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Bob Avakian

From chapters 1, 2, 3 — More next week:

There would be no United States as we now know it today without slavery. That is a simple and basic truth.

Communism and Jeffersonian Democracy, 2008

Recently I was reading an essay called "Disarming Images" about an exhibit of art for nuclear disarmament which was held in the early 1980s. And I noticed that the author of this essay points out that according to the dictionary, *Webster's Third International Dictionary*, the name "bikini" given to the bathing suit comes from comparing "the effects of a scantily clad woman to the effects of an atomic bomb." When you think about this, and you think about the horrendous death, destruction, mutilation and suffering alive before dying that was caused by the atomic bombs that the U.S. dropped on Japan, and what would result from the much more powerful nuclear weapons these monsters have today—when you think about all that, and you think about the reasons for naming the bikini after all that, and what kind of view of women this promotes—do you need any other proof about how sick this system is, and how sick is the dominant culture it produces and promotes?

Revolution: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Possible, What It's All About, a film of a talk by Bob Avakian. Available at revolutiontalk.net and in a DVD set from RCP Publications

Marx said about the future world, the world of communism, that it will seem as ridiculous and outrageous for one part of society to privately own the land, and everything that goes along with that, as it now seems for one human being to own another.

Communism will mean that we have reached the point where the very idea that the way society should advance is for a few to benefit and then to proclaim that to be in the general interest of the society, where that idea will seem so ridiculous and outrageous that in a certain sense, to put it simply, it couldn't get a hearing.

*"The Role of Dissent in a Vibrant Society,"
Observations on Art and Culture, Science and Philosophy,
2005 (quote originally published 2004)*

It is **right** to want state power. It is **necessary** to want state power. State power is a **good** thing—state power is a **great** thing—in the hands of the right people, the right class, in the service of the right things: bringing about an end to exploitation, oppression, and social inequality and bringing into being a world, a communist world, in which

human beings can flourish in new and greater ways than ever before.

*"Views on Socialism and Communism: A Radically New Kind of State, A Radically Different and Far Greater Vision of Freedom,"
Revolution #37, March 5, 2006*

In socialist society, there needs to be struggle, and criticism/self-criticism, but there also needs to be "air" for people to breathe, room for them to disagree, allowance for them to come to the truths that Marxism reveals in their own way—and allowance for Marxism itself to breathe and grow, to discard outmoded concepts and analyses and to deepen its reflection of reality, as the liberating science it is, in opposition to suffocating religious dogma.

*"The End of a Stage — The Beginning of a New Stage,"
Revolution magazine, Fall 1990*

If you want to know about, and work toward, a different world—and if you want to stand up and fight back against what's being done to people—this is where you go. You go to this Party, you take up this Party's newspaper, you get into this Party's leader and what he's bringing forward.

*Making Revolution and Emancipating Humanity — Part 2,
Revolution #116, January 20, 2008*

We should not only allow but even encourage oppositional politics under the dictatorship of the proletariat, because we have to conceive of this process not as a neat and orderly one but as a very tumultuous one—and a volatile and chaotic one at times—through which a lot of things get brought forward and thrashed out by the masses. Now, this doesn't mean that we can just turn power back over to the bourgeoisie indirectly or inadvertently by "loosening the reins" so much that there's no core that's driving the society forward to where it needs to go and is leading the masses of people to ever more consciously and voluntarily strive for those things. But that shouldn't be seen as like an engine on a track that's going straight ahead. It's a much more tumultuous and tortuous process where a lot of different things are going to get into the mix and a lot of different contradictions are going to be wrestled over, and a lot of different ideas are going to be brought forward about how to do that, and where increasingly the masses are being relied on and involved consciously in the process of thrashing these things out themselves.

*Dictatorship and Democracy, and the Socialist Transition to Communism,
Revolutionary Worker #1257, October 31, 2004*

There is nothing more unrealistic than the idea of reforming this system into something that would come anywhere near being in the interests of the great majority of people and ultimately of humanity as a whole.

*Making Revolution and Emancipating Humanity — Part 2:
"Everything We're Doing Is About Revolution,"
Revolution #114, December 30, 2007*

So this is what Marx discovered: You have highly socialized production, but very privatized appropriation by a small class of people called capitalists. But in that contradiction lies the basis for the overthrow of the system, as that class that carries out socialized production becomes conscious of this contradiction and of all of its consequences, and rises up and rallies its allies, as it is led by a vanguard party that brings it the consciousness to do this, and it eventually overthrows the system and resolves this contradiction through a whole long complex process whereby, step by step, it socializes the appropriation of what is socially produced and distributes it increasingly according to the needs of the people, not according to the dictates of the accumulation of private capital.

Dictatorship and Democracy, and the Socialist Transition to Communism, Revolutionary Worker #1252, September 19, 2004

Let's get down to basics: *We need a revolution. Anything else, in the final analysis, is bullshit.*

Now, that doesn't mean we don't unite with people in all sorts of struggles short of revolution. We definitely need to do that. But the proffering of any other solution to these monumental and monstrous problems and outrages is ridiculous, frankly. And we need to be taking the offensive and mobilizing increasing numbers of masses to cut through this shit and bring to the fore what really is the solution to this, and to answer the questions and, yes, the accusations that come forth in response to this, while deepening our scientific basis for being able to do this. And the point is: not only do we need to be doing this, but we need to be bringing forward, unleashing and leading, and enabling increasing numbers of the masses to do this. They need to be inspired, not just with a general idea of revolution, but with a deepening understanding, a scientific grounding, as to why and how revolution really is the answer to all of this.

*Making Revolution and Emancipating Humanity — Part 2:
"Everything We're Doing Is About Revolution,"
Revolution #114, December 30, 2007*

You can't change the world if you don't know the BASICS