

**NEW YEAR'S STATEMENT  
BY BOB AVAKIAN**

**A NEW YEAR,  
THE URGENT NEED  
FOR A RADICALLY  
NEW WORLD—  
FOR THE  
EMANCIPATION  
OF ALL HUMANITY**

**[www.revcom.us](http://www.revcom.us)**

**[@TheRevcoms](https://www.instagram.com/TheRevcoms)**

**[youtube.com/TheRevcoms](https://www.youtube.com/TheRevcoms)**

January, 2021



## **Bob Avakian: A Radically Different Leader— A Whole New Framework for Human Emancipation**

Bob Avakian is completely different than the endless stream of bourgeois politicians who are put forward as “leaders,” whose goal is to maintain one variation or another of this system of capitalism-imperialism that is founded on and perpetuates itself through cruel and literally life-stealing exploitation, murderous oppression, and massive destruction, in all parts of the world. BA is a revolutionary who bases himself on the scientific understanding that this system must finally be overthrown through an organized struggle involving millions of people, and replaced with a system that is oriented to and capable of meeting the most fundamental needs of humanity and enabling humanity to become fit caretakers of the earth.

Bob Avakian is the architect of a whole new framework of human emancipation, the new synthesis of communism, which is popularly referred to as the “new communism.”

highly oppressive order. Here, it has to be said (and can be readily demonstrated) that the “liberal” bourgeois attack on communism is, in its own way, as ludicrous and outrageous—crudely in violation of the scientific method and blatantly in opposition to the actual facts—as the fascist mangling of truth which the “liberals” are forever decrying. This does great harm to humanity: Refusing to apply, and acting in opposition to, an honest, scientific approach to communism, the actual history of the communist movement, and the development of the new communism contributes to closing off *the only real alternative* to this truly monstrous system of capitalism-imperialism—the only viable alternative that represents the fundamental interests and a future worth living for the masses of humanity and ultimately humanity as a whole.

The road to a better world is not, and will not be, an easy one—this cannot be accomplished without determined struggle and, yes, great sacrifice. But continuing on the current course, under the domination of this system of capitalism-imperialism, means a continuation of the horrors already being perpetrated in the world today, the far worse horrors that are immediately threatening, and the very real existential danger that is increasingly looming.

In the face of the fascist juggernaut that is still threatening and gaining strength, large numbers of us who are deeply sickened and outraged by this, and who aspire to something much better, have raised and rallied to the call that science and truth matter and must be our guide. Let us now be brave enough, and bold enough, to apply this in an unhindered way, determined to seek the truth and follow the truth wherever it leads, overcoming all obstacles to this, including any cherished illusions and ingrained prejudices that run counter to reality and scientifically-established truth. Let us dare to act to make a reality of what science reveals as possible: a radically different and far better world and future for humanity.

## NEW YEAR'S STATEMENT BY BOB AVAKIAN

# A New Year, The Urgent Need For A Radically New World— For The Emancipation Of All Humanity

January, 2021

**1** In my statement of August 1 of last year, I put forward the analysis that, in the particular circumstances of this presidential election and the truly profound stakes it posed, if the Trump/Pence regime remained in power at the time of this election, it would be necessary and important to vote for Biden to deliver a decisive electoral defeat to the fascism represented by this regime. At the same time, I emphasized that simply relying on voting would likely lead to disaster, and that it was vitally important for masses of people to take to the streets, in nonviolent but sustained, and growing, mass mobilization with the demand that this fascist regime must be OUT NOW!, as called for by RefuseFascism.org.

As it turned out, masses of people did vote in large numbers to oust this fascist regime—and, in doing so delivered a decisive enough electoral defeat to the Trump/Pence regime that its increasing, and then massively violent, attempt at a coup has been more difficult to pull off and has finally been defeated, with Trump forced to leave (while still refusing to acknowledge his loss in the election), even as Biden had to be inaugurated in a capital city that was a locked-down armed camp.

In immediate terms, the catastrophe has been narrowly averted that would have occurred if this fascist regime had been re-elected (or in some other way remained in power) and on that basis further consolidated its fascist rule and been more fully emboldened and unleashed to implement its horrific program. The fact that the Trump/Pence regime has had to leave office is of great importance and something in itself worth celebrating! Yet the reality is that, not only in relation to this election but throughout the four years of this regime's rule and its mounting atrocities, there has not been the massive nonviolent mobilization called for by Refuse Fascism to drive out this regime—and, in the aftermath of the election, the streets were dominated by fascist mobilizations, and not by opposition to fascism. This has resulted in a situation where, despite the Trump/Pence regime's loss in the election, the forces of fascism are still in many ways being strengthened, and the opposition to this has remained much too passive and reliant on the terms set by the Democratic Party.

The reality has to be confronted that, as expressed through the election, nearly half this country has passionately, aggressively and belligerently embraced what is represented by “Trumpism.” The unavoidable truth is that this country, the much-proclaimed “Shining City on a Hill,” is full of fascists!—in the government at all levels and in large parts of the society as a whole. And a defining

for a radically different and emancipating society, on the road to the final goal of a communist world, is set forth in the *Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America*, which I have authored.

**It is a fact that, nowhere else, in any actual or proposed founding or guiding document of any government, is there anything like not only the protection but the provision for dissent and intellectual and cultural ferment that is embodied in this Constitution, while this has, as its solid core, a grounding in the socialist transformation of the economy, with the goal of abolishing all exploitation, and the corresponding transformation of the social relations and political institutions, to uproot all oppression, and the promotion, through the educational system and in society as a whole, of an approach that will “enable people to pursue the truth wherever it leads, with a spirit of critical thinking and scientific curiosity, and in this way to continually learn about the world and be better able to contribute to changing it in accordance with the fundamental interests of humanity.” All this will unchain and unleash a tremendous productive and social force of human beings enabled and inspired to work and struggle together to meet the fundamental needs of the people—transforming society in a fundamental way and supporting and aiding revolutionary struggle throughout the world—aiming for the final goal of a communist world, free from all exploitation and oppression, while at the same time addressing the truly existential environmental and ecological crisis, in a meaningful and comprehensive way, which is impossible under the system of capitalism-imperialism.**

Far too many have rejected this—or, more often, failed or refused to even seriously engage it—because of ignorance and prejudice which have their ultimate source in the distortion relentlessly propagated by guardians of the present order, and which serve to reinforce this

decades ago). This scientific approach has led to the conclusion that with the actual socialist societies that have been brought into being, with the leadership of communists, first in the Soviet Union and then in China (before capitalism was restored in the former in the 1950s and in the latter after the death of Mao in 1976), this experience of socialism has been mainly—and in the case of China overwhelmingly—positive, while secondarily there have also been significant, in some cases serious or even grievous, errors.

Drawing from this historical experience of the communist movement and a broad range of human endeavor, the new communism, as its defining method and approach, emphasizes the critical importance of science and applying the scientific method to everything—to society as well as nature. It *firmly rejects* any approaches that amount to applying and justifying the bankrupt and extremely harmful notion that “the ends justify the means,” and that “truth” is just an “instrument” of desired objectives, rather than what it actually is: a correct reflection of objective reality.

It is this same method and approach that has been applied to continually deepen the understanding of the nature and functioning of the system of capitalism-imperialism that continues at this point to dominate the world, with terrible consequences and implications for humanity and its future. And this work is continuing as an important part of developing the revolutionary movement that is needed in order to finally abolish this system and bring a radically different and much better world into being. While much remains to be done and many challenges remain to be met, a scientific analysis and synthesis of fundamental questions relating to the situation facing humanity and the possibility of human emancipation can be found—in both more concentrated and popular forms and in works of considerable depth—in talks and writings of mine and other materials that are available at [revcom.us](http://revcom.us). And a sweeping vision and concrete blueprint

characteristic of these fascists is their fanatical allegiance to demented distortions of reality, which is extremely difficult (and in many cases impossible) to penetrate with reason and fact, because these distortions serve to reinforce their sense of threatened entitlement and render long-standing prejudices and hatreds even more virulent. This fascism is deeply rooted, in the underlying dynamics of the capitalist-imperialist system that rules in this country and in the whole history of this country, from its founding in slavery and genocide. Related to this is another critical truth: Biden will fail miserably in his attempt to bring about “healing” and “unite the country.” As I have written previously:

Biden and the Democrats cannot “bring the country together,” as they falsely claim, because there can be no “reconciliation” with these fascists—whose “grievances” are based on fanatical resentment against any limitation on *white supremacy, male supremacy, xenophobia (hatred of foreigners), rabid American chauvinism, and the unrestrained plundering of the environment*, and are increasingly expressed in literally lunatic terms. *There can be no “reconciliation” with this, other than on the terms of these fascists, with all the terrible implications and consequences of that!*

There is no question that many of the policies of the Biden/Harris administration will be different than the blatant atrocities of the Trump/Pence regime, and things will definitely “feel different” with Biden and Harris, but the way they will try to “unite the country”—in line with the interests and requirements of this system of capitalism-imperialism—is something that no decent person should want, or be part of. In seeking to re-establish and reinforce “stability” at home, and to maintain the U.S. as the world’s number one oppressive power, Biden, Harris, and the Democrats (as well as other “mainstream” institutions, such as the *New York Times* and

CNN), will make determined attempts to keep the masses of people who have righteously hated the fascism of the Trump/Pence regime, and who aspire to a more just world, firmly tied to this system—restricting their political vision, and activity, within the confines of this system, preventing them from acting in their own fundamental interests and those of humanity as a whole. *And to the degree that things are maintained within the limits of this system, this will actually have the effect of furthering the horrors for humanity that are built into this system, while also reinforcing and giving further impetus to the underlying economic—and the social and political—forces that will strengthen the fascism that has already shown great strength in this country (and a number of others).*

**2** Even as it is critically important that the voting in this election has resulted in a decisive defeat for the Trump/Pence regime and its attempts to more fully consolidate fascist rule, this must not be allowed to obscure this crucial truth: **The polarization, between Democrats and Republicans, as expressed through the electoral process in this country, involves contention over how to uphold and pursue the interests of the capitalist-imperialist system and rule by the capitalist class. It does not represent the fundamental divisions in society and the world, nor the fundamental interests of the masses of people, in this country and in the world as a whole. Nor can the profound problems confronting humanity be solved—in fact, they can only get worse—within the confines of this murderously oppressive and exploitative system and the chaos and destruction it will continue to unleash on a massive scale, so long as it continues to dominate the world.**

*This is fact-based, scientifically-established truth. Ignoring, denying, or trying to pursue individual escape from this reality will only make things worse and hasten disaster.*

that there can be a favorable basis for uprooting and transforming social relations that embody oppression, and the ways of thinking that go along with and reinforce that oppression, moving beyond the situation where (as Lenin so aptly put it) people are not merely encouraged but are compelled to calculate, with the stinginess of a miser, what their position is in relation to others.

**6** All this strongly points, once again, to the need not simply to “face reality” but to consistently apply the principle that science matters and truth matters, and therefore to seriously engage the scientific analysis (which I have outlined here) of the problem facing humanity, and the solution: where the world is heading now, under the domination of this system, and the radically different direction it needs to, and can, take. It calls for a willingness to apply this same approach—that science and scientifically-determined truth matter—to communism and the historical experience of the communist movement, and in particular to the *new communism* which has resulted from decades of work I have carried out. This new communism is a continuation of, but also represents a qualitative leap beyond, and in some important ways a break with, communist theory as it had been previously developed. Unlike those who slander and condemn, or simply ignore, communism and the historical experience of the communist movement, I myself have done, and have led others in doing, extensive, serious *scientific*, study—investigation and analysis—of the history of the communist movement and the socialist societies it has brought into being (as well as countries that have called themselves “socialist” but in fact are not, such as Cuba since 1959, Venezuela in recent decades, and the Soviet Union and countries of Eastern Europe, where capitalism was restored and has reigned for more than 60 years, well before they became *openly* capitalist countries a few

status for people of color and women, and a brutally suppressed existence for LGBT people, and Black people in particular subjected to continual terror, marked by repeated lynchings and other depraved acts accompanying them. The future lies not with the (real or imagined) past but in going *forward*, to an actual socialist society, and ultimately a communist world, where the fundamental orientation and practical policy are geared to meeting the material, intellectual and cultural needs of the people, while giving increasing scope to individual initiative, on the basis of and within the framework of the collective and cooperative foundation and ethos of society, where age-old economic and social relations of exploitation, inequality and oppression are surpassed, and no longer does the well-being of some rest on the misery of others.

It should be clear that the present polarization and the profound problems that must be faced cannot be solved by trying to “adjust” things within the confines of this system. The example of the “Occupy” movement of the last decade is another illustration of this. This attempt to in effect repolarize the 99 percent against the 1 percent of super-rich failed, in significant part because *social relations* (such as the oppressive relations between different “races” and genders), and not just economic relations, are powerful material forces, and a good part of that “99 percent” is determined to maintain those unequal and oppressive social relations from which they benefit (or strongly believe they benefit), especially in this capitalist society which sets people against each other in often ruthless competition.

It is only on the foundation of a radically different economic system—a *socialist economic system (mode of production)*, where society’s productive resources are collectivized, marshaled and utilized, in a planned way, to meet the material, intellectual and cultural needs of the people, on a continually expanding basis—

**The electoral defeat of the Trump/Pence regime only “buys some time”—both in relation to the imminent danger posed by the fascism this regime represents, and more fundamentally in terms of the potentially existential crisis humanity is increasingly facing as a consequence of being bound to the dynamics of this system of capitalism-imperialism. But, in essential terms, time is not on the side of the struggle for a better future for humanity. So *the time there is must not be squandered*—mired in oblivious individualism and political paralysis or misspent on misdirected activity that only reinforces this system which perpetuates endless horrors for the masses of humanity and has brought things to the brink of very real catastrophe.**

A profoundly different polarization must be brought about, in line with the potential for a radically different and better world, representing the actual interests of the masses of people and ultimately all of humanity. A radically different approach to understanding, and acting on, the relations and problems of society must be taken up—a *thoroughly and consistently scientific* method and approach.

**3** Among many who have been outraged by the way Trump has consistently engaged in both pathological and purposeful lying, there has been a great deal of emphasis on the importance of science and truth, on facts and evidence-based reasoning. This has focused to a significant degree on the criminally anti-scientific approach that Trump and Pence have taken to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the encouragement of this anti-scientific madness among the fascist “base” in society at large—all of which has led to at least tens of thousands (or even hundreds of thousands) of unnecessary deaths as well as unnecessary hardship and suffering for masses of people. This emphasis on science and the scientific method is vitally important,

but it is also necessary to emphasize the real need and great importance of being *consistent* with this, and *following scientifically-determined truth wherever it leads*, in order to correctly understand reality, in every sphere of life and society.

This means fully breaking with and moving beyond an approach of merely embracing truths—or supposed truths—with which one is comfortable, while rejecting, dismissing, or evading actual truth which may make one uncomfortable. One important dimension of this is rising above and repudiating methodologically the philosophical relativism of “identity politics,” which does a great deal of harm through its own version of reducing “truth” to partial, unsystematized experience and subjective sentiment (“my truth”...“our truth”...) in opposition to real, *objective truth, which is correctly, scientifically arrived at through an evidence-based process, to determine whether, or not, something (an idea, theory, assertion, etc.) corresponds to actual material reality*. While politically this “identity politics” may be proceeding from a desire to oppose various forms of oppression—even if this is often characterized, and vitiated, by people of different “identities” seeking to claim “ownership” of opposition to oppression—in terms of *epistemology* (the approach to understanding reality and arriving at the truth of things) “identity politics” has a lot in common with the reliance on “alternative facts” (assertions that are *in opposition to actual facts*, often wildly so) that is the hallmark of the fascists. Even as it is important to recognize the political distinctions involved, the situation is far too serious, and the stakes far too high, to allow ourselves to fall into, or conciliate with, *any* form of opposing the scientific method and its pursuit of objective truth about actual reality.

To understand why we are confronted with the situation we are, it is necessary not merely to respond to—and in effect be whipped

The fact is that there is no bringing back (or newly bringing into being) an idealized way of life that supposedly existed in the late 19th century and the first part of the 20th century in this country, no return to an imagined idyllic America, characterized by “traditional values” which somehow fairly rewarded “virtues” such as hard work, and where people occupied the place in society they deserved (or were intended by god to occupy)—something which has really existed only in the minds of those who seek an illusory “restoration” of this, and who have been conditioned to irrationally hate everyone and everything that has supposedly destroyed it. And there is no bringing back the situation that existed for several decades after World War 2 where large numbers of people (especially, though not only, white men) without a college education could have jobs in major industries like auto and steel at a wage that made possible a “middle class standard of living.” That there is no basis for this is true not because of conspiracies by “satanic liberals who drink the blood of trafficked children” but, once again, because of the workings of this system of capitalism-imperialism, which have led this world to be shaped as it is, and to be heading for the environmental disaster it is rapidly bringing into being, if it does not first extinguish humanity through nuclear war unleashed by the powerful possessors of massive nuclear arsenals.

And no one should *want* to go back to the *actual* past: to a world marked by massive poverty and disease, even beyond the terrible toll this takes today, especially in the Third World; with the horrendous destruction and suffering brought about through two world wars in the 20th century, in which tens of millions of people were slaughtered, and atomic bomb attacks were unleashed by the U.S. on two Japanese cities at the end of the second world war, immediately incinerating hundreds of thousands of Japanese people and ushering in the “nuclear age”; with the USA marked by open, institutionalized segregation, discrimination and “second class”



is acting as its dominant political representative. Capitalism is often extolled for being a “dynamic” system, constantly bringing about changes. But this is a “dynamism” based on exploitation for privately-accumulated profit, and driven by anarchy (and anarchic competition between capitalists), and that very anarchy is rapidly propelling things toward an existential threshold—past which humanity could well be irreversibly hurtled—if this system of capitalism, in its imperialist globalized expression, continues to dominate the world.

Given how much the fascist social base in this country has been conditioned to falsely and ridiculously identify the Democrats (even “centrist” Democrats like Biden) as “radical socialists” (or even “communists”) and to viscerally hate them on that basis—largely because of the Democrats’ limited concessions to the struggle against racial and gender oppression, to the need to address the climate crisis, and to a reckoning with the real history of this country—it is highly ironic that it is only a powerful movement aiming for *actual* socialism, as a radically new and emancipating society and the transition to the fundamental goal of communism on a global scale, that could create the basis for significant numbers of those, and in particular youth, who have been caught up in this fascism to break with that and become part of the struggle aiming for a positive resolution of the contradictions that this system of capitalism-imperialism continually intensifies. (As any rational person can readily determine, the relatively small number of “democratic socialists” who are part of the Democratic Party are in no way “radical socialists”—or really socialists at all—but are *social-democrats* who are aiming *not* for the abolition of the capitalist system and its replacement by a socialist system, but for reforms *within the capitalist system* which would not change, or significantly affect, its basic nature and functioning.)

around by—what is happening on the surface at any given time, but to *dig beneath* the surface, to discover the underlying mainsprings and causes of things, and arrive at an understanding of the fundamental problem and the actual solution. This means coming to the scientific understanding that we are living under a *system, and what that system actually is* (the system of *capitalism-imperialism*); working to grasp *the deeper relations and dynamics of this system* and how this is setting the framework for how different sections of society spontaneously think and react to events in society and the world, and what is the possible way forward to transforming all of this in the interests of the masses of humanity and ultimately humanity as a whole. A crucial part of this is a scientific understanding of major changes, resulting from the very dynamics and functioning of this system, that have led to upheaval in society and have in significant ways fed this fascism: changes in the capitalist-imperialist economy and correspondingly in the social structure and “social composition” within this country, as well as internationally, which have undermined “traditional” forms of oppression without, however, leading to the *ending* of this oppression but establishing and enforcing it in new forms, while provoking what is truly a deranged, sadistic and often violent reaction on the part of the sectors of society who have identified their interests, and in effect their very being, with the *traditional* forms of oppression.

As an introduction, and overarching point, in regard to some of these important changes, it is important to emphasize that these changes, and especially those that have occurred in the last few decades, are bound up with the heightened *parasitism* of capitalism-imperialism in the contemporary world. As I explained in *Breakthroughs: The Historic Breakthrough by Marx, and the Further Breakthrough with the New Communism, A Basic Summary*, parasitism refers to

the fact that an increasingly globalized capitalism relies to a very great degree for production and for maintaining the rate of profit on a vast network of sweatshops, particularly in the Third World of Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Asia, while capitalist activity in the capitalist-imperialist “home countries” is increasingly in the realm of finance and financial speculation, and the “high end” of (not the production of the basic physical materials for) high tech, as well as the service sector and the commercial sphere (including the growing role of online marketing).

◆ Since the end of World War 2 (75 years ago), the situation of Black people has dramatically changed. These changes were initially based in increased mechanization and other transformations in agricultural production, and the economy overall; they were driven by a powerful upsurge of struggle of Black people, wrenching concessions out of the ruling class in this country that was anxious to maintain its image as “the champion of democracy” and “leader of the free world,” especially in its confrontation with the Soviet Union for a number of decades after World War 2. As a result of these and other factors, Black people’s oppression is no longer centered around brutal exploitation in the rural south, in conditions of near slavery (and in some cases actual slavery) backed up by Ku Klux Klan terror, but instead involves a situation where masses of Black people are segregated and concentrated in urban areas throughout the country and subjected to systematic discrimination and continual brutality and murder by the police. Over the past several decades, due to heightened globalization and automation of production, interacting with continuing discrimination, there has been the elimination of a great deal of factory employment which provided Black men (and some women) with better-paying jobs in the urban areas. At the same time, as a result of the civil rights and Black liberation struggles of the 1960s/

not, or will not, look. The “liberal” (or “mainstream”) version of this system’s rule involves the enforcement of the exploitation and oppression of masses of people in this country and throughout the world (including the more than 150 million children in the Third World who are cruelly super-exploited in sweatshops and mines). Enforcing all this, and defeating attempts by rivals to gain a larger share of this plunder and to replace the USA as the world’s dominant power—that is what “liberal” (and other) representatives of this system mean when they speak of the “national interests” of this country. And this is the foundation for the “progressive” approach of allowing for some more “diversity” and “inclusiveness” for previously excluded sections of this society, and the promotion of certain aspects of science, *on the basis of and especially for the purposes of this international plunder, of people as well as the environment.*

**5** To emphasize this crucial point once again: It is necessary to confront the fundamental reality that *there is no future worth living for the masses of people and ultimately for humanity as a whole under this system*—which has given rise to a powerful fascism; which is the source of horrendous, and unnecessary suffering, not only for masses of people in this country but for billions of people throughout the world; and which poses a growing threat to the very existence of humanity, through its massive stockpiles of nuclear weapons as well as its accelerating destruction of the environment. It is true—an important truth—that the Trump/Pence regime (and others like it, for example the rule of Bolsonaro in Brazil) has made the environmental crisis far worse—has, so to speak, accelerated the acceleration of environmental destruction. But the dynamics and requirements of this system are driving the climate crisis toward the point of no return, regardless of which particular person or regime

As I put it in my August 1 Statement, fascism is “open and aggressive dictatorship, trampling on and perverting the rule of law, relying on violence and terror, on behalf of the predatory capitalist system and as an extreme attempt to deal with profound social division and acute crises (both within the country and in the global arena).” While this might hold things together, in an extremely negative way, for a certain period, *in the final analysis this cannot succeed—cannot indefinitely preserve this system of capitalism-imperialism, and cannot lead to any future but one of horrors for humanity, if indeed we have a future at all.* And the supposed “alternative,” as represented for example by the Democratic Party in the U.S., involving a “more democratic” means of exercising the rule of this system, will also continue to embody and enforce terrible and completely unnecessary suffering for the masses of humanity and pose an existential threat to humanity as a whole, even if not always through the same brute and unmitigated juggernaut of horrors as the fascist form of capitalist dictatorship.

What was expressed through this recent election—what, in fact, is expressed through all elections under this system—is not “democracy” and “the will of the people” in some abstract sense but specifically a choice that is made between *different representatives of this system of capitalism-imperialism*, which is the only “realistic” choice that is, or can be, offered under this system. In this particular, extraordinary situation, that choice—between fascist and bourgeois democratic capitalist rule—actually made a real difference, to the point where it was right to support one side, the Democrats, in order to deliver a defeat to the attempt to more fully consolidate fascism. But that does not change the fact that this was a vote on the terms of *the very system that has produced this fascism* and will continue to provide fertile soil for this fascism at the same time as it continues to generate horror after horror for humanity—horrors that are hidden only from those who do

early '70s, and other factors, there has been the growth of the Black middle class. But there has also been an increase of the so-called “underclass,” concentrated and contained in urban ghettos and more or less permanently locked out of regular employment in the “formal” economy.

Unable to provide a positive resolution to acute contradictions bound up with these changes—unable to end systemic racism which involves degrading discrimination against even economically better-off sections of Black people—unable to integrate large numbers of Black people into the “formal” economy—the ruling forces in society have responded to this situation with mass incarceration of millions of Black males (and growing numbers of females) with arrests, trials, convictions and sentences embodying yet more discrimination and injustice, and by unleashing and backing systematic police terror, which is especially directed against Black people in the inner cities but can target any Black person, anywhere, at any time. The attempt to brutally enforce “law and order,” given that a more just solution is impossible under this system, heightens the volatility of this whole situation, leading to further upheaval—including completely justified and righteous protest and rebellion—which, in turn, is seized on by fascist forces in promoting their grotesque white supremacist portrayal of the masses of Black people as “criminals” and “uncaged animals.”

The fact that, with all these changes, and regardless of who is occupying the seats of power, systematic discrimination and murderous oppression has persisted, has led some Black people to conclude that the Democratic Party is the problem, since it has consistently sought the support of Black people but has repeatedly acted against their interests. Even as the Republican Party has become the vehicle of overt and aggressive white supremacy, it is true that the Democrats, and not just the Republicans, have

presided over the oppression of Black people. But what is the actual reason for that, and what is the real answer to it? The reality is that white supremacy is *built into* this system of capitalism-imperialism, and neither of these ruling class parties could put an end to this, even if they wanted to. The answer is not rallying to the fascist Republican Party, or trying to play these bourgeois parties against each other, or embracing “Black capitalism” and begging for a better “seat at the table”—all of which will only reinforce the existing system of oppression and perhaps benefit a few at the expense of the many. The answer is *revolution*, and establishing a radically different society that has the basis as well as the orientation to uproot and abolish white supremacy, and all oppressive relations.

◆ There have been profound changes in the situation and social position of large numbers of women, both within this country and internationally. To cite one important dimension of this, much of the sweatshop labor in the Third World involves women, forced to work under horrific conditions. In this country, changes in the functioning and structure of the economy (as part of the increasingly globalized world economy) have led to extensive employment, and exploitation, of Black women (and other women of color), in the service and retail sectors in particular. At the same time, not only is there more opportunity for large numbers of women (especially white women, but some women of color as well) to find positions in the professions and in business, but this has also become a necessity in order for their families to maintain a “middle class way of life.” This situation where greater numbers of women are employed outside the home, including a significant increase in the number of women in better-paid middle class positions, has seriously strained and significantly undermined the “traditional” patriarchal (male-dominated) family and patriarchal relations in society overall.

Unlike that break, this one is not starkly geographic: South versus North. No, this one is city versus country, college educated versus high school educated and, most significantly, future versus past. Meaning that yesterday, this was a nation where white people were the majority, and tomorrow it will be one where they are not.

Although Pitts is correct that the division today is more rural vs. urban than strictly South vs. North, it is the case that the old (and new) Confederacy—and in particular rural white southerners—remain the anchor for an ill-founded and ill-intended attempt to restore the past (in the name of “Making America Great Again”). As I pointed out in the 2017 talk *The Trump/Pence Regime Must Go!*:

There is a direct line from the Confederacy to the fascists of today, and a direct connection between their white supremacy, their open disgust and hatred for LGBT people as well as women, their willful rejection of science and the scientific method, their raw “America First” jingoism and trumpeting of “the superiority of western civilization” and their bellicose wielding of military power, including their expressed willingness and blatant threats to use nuclear weapons, to destroy countries.

At the same time, the divide, and the clash, between the past and the future goes deeper than demographic changes and the prospect of a majority non-white U.S. population. The forces fighting for the past are aiming to reverse, with a vengeance, even the modest concessions that have been made to the fight against social injustice and institutionalized inequality and oppression, *and* to enforce a form of capitalist dictatorship that is overt and unrestrained by the Constitution and the rule of law (or which turns the Constitution and the rule of law into merely instruments of fascist tyranny and atrocity).

those who believe religion is necessary for an orderly and “moral” society, and all the more so with those who insist on a religious fundamentalism that is wildly out of keeping with reality and with a rational approach to reality.

Yet, while it is true that, in order to win their full emancipation, the masses of people in the world will ultimately need to cast off religious belief in general, it is important to emphasize that, in the world today, the polarization does not simply come down to those who have rejected religion in the name of enlightenment vs. those who cling to religious belief. An important polarization now is that between what can rightly be called decent people (including large numbers of religious people) who are opposed to injustice, and on the other hand those who are determined to revive and enforce traditional forms of oppression. In regard to all this, one of the important questions is whether people come to embrace, or reject, two distinguishing qualities: *largeness of mind* and *generosity of spirit*.

**4** All this provides an important foundation and “backdrop” for understanding what happened in the recent election, why, and what are the implications of this, now and in terms of the future. The following, from a November 9, 2020 article by Leonard Pitts Jr (“The election of 2020 has ended at last, but the celebration has caveats”) contains some important insights. The result of this election, he writes, “strips bare all the glossy claims about who we are as a country, underscoring the fact that in a meaningful sense, we are not one country at all anymore, but two sharing the same borders.” He continues:

The last time that happened [with the Civil War], it took four years and 750,000 lives to force us back into some semblance of oneness. Even then, the seams of the fracture were always visible.

All this has provided more favorable conditions for, and has been significantly influenced by, the struggle against the oppression of women, which was powerfully expressed as part of the overall radical upsurge of the 1960s and has continued in various forms since then. As I spoke to in *Away With All Gods!*:

Through the upsurge of the '60s, many things were called into question—not just in the realm of ideas, although that was extremely important, but in practice, in the realm of political struggle—things that are foundational to this society. And many changes were brought about, partly as a result of mass political struggle and partly because of the changing features and needs of the economy. Once again, one of the most important dimensions of this was in relation to the role of women, particularly among professionals and other sections of the middle class, where it became both possible and necessary for women to work full time, in the effort to maintain a middle class standard of living. When you combine that with political and ideological expressions of feminism, and other movements that came forward out of the '60s, this did pose a very direct challenge to traditionally institutionalized forms of oppression in this society.

Yet the elimination of male supremacy is impossible within the confines of this system. This is true because male supremacy has been deeply woven into the fabric of this society, and because this system is based on capitalist commodity relations and exploitation—things are produced to be exchanged (sold), through a process in which masses of people work, for a wage or salary, to create profit that is accumulated by capitalists who employ them and control their work—a system in which the patriarchal family unit remains an essential economic and social component

and requirement, even as it is being put under increasing strains. And the fascist section of the ruling class has, over a number of decades now, waged a relentless attack on Constitutional rights, and mobilized their social base of religious fundamentalist fanatics, to forcefully and often violently assert “traditional” patriarchal oppression—with the assault on the right to abortion, and even birth control, a major focus of this attempt to essentially enslave women. What I wrote, 35 years ago, is today more true than ever:

Over the past several decades in the U.S. there have been profound changes in the situation of women and the relations within the family. In only one of ten families is there the “model” situation where the husband is the “sole breadwinner” and the wife a totally dependent “homemaker.” With these economic changes have come significant changes in attitudes and expectations—and very significant strains not only on the fabric of the family but of social relations more broadly... **The whole question of the position and role of women in society is more and more acutely posing itself in today’s extreme circumstances—this is a powderkeg in the U.S. today.** It is not conceivable that all this will find any resolution other than in the most radical terms and through extremely violent means. The question yet to be determined is: **will it be a radical reactionary or a radical revolutionary resolution, will it mean the reinforcing of the chains of enslavement or the shattering of the most decisive links in those chains and the opening up of the possibility of realizing the complete elimination of all forms of such enslavement.**

What has gone along with all this has been an increased possibility and “space” for the assertion of gender “identity” and relations that run counter to the traditional oppressive gender relations—and,

things as “real” if concrete evidence for their existence cannot be shown, in the real material world. And, as emphasized by Ardea Skybreak, author of the very important book *The Science of Evolution and the Myth of Creationism: Knowing What’s Real and Why It Matters*, science provides plenty of evidence that human beings have invented every religion that exists anywhere in the world. (In a book consisting of an interview with Skybreak, *Science and Revolution*, she also emphasizes that, although at times “bad science” has been used for very negative purposes, including to promote racism, the actual scientific method itself provides the means for refuting this: “you can use rigorous scientific methods to prove that was all bad science.”)

It is true that science itself cannot put an end to religious belief, as shown by the fact that there are large numbers of religious people who consider themselves advocates of enlightenment and accept the discoveries and conclusions of science (up to a point at least) but insist that there is a realm of existence—involving a supernatural being, or beings—which is beyond the scope of science. And it is a fact that in general the representatives of the ruling class in this country, whether they are “liberal” or “conservative”—and whether they themselves personally believe in god or not—definitely regard religion as a crucial part of maintaining the “social cohesion” of the country on a capitalist basis, and work to promote religion, in particular Christianity, in one form or another. (They are all essentially practitioners of the statement attributed to Napoleon: society is impossible without inequality; inequality is impossible to maintain without a morality to justify it; and such a morality is impossible without religion.) Nevertheless (to paraphrase an important statement by the physicist Steven Weinberg), although science itself does not eliminate religious belief, it does provide a basis for people not to believe in god and to reject religion. This is in conflict with

World, has been the defeat, or abandonment, of movements in the Third World led by communists or revolutionary nationalists against old-line colonialists and neo-colonial oppressors, above all the U.S., in the period after World War 2—with the greatest setback being the reversal of socialism and the restoration of capitalism in China in the 1970s, which transformed China from a powerful socialist country and a beacon and bastion of support for revolutionary struggle throughout the world, into a rising imperialist power and itself an exploiter of masses of people in Africa and other parts of the Third World.

The rise of religious fundamentalism has occurred together with, and in opposition to, the increase of secularism (people who are not religious, or at least not part of traditional religions), especially among the more educated urban populations. This secularism is not in itself conceived or intended as an attack on people who continue to hold religious beliefs, but it does objectively undermine religion—and it is taken as an attack “on everything holy” by religious fundamentalists who refuse to even attempt to reconcile religious belief with the results of scientific inquiry, as strongly reflected in their irrational attack on the solidly established scientific fact of evolution.

What is essentially involved in this division is the acceptance, or the denial and rejection, of evidence-based rational thought, including the importance of critical thinking, that has, in a broad sense, been the extension of the Enlightenment, which arose in Europe (in particular France) several centuries ago. In that time, and since, the advance of science and important discoveries this has brought forward have given impetus to the questioning of religion in a way that was not really possible before, since many of these scientific discoveries clearly contradict long-entrenched religious scripture and dogma, and the scientific method rejects the recognition of

once again, there has been the often violent attempt to reassert and reinforce the traditional relations and to suppress anything that does not conform to this.

Religion, and especially religious fundamentalism, is a powerful factor promoting and reinforcing the patriarchal subordination of women, as well as other “traditional” forms of oppression. Here is an important insight by Kristin Kobes Du Mez, who grew up in a town in Iowa that was filled with white Christian fundamentalists (which she refers to as “white evangelicals”) who are the backbone of present-day American fascism. In her book *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation*, she writes:

White evangelicals have pieced together this patchwork of issues, and a nostalgic commitment to rugged, aggressive, *militant white masculinity serves as the thread binding them together into a coherent whole*. A father’s rule in the home is inextricably linked to heroic leadership on the national stage, and the fate of the nation hinges on both. [emphasis added here]

Given the tight connection between militant patriarchy and fascism, it is not surprising that some (though clearly a minority of) Black and Latino men have been drawn to support for Trump, despite his overt white supremacy. (This includes some who are or have been prominent in rap music. While there have been positive forces and elements in rap and Hip Hop overall, what has been increasingly promoted is a culture that is full of, not to say dominated by, misogynistic degradation of women, as well as admiration for the kind of hustler gangsterism that is one of Trump’s defining “qualities.”) It is also not surprising that even significant numbers of women (mainly white women but also some Latina and other women of color) have been drawn to

this fascism, as the phenomenon of the oppressed clinging to “tradition’s chains” that oppress them is unfortunately all too common. (Think of the mothers in the fatherland, written about by Claudia Koonz in her book with that title—women who actively worked for the aggressively male supremacist Hitler and the NAZIs in Germany during the rise of fascism there in the 1930s. Or listen to the words today of Black female fascist Candace Owens, who has praised Hitler for his efforts to “make Germany great”: “There is no society that can survive without strong men.... In the west, the steady feminization of our men at the same time that Marxism is being taught to our children is not a coincidence. It is an outright attack. Bring back manly men.” Of course, for fascists like Owens “strong” and “manly” men are those who embody and enforce traditional gender relations, exercising domination over women who submit to this domination—and men who do not conform to traditional gender roles and relations, men who support equality between men and women are somehow “weak,” “effeminate,” “emasculated.”) And for white women who are part of this fascist phenomenon, in which virulent male supremacy is a defining and cohering element, there is also the fact that these women can join in with the white supremacy which, particularly in a country like the U.S., is also a defining and decisive element of this fascism and is closely intertwined with the virulent male supremacy—as reflected in Kristin Kobes Du Mez’s formulation: aggressive, militant *white* masculinity.

◆ As a result of the intensifying climate crisis, war and repression—and, as a driving force in all this, major changes in the capitalist-imperialist dominated world economy, including the further growth and increased impact internationally of corporate agribusiness and labor-displacing technology, increasingly monopolized control of seeds and chemicals, greater monopolization of marketing, and vast land-grabbing

investments—there is massive dislocation and upheaval, particularly affecting people in the global South (the countries of Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Asia—the Third World). An important feature of all this is mass urbanization: more than half of the world’s population now lives in urban areas, with huge shantytown slums, involving more than a billion people, in the urban areas of the Third World, even as tens of millions of people from the Third World have been forced to migrate to the U.S. and countries in Europe. And the situation has developed where, in some of these countries—with the U.S. a prime example—the economy could not function without the exploitation of large numbers of immigrants, while many are subjected to the constant threat of deportation, which also makes them even more vulnerable to extreme exploitation.

The ruin of much of traditional small-scale farming in Third World countries and the dramatic increase of an urban population there (as well as in the U.S. and some other imperialist countries) which in large numbers is unable to find work within the “formal economy”—this has also fostered the growth of an illegal economy and of gangs (and, particularly in Third World countries, cartels) based on this illegal economy, in particular the drug trade, but also the trafficking of human beings, especially women and girls viciously victimized in prostitution, the “sex industry,” and literal sexual slavery.

This dramatically changed and often highly volatile situation has also been a major factor in the rise of religious fundamentalism, in the Third World and notably in the U.S., where Christian fundamentalism is a powerful negative social and political force. Interconnected and interacting with these economic and related social changes in a way that has contributed to the increased influence of religious fundamentalism, particularly in the Third