

A Major New Work by Bob Avakian

BOB AVAKIAN

Communism and Jeffersonian Democracy

CONTENTS

American Democracy: "They Kill People for Saying What You're Saying"

"Jeffersonian Democracy": Ideals, Illusions, and Reality

Jefferson's ideal of a good and just society—and the reality of slavery

Slavery, White Supremacy, and Democracy in America

Bourgeois Democracy, Bourgeois Elitism

Commodities, Polarization, Inequality, and Exploitation

The "Grand Narrative" About This Country—and the Brutal Reality Underneath This

More on the actual foundation of U.S. wealth and power

Freedom of Conscience as Private Property, "The Free Market Place of Ideas"—and a Radically Different and Far More Unfettered Search for the Truth

"Competing Elites"—and Moving Beyond "Elites"

What does—and does not—happen through elections...

what is—and is not—meaningful political activity

Can the people really be nothing more than pawns of elites?

Capitalist Society, Bourgeois Democracy and Dictatorship

Dictatorship Does Not Mean Unchallengeable Power

Communism and Capitalism: Two Fundamentally Opposed Views of Freedom

Communism: a *positive*—and not just a negative—vision of freedom

Necessity and freedom

The role of leadership in moving beyond social divisions that make institutionalized leadership necessary

A scientific understanding of society, and revolutionary changes in society—a basic answer to the slanders against communism

The Transition to the Future—The Reality, The Shadow, and the Exhilaration

Not just the ultimate goal, but the road to that goal, must be truly and profoundly liberating

Overcoming the lopsidedness in the world

A scientifically-grounded conquering spirit

The Bankruptcy of Bourgeois-Democratic Ideals, and the Liberating Potential of Communist Revolution

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RCP Publications announces a major new work by Bob Avakian! Today, the ideals of Jeffersonian democracy are widely hailed—to the point where even many who think of themselves as radical or revolutionary worship at this "chapel of democracy," and almost every demand for social change seems to come "packaged" in those terms. In fact, this expresses a poverty of analysis that has seriously fettered the vision of the movements of today—a poverty of analysis that demands to be subjected to serious criticism.

In the face of this, Avakian takes on the ideals of Jeffersonianism, and convincingly locates even its "loftiest aspirations" in social relations of exploitation and oppression—the social relations out of which those ideals grew, and which they served and continue to serve. In doing so, he draws on a wide range of scholarly research and polemically takes on major contemporary defenders of Jeffersonian democracy. Avakian demonstrates why and how these ideals of democracy co-existed with—and, indeed, arose on the basis of—the enslavement of Black people and the deep embedding of white supremacy into the body politic and ideological psyche of the U.S.

But he goes further: not only showing why events turned out that way, but why those ideals themselves *could only* and *can only* generate and serve relations of exploitation and the division, and polarization, of people into antagonistic classes...into oppressor and oppressed. Moreover, he convincingly points the way to a vision and future that is *truly* emancipatory—to a vision of freedom far more radical and thoroughgoing than anything imaginable within the constricted horizons of Jeffersonianism. In doing this, Avakian includes a devastating critique of the "free marketplace of ideas," contrasting it to a genuinely unfettered search for the truth—and he shows what kind of economic and political system would be necessary for that to flourish.

During the frenzy of the election campaign and the particular hopes—and damaging delusions—being raised by the Obama candidacy, *Communism and Jeffersonian Democracy* must circulate widely throughout society.

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