

It is only possible today to conjecture, and to dream, about what expressions social contradictions will assume in the future communist society and how they will be resolved. How will the problem be approached of combining advanced productive forces, which require a significant degree of centralization, with decentralization and local initiative (whatever “local” means then)? How will the rearing of new generations of people – now carried out in atomized form, and through oppressive relations, in the family – be approached in communist society? How will attention be paid to developing specific areas of knowledge, or to concentrating on particular projects, without making these the “special preserve” of certain people? How will the contradiction be handled of enabling people to acquire all-around skills and knowledge and at the same time meeting the need for some specialization? What about the relation between people’s individual initiatives and personal pursuits on the one hand, and their social responsibilities and contributions on the other? It seems that it will always be the case that, around any particular question, or controversy, there will be a group – and as a general rule a minority at first – that will have a more correct, advanced understanding, but how will this be utilized for the overall benefit while at the same time preventing groups from solidifying into “interest groups”? What will be the relations between different areas and regions – since there will no longer be different countries – and how will the contradictions between what might be called “local communities” and the higher associations, all the way up to the world level, be handled? What will it mean concretely that people are truly citizens of the world, particularly in terms of where they live, work, and so on – will they “rotate” from one area of the world to another? How will the question of linguistic and cultural diversity versus a world union of humanity be handled? And will people then, even with all their understanding of history, really be able to believe that a society such as we are imprisoned in now actually existed – let alone that it was declared to be eternal and the highest pinnacle humanity was capable of reaching? Again, these questions, and many, many more, can only be the object of speculation, and of dreaming, today; but even to pose such questions, and to attempt to visualize how they might be addressed – in a society where class divisions, social antagonism, and political domination no longer exist – is itself tremendously liberating for anyone without a vested interest in the present order.

Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA
Democracy, Can't We Do Better Than That? (Chicago: Banner Press, 1986), p. 266

REVOLUTION

Film of historic talk by Bob Avakian —
Revolution: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Possible, What It's All About
at revolutiontalk.net and selected clips at YouTube.com/revolutiontalk.