

They [ruling class spokespeople] pontificate about “Responsibility” ... and how the lack of it is corrupting the youth and the people generally in the U.S. They insist that people must take responsibility for the choices they make in life. But why is it that, for the class of people Bennett* represents, the choices involve things like whether to close down factories in this or that area and whether to invest billions in Mexico or South Korea, or what kinds of austerity measures to impose on Peru, or how to wage war against Iraq, or when to invade Panama or Haiti? While for people in a country like the U.S. who are part of what is broadly referred to as “the middle class,” the choices may be between accepting a cut in pay or losing their job, or deciding whether to go deeper into debt to help their kids get through college. And for millions in the ghettos and barrios of the U.S., the choices involve things like trying to get a minimum-wage job vs. going on welfare, or turning to crime—or having to fight in one of those wars the ruling class decides to wage. And meanwhile, a young girl in Thailand—maybe as young as 9 or 10—has the “choice” between slaving in suffocating squalor in factories making clothes or toys for export to countries like the U.S., or being forced into a brothel to be sold for sex to traveling businessmen from Japan, Europe, and the U.S.! It is the worldwide system of capitalist imperialism and its economic, social, and political relations of oppression that have shaped these different choices for different classes and groupings of people.

**Bob Avakian, Chairman of the
Revolutionary Communist Party, USA
*Preaching from a Pulpit of Bones:
We Need Morality But Not Traditional Morality***

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* William Bennett is a major right-wing ideologue who has held high-level positions in Republican administrations.