

# Statement on International Women's Day From the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA March 8, 2014

There is nothing more brutal and backward, nothing more outrageous, nothing which more concentrates the howling and unbearable gap between the world that is possible and the world that actually IS... than the way billions of women are treated every day. Rape, battery, exploitation and abuse of every kind...locked in the home or cast out on the streets, both devalued and commodified in the culture—regarded and treated like things to be bought and sold rather than full human beings... reduced to the roles of either mother and/or object of sexual plunder... exploited and abused in fields and factories and offices and then oppressed and abused once more in the home... denied the right to control their own bodies and make their own choices on reproduction... demeaned and degraded by the saturation of society with pornography... hounded, legislated against, and at times physically attacked and even murdered by religious fanatics of every type, on every continent, including the USA... and all this reaching a point of even greater, almost unimaginable, horror in the wars for resources and profit and geopolitical power that rage across the world. The very acuteness of this question means that when people rise up, this question often and increasingly and very sharply comes to the fore—as it did these past few years in Egypt and elsewhere, where different reactionary camps mobilized and waged battles over how best to maintain this oppression and even took out their conflicts on the very bodies of the women who dared to demand a voice in their futures.

The oppression of women pervades the planet; it is, today, inescapable. But this is not due to “human nature.” This is not eternal. It had a beginning—and it can have an end. This web of patriarchy—these systems of relations between people that take many forms but which all painfully bind and suffocate women everywhere they turn, in every sphere of society, and in every country in the world, including the “advanced” societies of the west—this arose at a certain time in human history. It continues today because the system we now live under—capitalism-imperialism—both requires patriarchy to maintain its “order” and feeds off it in its exploitation of the masses. While the continual blind and profit-driven development of capitalism in some ways undercuts traditional social relations, pulling women into work outside the home and disrupting family relations in certain ways, capitalism cannot do away with this oppression.

In fact, the capitalist-imperialist class is driven to reinforce and deepen this oppression, especially as the basis for traditional roles gets further undercut. First, because the maintenance of the traditional family and traditional gender roles is a pillar of social order, of keeping people “in their places.” Every and any serious effort to break these chains could potentially call into question the legitimacy of the entire social order. And so it is that in every corner of the globe we see reactionary forces slamming women even more firmly and violently back into oppressive, and *often even more extremely repressive*, social roles in the name of “tradition.” Second, because the driving logic at the heart of capitalism requires that everything must ultimately serve the accumulation of ever more profit for some capitalist. The logic of such a system turns everyone into a means for more profit, and requires that every demand and aspiration fit itself to the “bottom line.” Today, even as discrimination continues in both old and new, and more perverse, ways, women *themselves* have increasingly been “commodified,” turned into objects. As this view of women increasingly becomes the social norm, it stamps and suffocates people’s thoughts and emotions, their hopes and their dreams. Further, capitalism distributes society’s product through the family even though in most cases people have long since stopped producing as a family. The more irrational this becomes, the more the capitalist-imperialists feel compelled to buttress this institution as a means of social order and control—and, in particular, to strengthen the authority of the father and his “right” to lord it over everyone else. Was this not the essence of Obama’s recent proposed “solution” to the excruciating oppression, the life without a future beyond being ostracized and hunted and/or cast off, facing Black and Latino youth? Again, capitalism *requires* patriarchy—and it reinforces it, with all its power.

The oppression of women in all its forms can be ended, it could actually be put in the museum of outmoded human practices. But, two things:

One, **this oppression can only be ended as part of a revolution**, in which the instruments of violence and repression of the reactionary classes are defeated and dismantled with the emergence of a revolutionary situation and a revolutionary people numbering in the millions; and in which the new revolutionary power then leads the people to undertake the work of building a whole new society in every sphere, eliminating exploitation and taking on *all* the terrible disparities and oppressive abuses woven into the capitalist-imperialist system; and

Two, **no revolution that does not make the ending of the oppression of women a central pivot of its mission can ever emancipate humanity**. Humanity needs revolution—a communist revolution that does away with capitalism and all exploiting systems, and all the institutions and ideas—including *patriarchy*—that thrive in its soil and reinforce it.

This *can* be done. As Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party USA, recently put it:

Revolution is not an impossible dream. It is not “unrealistic.” Changing all of society, changing the whole world, is not a

crazy or dangerous idea. What is crazy, and dangerous, is going along with the way things are, and where things are heading, under this system. Revolution—a radical change in how society works, how we relate as human beings, what our values are, how we understand the world and act to affect it—this is what we, what people all over the world, desperately need. And it is lot more realistic than trying to “fix” this system.

In fact there *have* been times—all too briefly—when whole societies have been mobilized to uproot the oppression of women, as part of doing away with capitalism and all the institutions that reinforce it. This was true in the communist revolutions of the 20th century—first in the Soviet Union in 1917, and then in China in 1949. These revolutions were eventually reversed, but while they exercised power they mobilized masses to take the first huge steps in uprooting the oppression of women. They showed, in their relatively brief time, that what once seemed eternal could be overcome, what once seemed impossible could actually be done. And this can be true, in a far greater way, in the revolutions that must be made now, in the 21st century.

The path to this revolution can only be forged through struggle—and this struggle must be built now. The increasingly acute ways in which this oppression comes down, the sharp clashes brought forward by the very measures taken by the rulers of society to contain things, creates both the need—and a fertile soil—for fierce struggle. **Fight the Power, and Transform the People, for Revolution** crystallizes the path to that revolution—enabling people to change themselves as they take part in the struggle to change the world. And there is so much that cries out to be changed, and to be struggled against—right now! **Break the Chains! Unleash the Fury of Women as a Mighty Force for Revolution!** In fact, the very holiday of International Women’s Day grew out of struggle—a massive demonstration in 1909 of women garment workers in New York City, who poured out of the dangerous sweatshops into the streets, in inspiring defiance. This outpouring inspired the first International Women’s Day on March 8, 1910, organized by communists and socialists. And in 1917, in Russia, a massive demonstration on International Women’s Day played a significant role in fanning the early sparks of struggle that eventually led to the Russian Revolution and the establishment of the Soviet Union.

Today, with the new synthesis of communism brought forward by Bob Avakian, there is a deeper understanding of the pivotal importance of the liberation of women to *all* of human emancipation, and the centrality of the monumental struggle necessary to uproot this. This new synthesis critically sums up the experience of the communist revolution, and draws from many other spheres of human thinking and endeavor as well. There was a tendency in the first stage of the communist revolution to see this question as important, even critical, but in certain ways to tend to “subordinate it” to other questions, and to not fully enough grasp the depth and acuity of this oppression and how decisive—how *integral*—it is to the total transformation of society. The new synthesis of communism has brought forward a deeper comprehension not only of how embedded this is in society but of *how the transformation of the situation of women can be—and must be—a motive force in the ongoing transformation of all society*, in the struggle to destroy ALL tradition’s chains. This inspiring goal of the emancipation of humanity is one that can and must be taken up by women and men, now, and actively worked for and fought for.

This system, and the main trends that claim to oppose this system, have no real answers to this terrible oppression. The communist revolution, today based on the new synthesis, does. Today we are faced with this task: to make revolution against this system at the soonest possible time, and to politically support this revolution wherever it is made, with the aim of a new socialist state power as the first step to that world without social antagonisms of any kind—a communist world. “Tomorrow,” where and as this power is seized, our movement will be faced with another task: the building of a socialist society, on the road to communism. This society will be a transition in which people will be mobilized and unleashed to overcome *all* the scars of capitalism, all the ways in which one part of humanity antagonistically dominates another—the exploitation of the many by the few, and the domination of intellectual life by a small elite, in the service of capital... the division of humanity into antagonistic nations and the horror-filled subjugation of some nations and nationalities by others... the distorted and oppressive division between the cities and rural areas, and the antagonistic way in which the rich diversity of the natural world is turned into a source of plunder, and nature itself is poisoned... ALL of these and more will be taken on and transformed, along with—again, as a crucial and pivotal element—the oppression of women by men. And all that will be done as part of and while supporting revolution all over the world, until every human being is truly free.

What is urgently required by humanity is the initiation of a new stage of this revolution, one that grasps the emancipation of women as a motive force AND A GREAT POTENTIAL STRENGTH for that revolution. What is urgently required *of us* is that we take up the process of making this revolution... that we become the new initiators of a new stage of this revolution, in which all of tradition’s chains are shattered and humanity rises to its full potential height, both collectively and as individuals.

**BREAK THE CHAINS! UNLEASH THE FURY OF WOMEN  
AS A MIGHTY FORCE FOR REVOLUTION!**

**A BETTER WORLD’S IN BIRTH! WE CAN AND MUST TRANSFORM EVERYTHING!**

**revcom.us**