

**On Sunsara Taylor's national campus speaking tour and
The campaign on "The Revolution We Need...The Leadership We Have"**

—correspondence from Alice Woodward

Sunsara Taylor's national campus tour is part of a whole campaign the Revolutionary Communist Party is undertaking in this period, concentrated in the statement "The Revolution We Need... The Leadership We Have."

The campaign's objectives: to put revolution onto the map in a big way, to make the leadership of Bob Avakian a household name, and to bring forward a core of people in the world to take up this understanding, take it out into the world, fight for this and join the Revolutionary Communist Party.

This revolution, as the *Declaration: for Women's Liberation and the Emancipation of all Humanity* says, is "a revolution that unleashes the fury of women as a mighty force, and that grasps how central this question is to uprooting and abolishing all exploitation, oppression and degrading social relations, and the ideas that go along with them, among human beings as a whole all over the world." Sunsara Taylor national campus speaking tour brings this to life in a dynamic way.

When you go out into the world and call out the truth about the oppression of women on this planet, its global and systemic nature, the reality of it, the extremity of it—this is challenging, powerful and attractive to many different people, both women and men. Both the new generation caught in the midst of the intensifying objectification of women and reassertion of patriarchy in forms new and old around the globe, as well as the '60's generation that remembers what was fought for and is looking out at the world wondering what the fuck happened from the burkha to the attacks on abortion to "Girls Gone Wild." When you bring to the surface the nature of this, not as an individual problem but a social, global, systemic problem, this will uncork and unlock truths that are silenced, anger which is held back. When a different morality is presented, one that says what happens to a woman anywhere happens to all women and must be opposed as part of the revolutionary transformation of the world and the emancipation of all humanity, this has the potential to inspire people and capture their imagination.

As people have begun to confront what the situation is amongst the current generation on this question, it has been important to put forward that we are changing things now. That no, it's not okay to call women "cunt" or "bitch," you're not a "pussy" if you're a guy who stands against this, you're not a "shrill feminist," or a "lesbian" if you're a woman that doesn't tolerate this (and thinking that calling someone a lesbian is an insult shows just how misogynist and ignorant you are). No, it's not making a statement about your sexual liberation to have hardcore pornography in your dorm room or to use your body as a commodity. No, it's not right to hold off on criticizing the burkha and abstain from standing with the women in Iran who are throwing it off and at the forefront of the struggle there, in the name of "respecting cultures." And no, cultural relativism is not the correct framework and approach to understanding genital mutilation and other forms of women's oppression around the world—and we're going to debate this out!

If you open your eyes and ears all around us people are wrapped up in this fabric of women's oppression and wearing it like a cloak and/or vetting their frustrations about it. Women agonizing over what they look like, how many guys they've slept with, what way of thinking, what kind of epistemology and what kind of morality to take up which can transform the way they're relating to the world. Why do women especially feel like they can't laugh, can't "be themselves," can't be funny and outspoken. Everyone is hemmed in. But none of this is about personal choices, either positive or negative.

Coming from the need for revolution and communism, there is a tremendous responsibility in embracing and welcoming all this inquiry. Different types of people will have a lot of knowledge and experience, including in the most intimate spheres as well as the theoretical realm on these questions and we should be eager and curious to hear from them and involve them in the campus tour and this revolution, and to challenge them to get with this revolution. With all that springs forth there is great relevance to what Bob Avakian has developed in "enriched what is to be done-ism." What Lenin talks about in his work "What is To Be Done?"—that any bowing to spontaneity and any discounting of the crucial role of the conscious forces will encourage and open the way to, not the communist ideology that's needed, but to bourgeois ideology, the world outlook and method and approach that corresponds to the world as it is and the whole system of capitalism imperialism—that's the problem. This question of the position of women is coming to the fore in the world today in the ways in which Avakian has been discussing. There is a tremendous amount of agonizing around this and people are beginning to come into motion around this in different ways. An uncompromising stand on this is extremely attractive and unleashing, but this does not lead to anything radical or emancipatory left to its own devices.

People should see and feel that we are bringing something different that's not about taking on the many outrages piecemeal but that there is a multi-faceted whole. They should see and feel that we have a different morality that's about standing with the oppressed people of the world and confronting one another not as things and owners of things but based on mutual respect, appreciation, love, and equality, approaching all reality critically in its many layers and dimensions, and not fearing the questioning and contestation of everything. From the beginning and throughout the tour people need to know that Sunsara Taylor is a radical communist who takes as her foundation Bob Avakian's new synthesis, that this is something different being brought on the scene and they are being asked to be a part of this in whatever ways they are ready to contribute and be involved. Many people are attracted to the fact that Sunsara has taken on Bill O' Reilly and for good reason. Many people admire Sunsara Taylor despite their own reservations or differences in regards to communism because she is so completely outrageous and so eminently reasonable, as Avakian has emphasized we communists should be! But taking on O'Reilly and the Christian Fascists is part of (and really correctly understood, a very important part of!) but not the essence of, what Sunsara Taylor and the communist revolutionaries are bringing.

A focal point of all this has been to really make central telling people that they have to come hear Sunsara Taylor, they've really never heard anything like this from any feminist or communist and that this is part of a whole national campus tour to bring revolution to a new generation. Two of the biggest questions in relation to this have been about the relationship of feminism to communism and how and why a communist revolution is what's needed to do away with

women's oppression. We can speak to this, and we do—that this has to do with the way in which patriarchy and women's oppression developed as part of the first oppressive social divisions; things haven't always been this way and don't always have to be. This has been shown in past revolutions and a new revolutionary state power could go even further. Mainly we need to tell people that they have to come hear this talk! Taylor will be making the case for this and bringing alive the whole other way we could be living.

Crucial to this has been really living in the new synthesis of Bob Avakian ourselves. And especially being steeped in the new talk, “Unresolved Contradictions, Driving Forces For Revolution” including what's discussed in terms of the importance of contending in a more all-around way in the superstructure, in the moral and cultural sphere as a whole. This is something to wrestle with, not narrowly in relation to the direct practice of building for the tour, but there is direct application to this here. People are getting answers to the pressing questions of morality from the Christian Fascists, and in this sphere there are the two negative and reinforcing poles out there of the raunch culture and the rampant increasingly violent, degrading, and racist pornography that is seeping out into the mainstream culture, and on the other hand, the repressive dark ages morality that shoves women back into a completely subordinate position of breeder of children and helpmeet of men. The current generation is up against this in different ways. Some can see that there was something that went very wrong since the 1960's or that in the “no standards or limits,” “get more for me” hyper-sexualized culture as a response to “modesty” or “purity” and they are struggling to see a way to resist all the modern capitalist forms of oppression without reinforcing the traditional relations and the “double standards” about sexuality for men and women. And here there is an importance to really listening to people including on questions of sexuality and social relations generally and not flattening this out. Both the visceral hatred for these extreme forms of the degradation of women, and also a deep engagement around the question of sexuality and human expression from the point of view of the new synthesis, approaching this rationally and scientifically, welcoming experimentation, creativity, putting forward a view of sex as intimacy, strengthening of bonds, and mutual expressions of love and pleasure. We are coming at this on a whole different foundation and framework based on women being full equal participants in every sphere of society, and transforming the world to achieve the “4 alls.” (The abolition of all the class distinctions, all the exploitative production relations on which those divisions rest, all the oppressive social relations which arise and correspond to this set up and all the ideas and culture that flow from these relations of domination and subjugation.) At Revolution Books discussions, in the course of the work we have been doing, and late into the night with students, professors, and each other, diving into all of this is part of what we are doing to change things right now and open things up in a way that has never been done before, even with how important and significant the challenging of traditional gender roles and sexuality was in the 1960s movements.

Returning to the tour itself, and the third objective of the campaign, the slogan for International Women's Day comes to mind, “Unleash the Fury of Women as a Mighty Force For Revolution.” This is a point of orientation for the tour as well. There is great potential to unleash both women and men from the new generation to make this tour a nationwide awakening for the new generation, and a significant part of succeeding in bringing forward a new movement for revolution and communism in the world today, that can actually begin to change things now, and take on the whole system, “Fighting the power, and transforming the people, for Revolution. “

Coming off of having heard Sunsara's talk, students are meeting each other and finding people who, like them, do not want to make their peace with the way things are. They are commiserating and discussing the current terrain on campus, how "suffocating" the atmosphere is and the apathetic attitude of so many students, they are talking with the revolutionaries and with each other about why they feel a total revolution is in fact the only thing which can begin to address the monumental and indeed systemic problems humanity is facing. They are checking out Bob Avakian, posing thoughtful and deep questions about communism and the strategy for revolution, and they are taking up International Women's Day spreading the word at schools around the city. With all this the importance of the campaign comes in, as far as helping to situate all of the problems students are acutely perceiving and coming up against in the larger historical context of the moment humanity as a whole is faced with. Raymond Lotta's campus tour comes into play, addressing these questions and lifting the lid on the current generations contained and stilted dreams of how things could change. Also the Revolution Talk online where people can get to know the leadership and work of Bob Avakian themselves when they have been provoked and inspired by Sunsara Taylor's talk. The potential of all this in really fighting through to succeed in this campaign and begin a new stage of revolution and communism should not be underestimated.

I'll end with the conclusion of the statement, "The Revolution We Need, the Leadership We Have," because it has great immediate relevance to the Sunsara Taylor Campus Tour and the exhilarating challenges and potential emerging:

A whole different future, a much better future, is possible. We have what we need to fight for that world, that future. It is up to us to get with it and get to the challenge of making this happen. As our Party's Constitution says: 'The emancipation of all humanity: this, and nothing less than this is our goal. There is no greater cause, no greater purpose to which to dedicate our lives.'"