and meaning from the images that artists have created for us.

In the future, under socialism, and in qualitatively greater ways once people have achieved a communist world of freely associating human beings, imagination will be taken to new heights. Our need to be amazed, our awe and wonder at our world and the universe will inspire and guide new discovery, experimentation, and transformation of that world. And art like *The Gates* is a harbinger of what is possible when artists dare to dream the impossible and then make their dreams real.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude are artists with real heart. They push the envelope, *even their own envelope*, of what art can be.

The Gates expanded new ground for art. The work is gone, but a beautiful memory lingers.

Late Night Under *The Gates*

by Alice Woodward

The gates were sensual and surreal. Even at night the city is a flood of noise, but the gates had a silence and a soft motion. They seem in tune to the winds, and the city air. Their color was like so many sunrises I've missed and familiar objects in far away places. A sari in India, or Italian drapes. Evoking tastes of fresh oranges, cheese, and pumpkins. Structures like construction signs, monkey bars, and totem poles. They had symmetry, repetition, and surprise. They contained a life and story of their own. A size that was difficult to conceive even once you'd experienced it, and a human connection between those who imagined them, produced them and erected them, and walked, ran, dreamed, and drifted through them. They were secret trails on a treasure map, or a quiet moment with a book, sitting by an open window in the afternoon.

More concretely, the gates were a significant contribution to art and culture. In a society narrowly focused on profit and competition, there is scarcely room for the masses of people to explore art and get into ideas. The gates made this widely accessible for a short period of time. What's more, it brought to the forefront exciting questions and debate about what is good or bad art and what is the role of art, and how do we experience it. Questions that, in a communist society, will not just make occasional cameos or be left to the intellectual elite,

but will be ongoing widespread debate that is humorous and serious, productive and imaginative; it will engage people on a high level and play a real role in society like never before.

Following the story of *The Gates* and its ongoing response from critics, artists, and the masses, was a taste of this potential.

I felt a deep connection walking beneath the drifting panels, reading articles everyday, and tossing ideas around with friends. I thought of my parents and their story of road tripping to see Christo's *Fence*, and all of the creativity and rebellion of their generation. I thought of fellow filmmakers trying to carry forward artistic theory and expression. Breaking boundaries with a new and evolving technology.

I thought of shadows in the afternoon and the longing you feel, gazing, trying to look through a fabric that is so close to transparent, but you continue to see color and silhouettes. Brilliant and solid.

I won't forget the late-night walk I took beneath *The Gates* in the cold winter New York City air. Feeling acutely the familiarity and foreignness of such a city. Enjoying the quiet company of a comrade and the laughter of our friends in the distance, weaving in and out, through the warm glow of the drifting gates.



Photo: Dread Scott

Scenes from Nepal

The Daring of Revolution, The Shoots of the Future

by Li Onesto

In 1999 I traveled through the heart of the Maoist People's War in Nepal, deep into the guerrilla zones in the districts of Rolpa and Rukum. The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) had been waging armed struggle for three years and the police, corrupt officials, and greedy moneylenders had been run out of this area. The people were beginning to establish a new people's power.

There were mass organizations of women, peasants, and students, and new people's courts were administering justice. For the first time women had the right to own land and get a divorce, land was being redistributed, and peasants mercilessly cheated by usurers had torn up debt papers. 3-in-1 committees of guerrilla fighters, party cadre, and members of mass organizations ran the villages, creating new systems of taxation, laws and basic commerce, building schools and starting to organize collective farming. Cultural squads were creating a new revolutionary culture.

These were very fragile shoots and I wondered if they would survive. The Maoists were trying to establish base areas. But the police were arresting, killing, torturing, and raping anyone suspected of being a Maoist or a Maoist sympathizer, and the guerrillas were poorly armed. There were already hundreds of revolutionary martyrs and everyone knew that sooner or later the Royal Nepal Army would be sent against the people.

How could such a poor peasant army have such fantastic dreams and hopes of seizing power? How could they dare to challenge a government that was getting weapons from India—and would almost certainly, eventually, get money and arms from powerful countries like the United States? Could these poor, illiterate peasants really get rid of their oppressors, defy tradition's chains and remake their world?

II

April 2005. A friend sends me a video, not yet available in the U.S., "Eight Glorious Years of People's War"—hours of amazing footage from the liberated base areas, shot and edited by the Central Cultural Department of the CPN (Maoist).

It has been six years since my trip to Nepal, and the Maoists now control some 80 percent of the countryside. The People's Liberation Army is able to wage battles against the Royal Army, involving thousands of guerrilla fighters. And there are now two governments in Nepal. The reactionary ruling class has the capital of Kathmandu and runs the cities and district headquarters. But the Maoists control most of the vast countryside, where 85 percent of Nepal's 26 million people live.

The U.S., U.K., and India have all declared that the Maoists must not be allowed to win. And a "war on terrorism in Nepal" is being used to justify U.S. money, weapons, and training for a brutal counterinsurgency. The Royal Nepalese Army has killed many thousands of people and arrested, tortured, and raped even more. But they have been unable to defeat the guerrillas.

The video takes me back to Rolpa and Rukum, to the same areas I visited in 1999, and it is deeply moving and exhilarating to see how things have changed. Over the years I have thought a lot about the political and military leaders I met, the guerrillas I traveled with, the families of martyrs I interviewed—wondering if they have survived. Now tears well up in my eyes when I actually see in the video some of these very same people fighting, working, and laughing in the base areas.

The video's soundtrack transports me back to Nepal on another level, evoking memories of the cultural programs I attended, feeling again the passion and spirit of the new revolutionary culture that has been such a crucial part of this struggle. The lyrics flash across the screen.

This is the time to give birth to the tempest

This is the time to burst out like a volcano

To the soldiers of the war

To those red stars

Don't be Stopped! Not by anyone!

The video takes me to a massive rally where the Magar people, an oppressed nationality, are celebrating the declaration of the new Magrat Autonomous Government.

A close shot of people streaming into the area. Then the camera zooms back, then back even more and the camera's eye traverses the rocky terrain, giving a binocular-like survey of a human procession that snakes across the steep mountainside for miles. Back in the village there is visible joy amidst huge red flags. A man playing a drum tied to his forehead. A dance troupe of girls in traditional costume.

This is a vivid and many-faceted picture of the People's War. Massive rallies of tens of thousands of peasants. Speeches by party leaders and military commanders. PLA training camps. Cultural performances. Revolutionary festivals, volleyball, and foot races organized in the base areas. And actual footage from the battlefield—the sights and sounds of rapid gunfire, back and forth. A voice in the darkness, "Take cover, don't be afraid. Don't be afraid." Bodies of dead RNA soldiers. Wounded and dead PLA fighters. Caches of captured weapons and ammunition.

Segue to revolutionary construction in the base areas—schools, bridges, even an FM radio station. Text on the screen informs me that the first day of the month has been designated as a collective day of labor, and I see PLA soldiers, party cadre, members of revolutionary cultural troupes, and villagers working together to haul stones from the river to build a new wall.

Those who fatten on others' labor have fled the villages

Those who rule with arrogance have run away

The people's governments are organized in villages

The redness of victory is arising among the people

A custom of working together is established

Nepotism and injustice are eliminated in villages

Caste and untouchability are eradicated

Let us create

a new culture and a new society

There is footage from a revolutionary "love marriage" ceremony. And I think about the young women guerrillas who told me how women in Nepal are suffocated by feudal tradition. Not allowed to go to school, subjected to arranged marriages and polygamy, lives crushed by the thriving sex traffic. Today in the base areas, a new culture aimed against the patriarchy and caste system is giving women and men new freedom.

In a liberated village people have gathered to greet scientists, professors, engineers, and artists who have come from the city. Suddenly I see a familiar face—a famous revolutionary writer, his face beaming, his right fist held in a *lal salaam*, red salute. I had interviewed him when I was in Kathmandu. Now he has gone to the countryside, to the Rolpa base area, to serve the people.

III

In the villages I visited in 1999, there were mainly women, young children, and old men. Most of the men were working in the cities or had been forced underground.

I think about how the 12-year-old girls and boys I met in the villages are now young men and women, old enough to join the People's Liberation Army. What has it been like for them to grow up in a liberated village, in a base area where there is a new people's power?

A new generation in Nepal is being shaped by the People's War and, in the base areas, the youth are growing up as part of

the struggle to create a whole new way of living—seeds of a whole new economic, political, and cultural life are being planted. And the guns of the People's Liberation Army are protecting these shoots of the future, allowing them to grow and strengthen.

Power is won through war
Enhance people's power
This old state is tiring
Let's seize the central power

To those who are advancing, moving heaven and earth

To those who have given their lives to change the face of society

Welcome these red people of this new era

Li Onesto is the author of *Dispatches from the People's War in Nepal* (Pluto Press and Insight Press), available at: www.amazon.com, www.insightpress.com, www.press.umich.edu and Revolution bookstores.

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Tune into www.accessstucson.org to see Li Onesto on the TV show, *Natural Progression*, with Elaine Higginbotham-Schramm, on April 29, 10:30 pm and May 1, 6 pm Pacific Time, Channel 73.



Base area in Nepal



Lal Salaam! (A red salute), Rolpa, Nepal

Special to Revolution

Photo: Li Onesto -- Revolution

An Open Letter to Professors, Historians, Scholars and the '60s Generation

The People of the World Need the Truth— What was Communism's Past? What is Communism's Future?

CC: The Younger Generation

From: Penny Brown

"After the shipwreck of communism came years of relative quiet, years of repose, years of sabbatical. And then there came a day of fire."

George W. Bush,
2nd Inaugural Address,
January 2005

Are we really going to let this guy—this liar, this fundamentalist lunatic—sum up the whole historical experience of communist revolution as a "shipwreck"?

Amidst a barrage of lies, let this be a message from a generation who's grown up in a world without a real socialist society, to another who saw the possibility and felt the urging of revolutionary change.

I grew up in the '80s—on the whole, hardly a time of great social or cultural upheaval.

As a young woman growing up in America, I was surrounded by idealized, unrealistic images of women's bodies. I was told again and again, directly or indirectly, that I was ugly and stupid and made to feel worthless. This kind of stuff is deeply internalized and woven into the very fabric of our existence on an everyday basis. Not to mention the daily threat of physical or sexual abuse or rape that faces every woman in this society, or other horrific realities of our lives.

When I was a bit older, I began to really look at the world around me, and immediately it was easy to see all the pain and suffering that characterizes the everyday lives of the vast majority of humankind.

But the idea that something completely different is possible was something I would only let myself fantasize about on rare occasions. The whole tone of society was that we were living in the "end of history." Communism? "They tried that, it didn't work and it was filled with horrors and unspeakable crimes—people turned into automatons, were hounded and killed off." As bad as society might be today, it is still the best of all possible worlds.

And I have distinct images in my brain, all gray, of old people, their noses red from the cold (and maybe some vodka) standing in long lines waiting for a loaf of bread, their towering fur hats their only protection from the surrounding snowstorm in the Soviet Union. These were my mental images of revolutionary societies. I just

naturally accepted the verdicts that communism was a disaster.

And then a few years ago, a professor gave me a copy of Bob Avakian's book *Preaching from a Pulpit of Bones: We Need Morality, but Not Traditional Morality*. And my whole conception of the world and what's possible changed.

In this book, Avakian was bringing forth a radical communist morality. He was looking at the accusation that communists believe "the ends justify the means, (any means)" and saying that no, real communists believe that the means must flow from and serve the goal of the emancipation of humanity.

He is someone who has summed up the

history of the international communist movement and has brought forward a very rich and profound analysis of the socialist experience, in the Soviet Union (1917-1956) and especially in China (1949-1976)—the overwhelmingly positive but also the negative—in light of where humanity can and needs to go. He has rescued the communist project and given it new vitality and relevance to the 21st century.

I was challenged to get deeper into the actual experience of the people in these revolutionary societies. I got involved in the project to "Set the Record Straight."

Recently I came across an account by a woman observing the difference between how children are socialized in the United

States and her own childhood during the Cultural Revolution in China:

"While studying in America, I was surprised to find that youth as a gender-neutral idea was not as popular a concept here as it was in China. Instead, social perceptions of gender differences exist between girls and boys in early childhood. Even newborn babies are subjected to gender differentiation: pink and blue ribbons traditionally mark female and male infants. As a teenager in China in the 1970's, however, I was able to positively identify myself as a non-gendered youth with strengths, strengths that were won through constant struggles with the contradictions of being a youth and a woman." (Lihua Wang, *Some of Us: Chinese Women Growing Up in the Mao Era*)

The fact that millions of women grew up on this planet, as recently as 30 years ago, in Maoist China, in a society consciously struggling against the "mark of gender," is not something to be lightly passed over. It is something to dig into and explore. Women who, prior to the 1949 revolution, would have been relegated to the role of wife or concubine, with no rights whatsoever, and subjected to other feudal practices, such as the horror of foot-binding, were growing up identifying themselves as "non-gendered youth with strengths."

Women were being empowered: taking up theory, participating in the running of society, and engaging in ongoing revolutionary struggle and transformation.

And the nearly unbelievable achievements towards the liberation of women were just a part of the broader changes going on economically, socially, and politically, as well as in people's values.

And there is a whole generation of people today who just have no idea about all this. And, as Avakian is pointing to, it's not just the accomplishments of previous socialist experiments that we need to explore, but also the real shortcomings and problems, looking back from the perspective of a deepened understanding of communist revolution.

So this is a message to professors and intellectuals, meant to span a generation. We cannot allow the same people who have brought us endless war and police-state measures, who have created and perpetuated the misconceptions about what actually went on in these revolutionary societies, to control our interpretation of history. And we cannot allow the guardians of the status quo to define and control our future.

To those of you who drew inspiration "back in the day" from the radical society-wide transformations taking place on the other side of the globe, to those who felt part of liberation much bigger than themselves, to those who have since fallen under the influence of the message that "there is no alternative" to capitalism but who once knew better—I offer this challenge. Take a fresh look with a critical and open mind at humanity's first steps towards emancipation. Seek to sort out the lies and horror stories from the complex realities of bringing a new society into being. Help a new generation understand history and human possibility.



Revolutionary leaflets being distributed in Maoist China.

Setting the Record Straight

The project to "Set the Record Straight" is inspired by the writings of Bob Avakian.

The purpose is to take on the distortions, misrepresentations, and supporting scholarship that hold such sway in academia about the first wave of socialist revolutions, in the Soviet Union in 1917-1956 and China in 1949-1976.

Against the facile verdicts that socialism has been a nightmare, or at best a terribly failed experiment, we are bringing forth the real and historic accomplishments of these revolutions, especially the lessons of the Cultural Revolution, without papering over mistakes and shortcomings.

The idea is to stir debate and discussion as to why these stand as vital, if initial, experiences at building liberating societies. At the same time, we are bringing forth what Avakian has been pointing to, in terms of where we have to do better and what it means to take the communist project to a whole other level of understanding and practice if it is to be viable and desirable in the 21st century. In short, communism is alive...but also developing.

We are undertaking a wide range of activities: fact sheets, arti-

cles, mass leafleting, forums, etc.; and we are networking with progressive scholars and want to learn from the diverse insights of others.

We are seeking to influence both students and professors and scholars.

We want to contribute to creating an intellectual current that challenges the slanders and superficial summations, that insists on truthful examination of what these revolutions were actually striving to accomplish, the difficulties they faced, and what they were able to achieve, and that sees the relevance of all this to the deeply felt desire of so many for a radically different world.

You can contact "Set the Record Straight" at:
SetTheRecordStraight@hotmail.com

See the articles online at revcom.us

"Social and Economic Achievements Under Mao," August 8, 2004.

"The Truth About the Cultural Revolution," August 29, 2004.

From The CoRIM

May 1, 2005: Communism in the 21st Century

April 18, 2005. A World to Win News Service.
Following is a statement by the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (CoRIM) on the occasion of May Day 2005.

The world seethes and moans with discontent and resistance on the part of the people. Through war in Iraq and the threat of wars in the Middle East and elsewhere, the imperialist powers, in particular the U.S., are desperately trying to hammer into place a new world order with itself as king of the heap. Their hands drip with blood.

Many people are in a reflective mood, angered that their struggles in the millions to stop the war failed. Valiant resistance is taking place on the ground in Iraq. Regrettably, painfully, the target is not always the imperialist forces of occupation and oppression and the reactionary regime.

May Day is a time to take stock of where we stand in our struggle to overthrow the ruling exploiting classes. What we need is a world where the interests of humanity and not the endless search for profit is at the center of society, where the masses are no longer faceless, regarded as beasts of burden, locked out of any possibility of utilizing their creative energy to consciously transform the world and themselves.

The global plan of U.S. imperialism is sinister—one world, one empire. They are unleashing naked military intervention on a scale that no other power can rival to enforce and organize globalized exploitation. A range of possibilities exists for the world's people, from devastating defeats to great advances, including revolutions in a number of countries. The outcome is up to us all.

Propelled into resistance, new generations have stepped onto the stage. They lack knowledge of our past achievements. Or they only hear the ruling class propaganda machine spewing out that Communism has failed.

The masses need the clear vision of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to guide them in their struggles.

They need a vanguard leadership wielding this ideology in each country and a new communist international to help different streams of revolution form a worldwide torrent against the capitalist system.

As with all science, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism cannot stand still. It must be a living, developing tool that can analyze new conditions and questions. Communist ideology advances amidst a turbulent process. New understandings must overcome the inertia of past ways of looking at things, and correct and incorrect viewpoints must be sorted out. The ideas that derive from different realms of humanity's experience will be further tested and developed in the course of changing the world. This whole process is marked by what communists refer to as the two-line struggle.

Rebels and visionaries of the past have sacrificed greatly to try to transform society. Marx and Engels developed a scientific understanding of the nature of the capitalist system. In the Communist Manifesto Marx called for rupturing with traditional property relations, the social relations based on those property relations and the traditional ideas and institutions that reinforce those social relations in the whole world. That is what communism is about. Lenin and Mao Tsetung further developed and applied this science.

Great victories were achieved during the Paris Commune, the October Revolution in Russia and Mao's socialist China with the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution at its pinnacle in the 1960s and '70s. These were crushed by the reactionary forces in general and the weight of thousands of years of class exploitation and the traditional ideas and institutions that serve and reinforce it. The Maoist forces around the world analyzed the 1976 coup in China and went forward to unite and form the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM), the embryonic center of the world's Maoist forces.

RIM has called for a wide discussion and debate inside and outside its ranks over the most vital issues

facing the communist revolutionaries today, such as summing up the experience of exercising proletarian dictatorship (USSR and China), understanding the dynamics of how the imperialist system works, analyzing the socio-economic developments that are taking place in different countries and understanding their implication for revolutionary strategy, as well as other important questions. Through this process RIM itself has and will continue to be tempered and strengthened. Today our comrades in Nepal have made great strides in their struggle. The poor and downtrodden of Nepal have established their own revolutionary political power in 80 percent of the country and are now using those red base areas to attack the fortresses of the enemy in order to seize political power countrywide.

Communism remains the only hope for humanity. But this lofty hope can only be realized through struggle, hard struggle, in every sphere. The international communist movement has brought forth legions of heroes who have braved imprisonment, torture and death in the face of the enemy. It must show the same courage in its merciless self-examination and its determination that its ideology remain vibrant, capable of comprehending ever more fully the rich complexity of human society and class struggle, and able to reach out, learn from and unite with millions of others while fighting tenaciously to uphold, apply and win others to the ideology of liberation.

We need to advance further in our goal of building a communist international of a new type, and unite with all of the genuine Maoist forces the world over in this process, as well as reaching out to revolutionary activists who are yet to be won to the liberating truth of communist ideology.

Today the RIM is determined to fuse our scientific tools of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism with the new rising tide of revolution.

Photo: Li Onesto -- Revolution



Rolpa, Nepal, 1999

Iraq

Continued from page 5

fundamentalists?"

American slave owners used to tell their slaves, "Where would you be without me? Who would give you those second hand clothes? Who would feed you, and give you a little sweet molasses on Sunday?"

Such arguments seem ridiculous now—because (looking back) it's obvious that slavery or starvation wasn't the only choice. There was a real chance (however complicated and difficult) for something different: *ENDING* their enslavement!

In today's Iraq, competing religious forces have emerged powerfully, and there is rising possibility of civil war. But much of this happened because the U.S. cracked Iraq "like a goblet" and then manipulated one nationality against another—Arab against Kurd, Shiite against Sunni.

There are challenges—overcoming deep divisions among the people, and the influence of reactionary forces. But do such obstacles really mean the best choice for

the people of the world at this moment is to be dominated (and exploited!) by the U.S. superpower?

Isn't it *truly perverse* to argue that domination by the *Christian* fundamentalists of the White House is the only realistic antidote to *Islamist* fundamentalism in the Middle East?

And who would it serve if we accepted such twisted logic?

Forging movements for genuine change and liberation is difficult (in the Middle East and everywhere else). But it is the only real hope in our times that is actually worth living and dying for! Wouldn't it strengthen the most oppressive forces (including in both Iraq and especially in the U.S.) if the people of the U.S. blindly endorse the brutality carried out in their name?

And won't it actually accelerate progress toward *real liberation* (here and around the world) if more and more people here in the U.S. boldly demand an end to this unjust U.S. conquest?

Something Beginning Here

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In another neighborhood not too far away, an older Black man runs a popular boxing gym. He's watched the complete 11-hour DVD set three times. Before hearing Bob Avakian speak, he thought the only thing possible for him to do was try to help Black youth stay out of prison. He was so moved by Avakian's talk that he's mobilized his trainees to distribute leaflets in the neighborhood, and he's showing the DVD samplers on the three TV's that are set up in the gym. He's volunteered to do public speaking to tell people everywhere about Bob Avakian.

Farther away, on the other side of L.A.'s downtown, where the land becomes more hilly but the neighborhoods are not so much different, an indigenous immigrant from Mexico has been doing his own public speaking to small crowds. Normally working in a restaurant 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, on New Year's Day he went to the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena to tell people about Bob Avakian. He distributed the

"Battle for the Future" statement, telling everyone he talked to, "We have a leader who fights for global change. You have never heard anything like him."

Panning up and out of these neighborhoods, the panorama of the city is beginning to look a little different. The same landmarks are still there, but there seems to be a pulsing that wasn't apparent at the first sweeping view. There's something growing here that can be sensed by hearing pieces of conversations caught in the wind. A youth in the gangster scene sees the DVD sampler and says, "Damn, watching that makes me think a muthafucker got to change the whole way he has been looking at things." In the projects down the street two men greet the neighbor who got them their DVD samplers by putting their fists to their hearts and shouting out, "B.A.!" Farther away two young people talk outside a concert, and one begins to cry as he hears of the future envisioned by Bob Avakian—"People need this kind of leader to unleash their creativity."

There is something beginning here.

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.

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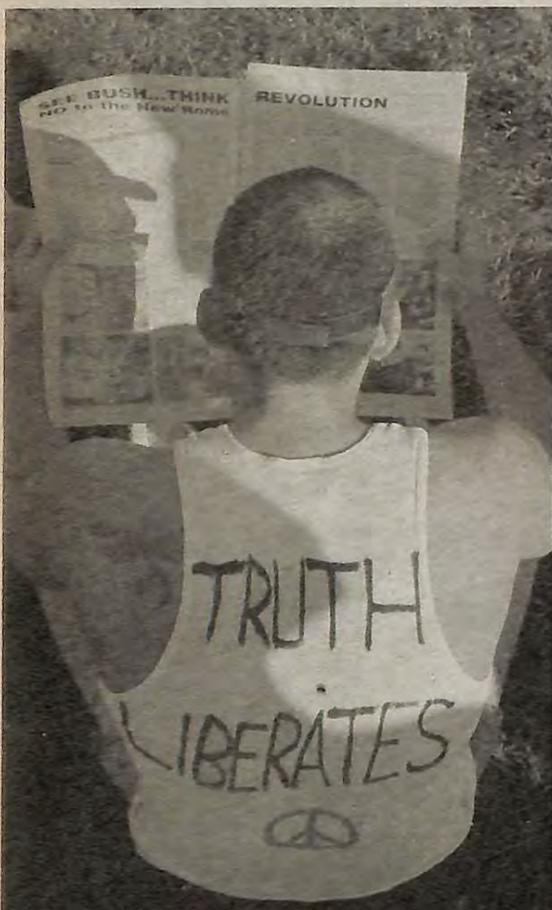
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