

Statement from Carol Downer

Co-founder of Feminist Women's Health Center Los Angeles which began doing abortions in 1971. She is also a retired immigration attorney (1991-2010)

Why I support the Get Organized for An ACTUAL Revolution Tour

I support the Get Organized for an ACTUAL Revolution Tour because it is important that consciousness spreads. The Tour is laying the groundwork for people to change by laying out the politics. People are not ready for revolutionary change, but how do we get them to be ready? At this stage, it's not a numbers game. Whatever our numbers, our work is important. Especially in this time where individualism is the norm, the Tour is working together and collectivity works!

When the Tour hands out leaflets, perhaps only a few people will be impacted immediately, but the message has been put out there and who knows how many will ultimately respond to it? I remember how, in the 1960s, I encountered a Black power group who was handing out leaflets which said that white people were “the white devil.” I got into a brief argument with one of them, asking him why he was even talking to me, his “enemy.” Then when the Watts Rebellion came, I remembered this discussion, and I saw where that anger was coming from. I got it that my just being “sympathetic” to Black people’s problems was part of the problem. I did not change overnight, but that leaflet started the process.

Each Tour member is part of a revolutionary force; speaking out and distributing literature is part of the process of changing conditions so that when events, such as the Watts Rebellion happen, those seeds of consciousness have been planted. The Tour spreads the message, “We have a plan,” and they spread it enthusiastically. That enthusiasm is contagious (just as how the discouraging message of the ruling class is contagious).

It is important that consciousness spreads and more people change. The groundwork is being laid by the Tour for the politics to be laid out. I’m not for the vanguard party idea, but I do agree that it’s important for people, whatever their numbers, to do this work. The process of recruiting people is extremely important, and the Tour is out there doing that, distributing literature to prepare people for when the conditions for revolution happen.



June 8, 2019— The Get Organized for an ACTUAL Revolution Tour marching in South Central Los Angeles:

(over)

I feel very lucky to be part of this valuable effort. I find a sense of a real revolution at the Club Center in LA., and it is very meaningful to me that a revolutionary force is alive. It might not be flourishing in a widespread way yet, but it is valuable what the Club is doing. Right now, very few people are opposing the ruling class, but in my opinion, the elaborate superstructure that it has created to maintain its power is collapsing of its own weight, because it depends on the destruction of our planet. So, I think the Chicago Revolution Club's invitation to involve the people to solve the problem of the youth killing each other is a very good process; it provides an answer and an alternative process.

Basics 3:2 points out the impossibility of achieving a just society by working for reform within the current system. I agree with Bob Avakian on this. We have to work very hard to get even small reforms, and we often compromise our principles and accept certain conditions that undermine whatever reforms we manage to get. Reforms are often self-defeating. We end up in worse shape than before we started. That said, we can't throw out reforms entirely, but we shouldn't put our main energy into them. We need to be part of the community effort to show people a better way. For example, the Supreme Court's decision to legalize abortion in 1973 did not change things fundamentally; women still had to seek medical approval. Women thought that their gain was permanent. They no longer demanded repeal of all abortion laws, and they stopped learning how to get knowledge of natural methods of birth control and abortion so that they didn't need to ask permission of anyone. Women let down their guard. Now, access to safe abortion may be sharply reversed, and we are totally dependent.

These are scary times, but also, we may be on the verge of a breakthrough. That's why it's important that the Revolution Club and the Tour have the money to succeed, so that we can fight against further attacks from reactionary forces, and be prepared to be an important part of the revolutionary process, if and when breaks in the oppressive power structure present themselves.

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“ 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.”

Bob Avakian, *Basics 3:2*