



REVOLUTIONARY WORKER

Voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

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HUNTERS AND THE

Minutemen vigilantes.

HUNTED ON THE ARIZONA BORDER



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Our Ideology is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

Our Vanguard is the Revolutionary Communist Party

Our Leader is Chairman Avakian

Three Main Points

by Bob Avakian Chairman of the RCP,USA

What do we in the Revolutionary Communist Party want people to learn from all that is exposed and revealed in this newspaper? Mainly, three things:

- 1** *The whole system we now live under is based on exploitation—here and all over the world. It is completely worthless and no basic change for the better can come about until this system is overthrown.*
- 2** *Many different groups will protest and rebel against things this system does, and these protests and rebellions should be supported and strengthened. Yet it is only those with nothing to lose but their chains who can be the backbone of a struggle to actually overthrow this system and create a new system that will put an end to exploitation and help pave the way to a whole new world.*
- 3** *Such a revolutionary struggle is possible. There is a political Party that can lead such a struggle, a political Party that speaks and acts for those with nothing to lose but their chains: The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.*

This Party has the vision, the program, the leadership, and the organizational principles to unite those who must be united and enable them to do what must be done. There is a challenge for all those who would like to see such a revolution, those with a burning desire to see a drastic change for the better, all those who dare to dream and to act to bring about a completely new and better world: Support this Party, join this Party, spread its message and its organized strength, and prepare the ground for a revolutionary rising that has a solid basis and a real chance of winning.

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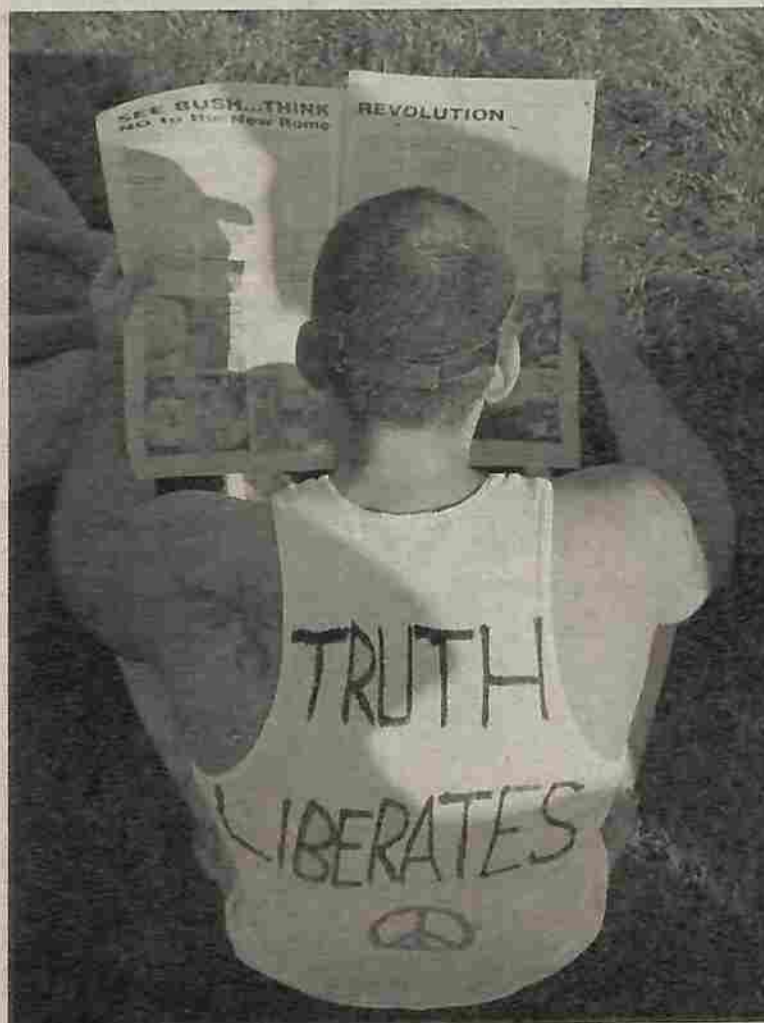
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Karol Wojtyla is dead. He had ruled over the Roman Catholic Church for 26 years as John Paul II.

All through that long reign, he aggressively worked to make his church a powerful conservative force throughout the world. He was a fierce opponent of social liberation, modern secular thinking, and equality for women.

He opened his pontificate with an intense political intervention into the Soviet bloc, and particularly his home country of Poland. In fact it was his aptitude for that mission that brought him to power. His public sponsorship of a rising Catholic nationalist opposition within Soviet-dominated eastern Europe was a crucial political weapon in the U.S. war arsenal during those days of the 1980s.

From the very beginning, John Paul toured the world, restlessly, in a way no other pope had done, preaching in 129 countries on 104 international trips. It was a campaign to reclaim the initiative for a rigidly conservative vision of humanity, morality, and society—and he tried to do this by projecting himself, his church, and his traditionalist ideology on the world stage as a hope-filled alternative to the suffering and alienation of modern life.

He stomped on the social activism of some priests, especially in Latin America. And he purged opposition from the ranks of the church hierarchy.

He rejected any erosion of key Catholic doctrines regarding women and sexuality—opposing any forms of birth control, including especially abortion, and rejecting any change in the second class status of women within his own church.

And for all this he is being hailed, rather shamelessly, at his death—as a unique, saintly, and towering human being. It is an ominous sign of our times that this apostle of submission, intolerance, and inequality gets honored in such extravagant ways.

A Conservative Warrior

From the very beginning of his pontificate, John Paul II stood for an aggressive reinsertion of the Catholic Church into world events. John Paul was *picked* to be on the frontlines—and the decision to choose a Polish Cardinal was a chess move by the U.S. bloc in their rivalry with the Soviet imperialists and their allies.

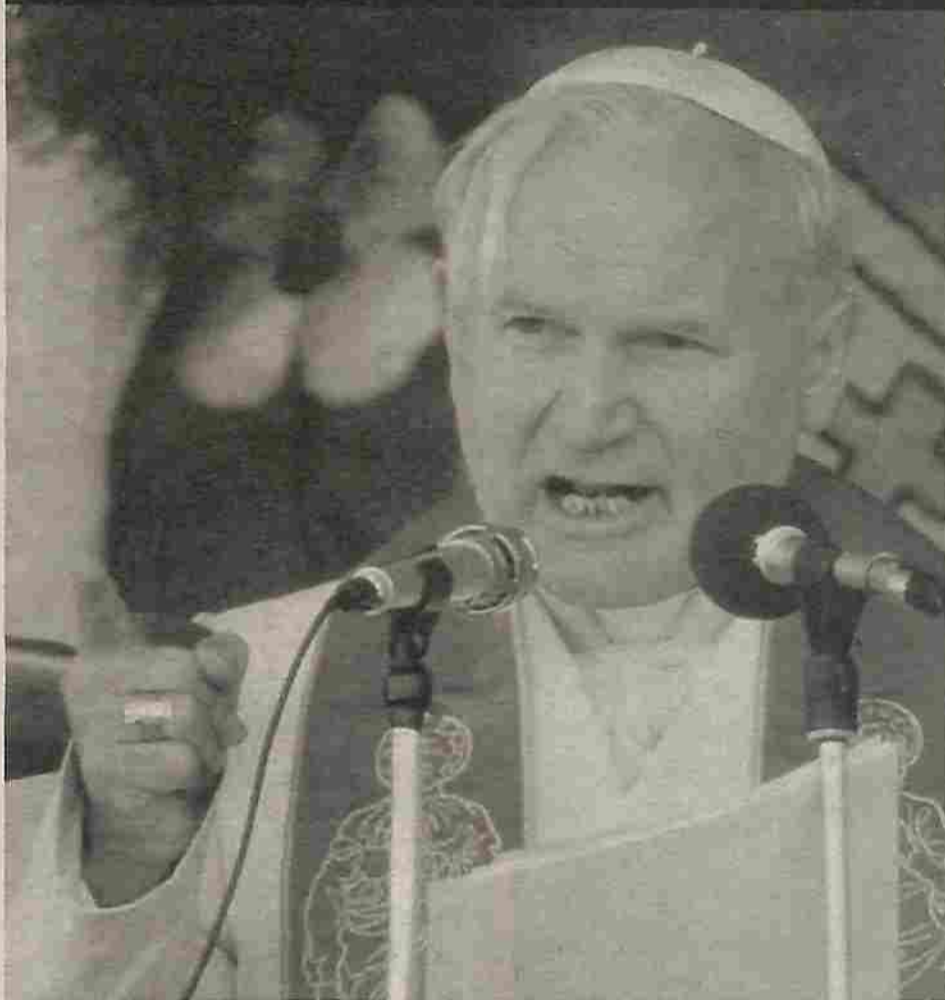
It is said that John Paul fought the Nazis who occupied his home country during World War 2—but all the evidence suggests that this is untrue.

Karol Wojtyla was a devout Catholic who sat out the Nazi occupation (as so many conservative Poles did), and studied quietly for the priesthood. After World War 2, he rose in the hierarchy as a bishop well-trained in political intrigue and maneuver.

Poland's Soviet-imposed government officially claimed the country was "socialist." But Polish society never went through any deep-rooted revolutionary transformations in culture, politics or economics. The unpopular authorities were associated with a vague, modern, urban secularism—while crudely enforcing their control over a society defined by private capitalism in agriculture and state capitalism in industry.

Karol Wojtyla was a leader of a Catholic

The Sinister Mission of John Paul II



Pope John Paul II denouncing revolution in Peru, 1985

apparatus that jealously protected its power and prerogatives within this revisionist Poland and served as a center for highly conservative pro-Western forces that were biding their time. By 1980, discontent in Poland had given rise to the Solidarity trade union movement that led millions of workers to defy the government with strikes and rallies. Once Wojtyla became Pope John Paul II, his Vatican acted behind the scenes to finance and guide the most reactionary Catholic forces within this political upheaval—seeking to keep the masses of people under control as they undermined the Soviet bloc.

All of this is now portrayed as if John Paul heroically championed "freedom." But in fact, his maneuvers and influence helped prevent anything truly revolutionary or new from emerging from those times. And in the years since the "fall of the wall," this resulting Catholic power within Poland has produced a relentless assault on the rights of women and on modern secular society generally.

Siding with Oligarchs and Death Squads

You can see the highly reactionary nature of the Pope's politics by looking at the operations he launched in Latin America. There chunks of his church had identified themselves with the "social concerns" of the poor and even aligned themselves with various movements against brutal pro-U.S. dictatorships.

Pope John Paul II was relentless in his war on these currents—including the reform-minded trends known as "Liberation Theology."

In 1980, on his first trip to Nicaragua, he publicly wagged his finger in the face of Ernesto Cardenal, a Catholic priest who held a post in the anti-U.S. Sandinista government.

This was a time of intense brutality and murder in Latin America. U.S.-backed governments and death squads were committing mass murder in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. And their vic-

tims included thousands of Catholic priests, nuns and lay people. And John Paul turned a deaf ear to all this. He denounced the activism on the side of the oppressed and blessed the powerful. Grassroots "base communities" among the poor were attacked and often dissolved, and the priests who worked within them were often removed. When Argentina's "Mothers of the Disappeared" asked to meet with John Paul to discuss the military torture and murder of government opponents, he refused.

In February 1985, John Paul made a special trip to Peru—where the fascist government was being challenged by the Maoist people's war led by the Communist Party of Peru. John Paul made a specific trip to Ayacucho, the heartland of the revolution, where the Peruvian military had been carrying out a bloodbath. From a church pulpit in Ayacucho he preached against the revolution: "The men who put their faith in armed struggle have allowed themselves to be tricked by false ideologies. I ask you, then, in the name of God: Change your course!" It was a demand that the people's fighters capitulate.

As his plane approached Peru's capital, Lima, the lights of the city went out. In the darkness, this Pope got his reply from the revolution: across the side of a nearby hillside, a series of bonfires blazed in the shape of the hammer and sickle, symbol of revolutionary workers and peasants.

Throughout his career, John Paul systematically moved the most rightwing clerics imaginable into the highest church positions. Just one example: Angelo Sodano had the "papal nuncio" (Vatican ambassador) to the murderous Pinochet regime in Chile. Sodano openly defended Pinochet's fascist rule by saying, "Masterpieces can also have small errors. I would advise you not to dwell on the errors of the painting, but concentrate on the marvelous general impression." Today, this Angelo Sodano is a Cardinal.

The elevation of bitter reactionaries, supporters of fascist murder, and opponents of popular movements was carried out in country after country. In 1998 an arrest warrant was issued for Augusto Pinochet while he was in London, and the Pope openly opposed the prosecution of this notorious fascist.

Conformity and Persecution

"Above all, believers distinguished by critical thinking and energetic reform are persecuted in inquisitorial fashion....The consequence: a Church of surveillance, in which denunciation, fear and lack of liberty are widespread. The bishops regard themselves as Roman governors instead of the servants of churchgoers, the theologians write in a conformist manner—or not at all."

Hans Küng, Catholic theologian silenced by John Paul II

John Paul was extremely active throughout his papacy, entrenching and refining conservative Church doctrine. He issued 14 encyclicals (official papal instructions) on a wide range of issues.

What emerged was a traditionalist Catholic doctrine that rejected and denounced socialism (as an essentially atheist doctrine) while upholding entrepreneurial

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All Out
for May 1st,
International
Workers Day
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Create Public Opinion for Revolution on a Grand Scale

After 26 years, this is the last issue of the *Revolutionary Worker*. We are changing our name and our look to capture the vision of a revolutionary communist newspaper of the 21st century.

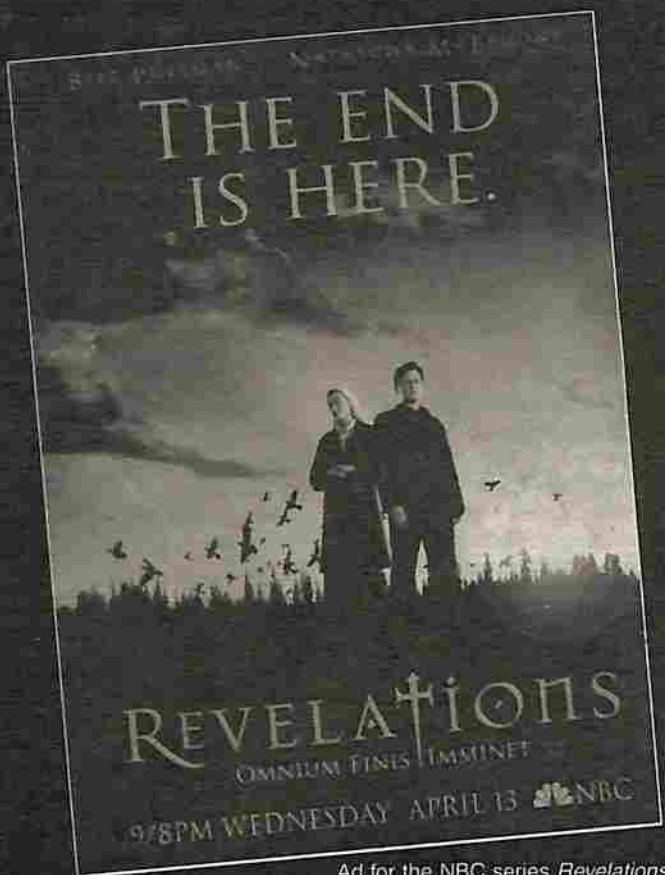
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Join in the SPECIAL MAY FIRST EFFORT— to distribute 100,000 copies of *REVOLUTION* newspaper's first issue and 5,000 copies of the DVD samplers of Chairman Bob Avakian's talk, *Revolution: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Possible, What It's all About.*

- ★ Contact RCP Publications or your local Revolution Books to order your bundles of *REVOLUTION* and stacks of DVD samplers.
- ★ Organize your friends and comrades to make ambitious plans so that *REVOLUTION* becomes a reference point for millions.
- ★ Get *REVOLUTION* out broadly—among the proletarian people and all strata of society—and develop networks for expanding waves of distribution throughout this summer and fall.
- ★ Contribute generously to make this effort possible and successful.

The Armageddon Porn of NBC's Revelations

by Sunsara Taylor



Ad for the NBC series *Revelations*.

On April 13 NBC began pumping Armageddon pornography into the homes of millions—*Revelations*, their new fast-paced, adrenaline-pumping, mystery/thriller mini-series based on an extremely dangerous interpretation of the last book of the Bible.

Whatever their intentions, NBC is marking a major leap into the mainstream by the ministers of Christian fascist propaganda. This series does more than simply dramatize metaphysics or even Christianity in a general sense. When asked, "Why not [a] 'Touched by an Angel'-type [series]? Why *Jesus*?" executive producer Gavin Polone answered that the majority of Americans believe in a Christian God and that making it "more specific is more real" to viewers.

Writer/creator David Seltzer explained, "It's about how we live our lives, our responsibility to what's happening to the planet socially, politically, physically and what we have done *really* to create a scenario that looks like what is described in the Bible as the End of Days. We have a character that believes that man still has a responsibility and that it is conceivable that mankind can step in and find a way before that happens."

But this comes at a time when a born-again president claims the "jury is still out" on evolution and cloaks his international invasions and restrictions of civil liberties in biblical double-speak. It comes as his crew of Christian fascists are using religion to grab for themselves more and more unchecked power. It comes when a growing population of millions is being cultivated and unleashed to accept and serve this agenda as non-thinking true believers. Into this moment, this new mini-series and its creators consciously come down on the side of all this.

On NBC's own website, the blurbs about this film set up the two main characters as unlikely allies—"one who worships God and one who worships Science." Excuse me? Since when did any real scientist ever capitalize the word "science"? Since when does the word "worship" have anything to do with a scientific method for understanding the world around us?

The premise is false in this series, just as it is in all the Armageddon fiction that I have encountered. They take the Ivy League, college-educated brainiac (in this series it is a Harvard professor, oh my!) and then they break his "faith" in "Science" through the unfolding of fictitious events which "Science" cannot explain.

Now, I am all for fiction. As one very funny New Yorker quipped while walking past a group of us who protested at NBC the first day this aired, "You have a problem with the Bible? What, you don't believe in fiction!" Well, not only do I believe in fiction, I happen to be a fan of it. But not fiction which poses as reality.

I am ready to suspend disbelief and go along, for the sake of a story, with a man not bleeding when his finger gets cut off. I could even handle a girl channeling some kind of spirits while in a coma. But anyone who has ears to hear (to paraphrase the book of Revelation) has heard that millions in this country don't realize things such as this *are* fiction. And, again, the creators of this series are all too aware of this. When executive producer Gavon Polone was told that 60% of Americans believe the Book of Revelation

will come true, Polone upped the ante by responding: "40% believe it will come true in *their* lives!"

But the manipulation and misrepresentation of science is much deeper than the more obviously fantastical elements of the series. The backdrop of this series, which poses as "reality" and not fiction, is where the more insidious assault on science and rationality takes place. Everything in the way the film is set is stacked. Science is presented as a false religion that some stubborn intellectuals narrowly cling to. The most powerful scientific arguments are not presented. The very first words of the episode are from a "scientist" lecturing that the emergence of life was "inevitable" but essentially unexplainable and that life emerged and evolved "into the hands of man." In fact, the emergence of life was not inevitable. And evolution does not have an end goal—life is not evolving *towards* anything. Evolution is the adaptation of living organisms based on their own naturally occurring variance from one generation to the next and the reproductive competitive advantage that some variants may gain in different and changing environments.

So this film sets up a false argument. It brings in a thoroughly unbelievable Voice of Scientific Authority to set up such simplistic and false terms about what it would take to discredit science, and then goes on to fictionalize conditions which fulfill those terms (miracles, murders, and supernatural possessions).

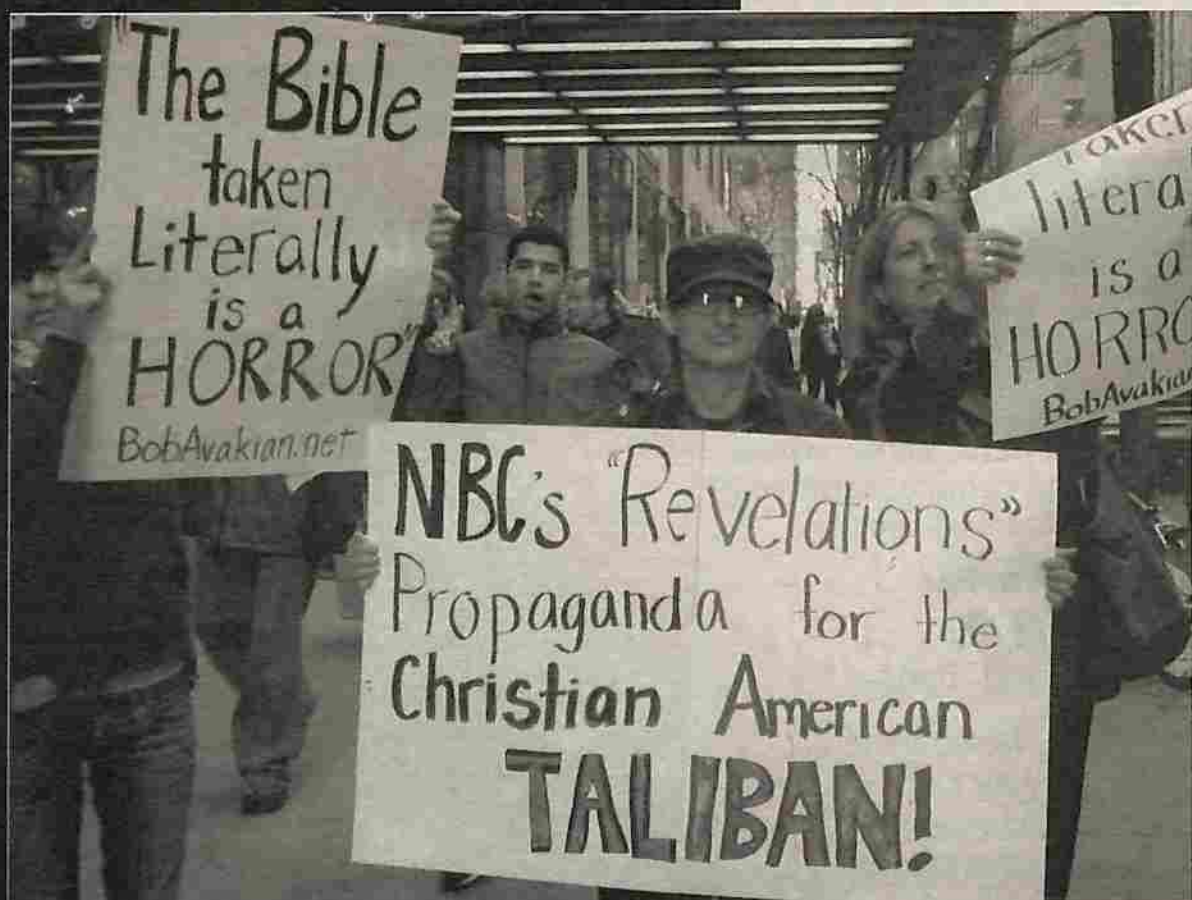
The NBC website provides resources for "both sides"—as if there is a legitimate debate between the view that biblical prophecies can explain the world (links to prophetic biblical resources are first on their list) and biblical skeptics (at the bottom of their page there are some links to some good websites which criticize biblical literalism). But here again, the argument is stacked. On one side, the audience is offered a religious, air-tight worldview, and on the other they are offered criticisms of religious literalism but *not* an explanation of a scientific worldview. All this as if there haven't been hundreds of years of history of science battling against religious dogma and being proven correct, repeatedly. As if it is all still just "up for debate," and "who is to say" which is right!

There were a couple things that surprised me about the first episode of this series. First was the degree to which suspicion and sinistrism was cast on the medical professionals. Apparently, doctors just hover like vultures, evilly scheming to "harvest" the organs of innocents who are stuck in a "persistent vegetative state."

Second, Sister Joseph Montafiore (the "true believing" nun who is the protagonist of the series), is much more abrasive and rigidly dogmatic than I had expected. The message seems to be that it actually is a *good* idea to scream and quote the Scripture at people who are confused or trying to think. No, don't give someone space. Quote the Bible. Keep hammering. You are right. Never pause. You will be vindicated.

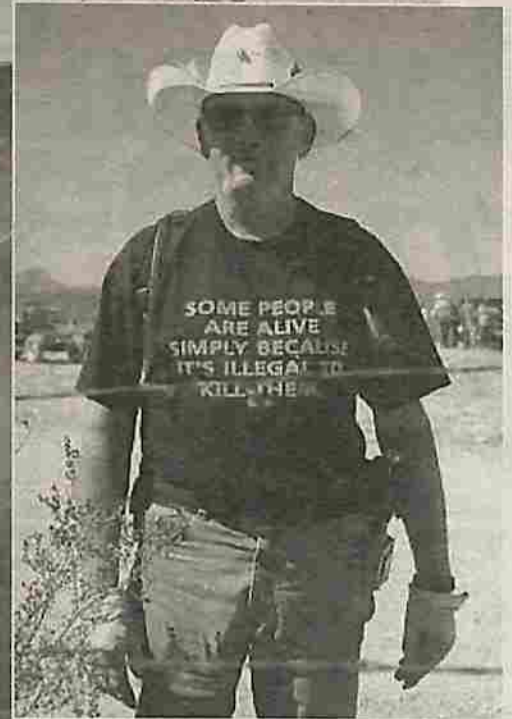
Speaking of the Scripture, there has been a certain amount of buzz about how various leading "experts" in End Times and biblical prophecies have criticized the way the NBC film strays from a strict reading of the Bible. The authors of the *Left Behind* novels, Jerry Jenkins and Tim LaHaye, have ridiculed the notion portrayed in the series that Jesus returns as a baby in need of human protection or even the idea that man can intervene in the playing out of End Times prophecy. But, even with this, forces like Jenkins and LaHaye (and others, like Pat Robertson's 700 Club) have clearly welcomed this series as an opportunity to bring Christianity—and in particular a literal interpretation of biblical End Times—further into public life, giving openings for "true believers" to preach over the water cooler at work and sparking public debate. Already the series has given the green light for people like Fox's Scarborough to hold an entire show dedicated to discussing whether things like the recent major tsunami in Asia are signs of the End of Days.

This series is *not* harmless entertainment. No less than the propaganda that associated Jewish people with rats in Nazi Germany, films and other cultural works like this do great harm. The slick packaging and flashy ads are part of "softening up" society to accept things people never would have before. They foster a hurtful morality that excuses horrors done to "non-believers" and promotes an airtight worldview that hardens itself to reason, facts, or rationality. In a time of unjust war, deep divisions in the world, economic insecurities, and great moral questions, this is propaganda for a Christian American Taliban.



Protest at NBC Studios, New York.

HUNTERS AND THE HUNTED ON THE ARIZONA BORDER



Minuteman vigilante at a border fence.

MINUTEMEN VIGILANTES TARGET IMMIGRANTS

Minuteman vigilantes arriving at the border.

BY LUCIENTE ZAMORA AND NIKOLAI GARCIA

Somewhere along the Mexico/U.S. border, between the small Arizona towns of Naco and Douglas, a retired ex-Marine from Missouri stands in front of his campsite and American flag. On his right side is a 9mm handgun, and on his left is a cell phone. He holds up a pair of binoculars and looks toward the Mexican border, waiting.

The man is part of the Minuteman Project, a group of military vets and militant rightwingers who have been recruited over the Internet to patrol a 20-mile stretch of the Arizona border during the month of April.

They gathered in RV camps, and celebrated their mission with all the camaraderie of a vacation cookout.

They deployed themselves out into the desert wearing camouflage, often packing guns, night vision goggles, walkie-talkies, and cell phones with the number for the Border Patrol on speed dial.

They consider the migrant workers who cross this border looking for work to be an enemy invading force. And they describe themselves as merely "Americans doing the job Congress won't."

They are hunting human beings.



Immigrants in Agua Prieta, across the border from Arizona, April 6.

The Minuteman Project

Since April 1, recruits of the Minuteman Project have been gathering from Colorado, California, Texas, New Mexico. Retired border patrol agents, ex-Marines, former corrections officers, neo-nazis from the National Alliance, white separatists, and others answered a call put out by the Minuteman Project to defend the "Homeland" from the "invasion of illegal aliens."

Some came by car or RV, others flew into the area on their private planes—but they all arrived on a mission to hunt "illegal aliens." Officially, they say they will only "call" Migra Agents to "report" crossings—but vigilantes with guns, enthusiastic about the hunt, suggest they are ready and eager to kill immigrants if given a chance. After orientation, they dispersed in bands of vigilantes across a 20-mile stretch of the Arizona/Mexico border.

Two of the Minuteman Project's founders are Chris Simcox and Jim Gilchrist, both originally from California.

Chris Simcox—a longtime vigilante

activist who bought the local *Tombstone Press* when he moved to Arizona—wrote a letter addressed to President Bush, Vice-President Dick Cheney, John Ashcroft, and Tom Ridge. In that letter Simcox described the lack of border patrol agents as "treasonous behavior" and vowed to contribute to "national defense" by stopping the "invasion." He announced he would take it upon himself and his group to patrol the border.

When he heard Simcox on conservative AM radio, Jim Gilchrist decided he had found an ally for his idea of forming a vigilante group that would patrol the border.

These Minutemen inspired by rightwing Republican Pat Buchanan's claim that urgent action is needed to preserve the U.S. as an ethnically white, Christian-European nation. Their mission statement says that if this is not done, "Future generations will inherit a tangle of rancorous, unassimilated, squabbling cultures with no common bond to hold them together, and a certain guarantee of the death of this nation as a harmonious 'melting pot.'"

The Hunted

Somewhere in Mexico a man fits two days worth of clothes into a small bag. His wife cries as she watches her husband pack.

From the doorway a small boy stares at his mother crying. He understands what his father told him: "I have to leave for a while." But, unlike his mother, he's still not old enough to realize the deadly journey his father is about to embark upon and the possibility that he may never see him again.

All throughout Mexico, men and women, young and old, are saying goodbye to their home towns and their families in order to insure survival for at least one more day.

Many will end up in the Downtown L.A. sweatshop district attached to sewing machines, and sometimes not even earning minimum wage. Others will go beyond southern California to pick garlic in Fresno, or all the way to Florida to pick tomatoes, or somewhere in between, like North Carolina, to work at a meat packing plant.

For most of the time that they spend in this country, until they return to Mexico or until they die trying to pay off debts, they will be treated as second-class citizens.

They will be harassed for not speaking English and will be in constant fear of the passing of another state law that seeks to deny their children education or health services. They will always stay as far away as possible from any authorities.

But for the ones that aren't so "lucky," a different fate awaits them.

Hunting Humans in Modern America

"Humans. That's the greatest prey there is on earth."

Roger Barnett, former deputy sheriff and rancher, Sierra Vista, Arizona

The cold-blooded vigilante attacks on immigrants aren't a new development. Ranchers in Arizona have killed undocumented immigrants for years. They have

Continued on page 14.

The RW Interview

Lynne Stewart: Then They Came for the

On February 10, the well-known criminal defense attorney Lynne Stewart and two of her former legal co-workers were convicted on a range of serious charges. Stewart, who has defended numerous political prisoners, will be sentenced on July 15 and faces up to 30 years in prison. Because of the conviction, she has been disbarred—which means she cannot practice law. Her conviction marks a dangerous turning point in the history of the legal rights long thought sacrosanct in this country.

Back on April 9, 2002, then-Attorney General John Ashcroft flew to New York to announce with great fanfare the federal indictment of Lynne Stewart together with a translator and a paralegal who had worked with her. This was in the frenzied atmosphere following 9/11, and the three were charged with providing "material support" to "terrorists." (A fourth person indicted was out of the country.)

What quickly became clear was that Stewart's real crime, in the eyes of those like Ashcroft, was aggressively representing the interests of one of her clients—a client the government felt deserved no legal rights at all. Further, the government's case against Stewart was based on secret recordings of conversations of one of her co-defendants and conversations between her and her client. Such lawyer-client conversations have historically been privileged from government eavesdropping.

Stewart's client was the fundamentalist Islamic cleric Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, who was convicted and sentenced to life in 1996 for seditious conspiracy related to alleged plots to attack New York City landmarks. In particular, she was charged with giving a press release expressing some of Rahman's views to a Reuters reporter.

Stewart is known for her zealous legal representation of defendants ranging from Larry Davis, who defended himself when a crew of drug-dealing cops tried to kill him, to revolutionary Black nationalists and Palestinian Americans. Her prosecution and conviction have sent shockwaves through the legal community.

Information on her defense committee can be found at www.lynnestewart.org.

The RW recently spoke with Stewart about the issue embodied in her prosecution.

RW: First of all, we want to express to you on behalf of the paper and our readers our admiration and our support for the stand that you've taken and the courage you've shown in the course of this whole struggle.

I know many people kind of shuddered when they heard the news of your conviction, and there was this sense that something major had just happened and that what are supposed to be the legal norms in this country had just taken a big hit. What do you see as different in the legal realm "the day after"?

Lynne Stewart: Well, I see that there is a new view, or we must take a new view, of whether or not anyone who has been demonized with the "T" word can receive a fair trial. I think that the verdict showed that perhaps this is a fear that a jury cannot get over. I don't want to distrust juries, because I think that the system itself is a viable system. To bring together 12 strangers to hear your side and their side and then communally make a decision has some merit to it. But it doesn't have merit when those people have been engraved upon—not just written upon—but engraved upon by the media—by, as somebody put it to me, 30 years of television, and they go in with a fixed agenda, or a fixed idea, where the government is able to lead them. I think that if anyone had told us, even 10 years ago, that torture would be acceptable, that the American people as a whole would say, "Oh, it's okay to do that now," well, we would have thought that would be remarkable. We would not probably have believed that. And I think the verdict in my case sort of stands for the same kind of fear, which of course is orchestrated by the government. And people do march to that drumbeat.

RW: Defending political and demonized defendants has been your life's calling, as well as defending the right of defendants to even have a defense. What has your conviction and your being disbarred meant for you personally and for your clients who have been depending on you?

Stewart: It is the most difficult thing for me every morning to drive past One Hundred Centre Street (which is the criminal court here in New York City) and to see the lawyers and the defendants going in and knowing the world they go into, and what is going on, and not having a case ready for trial, or being investigated, or being bargained out.

Not to be part of that life after 30 years is the most difficult thing for me. It caused me the most tears, more than anything else. I said to my husband, Ralph, the other day: You know it comes with the good side, of

course, and the good side is, now I'm free to do nothing but organize people around my case and around fighting back and making people aware.

I feel for the people I represented that now are casting about for new lawyers. I purposely did not have a lot of cases on the front burner; a student from City College, who had been wrongfully arrested for protesting against budget cuts, a Black woman whose son had been murdered by the New York City Police Department (and amazingly that same police department comes to her home and arrests her in her bed for criminal trespass). These were two cases that were on my front burner to try when I was acquitted. Now those folks are probably going to be working with my son, Jeffrey, who is also a criminal defense lawyer and who has taken on the cases.

But my own sense of loss is over not being able to defend those, and the many others that are out there that I don't even know about who might have or could have come to me. It is a big blow to not be "the lawyer."

People come up to me, or stop me in the street and they'll say, "Are you 'the lawyer'?" I'll say, "I'm the lawyer. I'm the one." They'll say, "I thought you were." So not being "the lawyer" anymore is a blow. It hurts.

RW: There were some pretty shocking intrusions into what are supposed to be your confidential conversations with your client. Could you give a description of just how intrusive the surveillance the government did was?

Stewart: The proof at trial was based on over 75,000 wiretapped conversations which were seized from my co-defendant's telephone line, Internet line, e-mails, and fax line. That was Ahmed Sattar—he had been an outspoken critic of the Egyptian government, which of course has been criticized by many human rights organizations.

These seizures were done under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, commonly known as FISA. The FISA court never saw a warrant it didn't like, and signed on to absolutely everything. They surveilled him from the years 1994 to the year 2002. And I'm talking about everything. There was no minimization, like taking out the call to the psychiatrist or the call to the doctor. Everything was taken.

As bad as that was, nowadays, if people want to understand the extent to which civil liberties have eroded, now all that would be necessary for an equally broad wiretap authorization would be a signature of the Attorney General. Under the Patriot Act, he may authorize such a widespread invasion

The RW Interview

A special feature of the RW to acquaint our readers with the views of significant figures in art, theater, music and literature, science, sports and politics. The views expressed by those we interview are, of course, their own; and they are not responsible for the views published elsewhere in our paper.

of privacy, merely because he suspected there to be a security problem.

We litigated that in part, but of course it was not a tap on me—I was never a target, they did not tap the phone in my office or at home. But I have very little doubt that were this to happen at this point, they would do that.

I do think this is a wholesale invasion of which we have to be very conscious, because it no longer requires really anybody to approve it, except those people who are making all the rules and are passing "legislation" to suit their own aims.

RW: But they did record your conversations with your client. What is the significance of lawyer-client confidentiality?

Stewart: I think it goes to the core of the way we represent persons accused of crime. And also to the core, if you will, of political persons who are criminalized by the government. When I say that, I mean we enjoyed for all of the years of the Constitution's life a privilege which said it was in the best interests of the state and the people to allow lawyers and their clients to discuss cases confidentially. In other words, they can tell their darkest secrets, and the lawyer can advise based upon knowing the full story of what is happening to this human person whose life is really placed in your charge. This changes all the rules.

And remember, this was a conversation listened to in a jail, where a person is certainly in a situation where there are no viable alternatives. It wasn't like we could

say, "Let's go out and get a cup of coffee" and discuss this. If a person can't be discreet in the sense of being able to say everything, it really changes the landscape remarkably. I always like to use this example: Suppose there was an eyewitness for a person accused of a crime, and suppose that eyewitness was someone that law enforcement or the state could get to fairly easily and intimidate. Would you really want to tell your lawyer about that eyewitness? On the other hand, could you not tell the lawyer? These are the kind of practical problems. It seems to me it goes to the foundation of being able to vigorously and ably represent. Because if you don't know the entire panoply of this person's concerns, you cannot really advise them adequately.

The other thing they did, of course, is they searched my office. Thinking that these were sacred precincts, what of what one put in notes and slipped into a file? This now raises concerns not just of the person who is listened in on, but raises a bigger question. Can you afford to go to a lawyer such as me, or such as Bill Kunstler, or such as Clarence Darrow who made a practice of representing the demonized, if the government is likely to vamp on that lawyer, come into their office, spend 12 hours searching, take their hard drive, and thus find out not only about the client that may be the point of information, but also all the other clients you may have? Someone said to me, it's not just a "chilling effect"—that's what we say in legal terms—this is really sub-Arctic, this is the deep freeze, of constraining



Lynne Stewart at a protest during the Republican National Convention, New York City, August 29, 2004.

Lawyers ...

lawyers in particular. And of course we all know that this administration specializes in constraining of lawyers.

One of the things that came out was when we asked for an assurance that they would not be listening to us during co-defendant meetings...

RW: During your trial?

Stewart: Pretrial and during the trial. Anyone who has ever been involved in a political trial knows that the meetings among co-defendants to discuss strategy, to look back on 10 years of events and try and interpret them—to say to someone “what did you mean when you said that?”—is really crucial to the preparation of the case. They refused to assure us that we would be able to meet privately! They assured us that there would not be certain wires—that there was no court-ordered wire tap. But they were not able to assure us that we would not be surveilled under the Patriot Act or some other construct. And so, as a result, we had no co-defendant meetings, which I personally feel was a problem in the sense of having a unified defense.

RW: Related to your comment of “it’s not just a chilling, but a sub-Arctic atmosphere,” the government really pulled out all the stops to get a conviction in your case, with Ashcroft personally flying to New York to announce your indictment. How has the public opinion campaign against you unfolded? The government came up with this sound-bite that “this is about an attorney who crossed the line.” It looks more to us like the line has been moved. How do you see this?



Iraqi prisoner tortured by U.S. troops in Abu Ghraib prison.

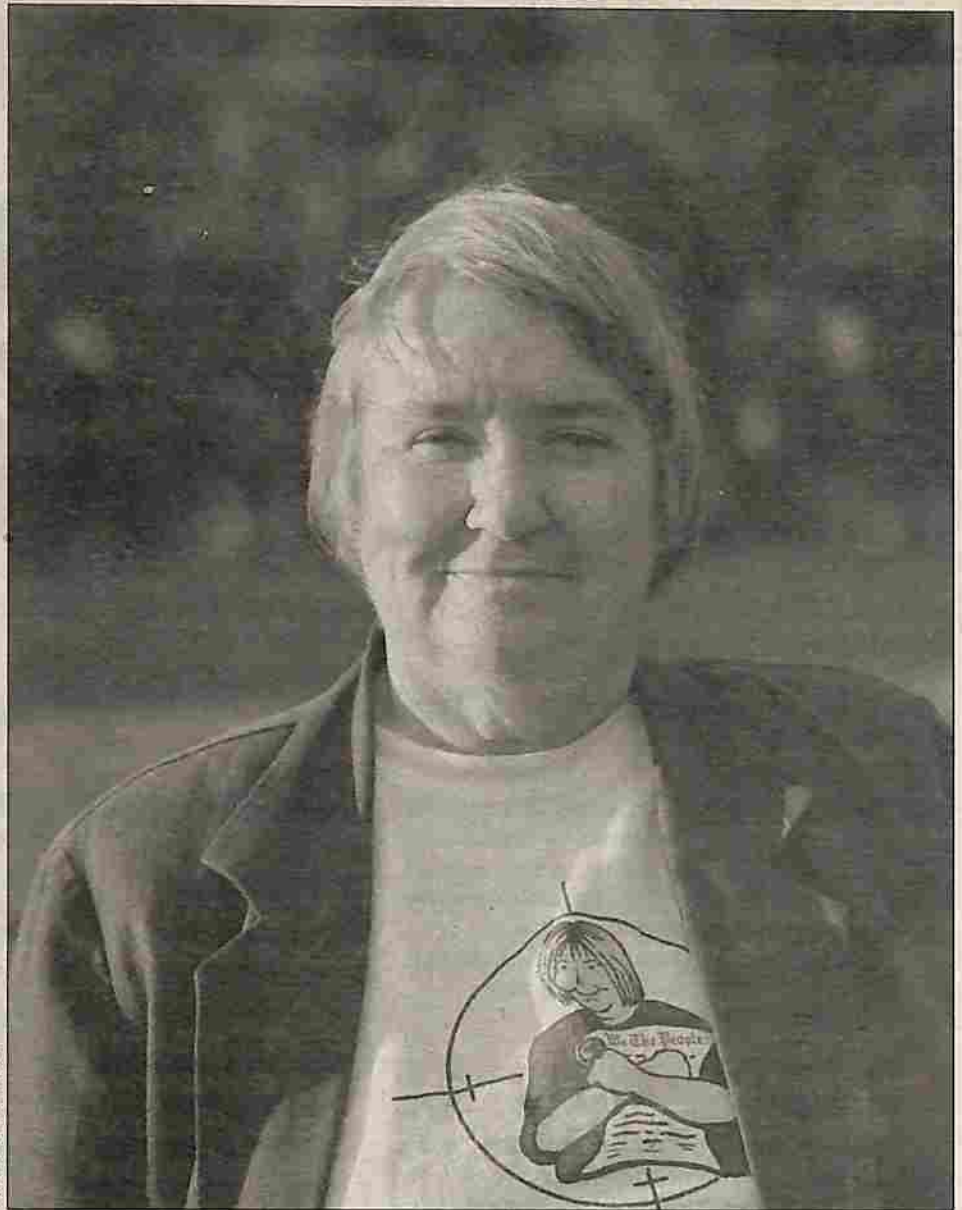
Stewart: It is an unfortunate analogy for them, and I hope we’ll be able to turn it on them. Indeed, there was a line in 2000, and indeed there is a different line in 2002, and a different one yet in 2005. So if you start a game and the foul lines are at such a place, you rely upon that. And in this case when we made the press release in 2000, I relied upon the lines as they had been drawn at that point. What’s more, my co-counsels Ramsey Clark and Abdeen Jabara likewise respected that line, and that line included press releases.

They [the govt.] wrote me a letter; they basically did not say, “We’re going to arrest you, you’re going to be indicted, we’re presenting the case to a grand jury.” They wrote me a letter in the year 2000, and said, “We’re drawing up a different set of SAMS,* and we’d like you to sign that before you are able to visit again.” These [SAMS] are basically regulations that are like adhesive; you either sign them, or you don’t get in jail to see your client.

So we all signed on. We all bartered with them as to what this language should be, but we all did sign on. Press releases were made after that date. So when I say it’s not only moving the line—the government then only blew the whistle and called “foul” on one of the lawyers that they claim had crossed the line—not on the rest of the team. It’s an unfortunate metaphor. It’s seized upon by the criminal bar in particular, because we’re all very self-conscious about the fact that, when you’re working for criminal defendants, you have to always be very aware of a request by a client which may indeed aid the client’s criminal enterprise.

For example, a client says to you, “Call my mother and tell her to shut down all the phones north of 96th Street.” You’re going to say, “I don’t think I can do that; you’ll have to handle that yourself.” But if the client says, “Call my mother, I’m in this jail, they won’t give me my glasses, they won’t give me my pills”—that’s a different thing. That’s not aiding his criminal enter-

* By order of President Clinton’s attorney general, Stewart’s client was being held in a federal prison under “Special Administrative Measures” (SAMs). These “measures” meant holding him in complete isolation—he could not have visitors, phone calls, or contact with other inmates, and contact with his wife was extremely constrained. In order to even talk to him, lawyers, including Stewart, were compelled to sign statements (so-called “SAM agreements”) which included various restrictions—that changed over time—on what kinds of communications the lawyers could have with their client.



Lynne Stewart

prise. Unless, of course, the government wishes to characterize it as such. If they said, “Your helping him get his glasses is going to help him being a criminal,” then it’s really such an amorphous line they are talking about. But it’s not one we’re not aware of. Somehow or other, I don’t think people are being genuine when they talk about me “crossing the line.” They well understand that there are ethical considerations which make you do things in a way different than the government may define that line.

RW: A big part of this prosecution was to send a message to the legal community, and to society in general, that from now on certain people will not be accorded basic legal rights. What has been the response in the legal community to your conviction? Some seem to have been drawn into the “she crossed over the line” argument, but others seem to have been genuinely shocked into a realization of just how dangerous all this is and see the need to come to the defense of the very first lawyers who come under attack.

Stewart: Well, as we were walking down to this interview, a lawyer I didn’t know from the Bronx, as he identified himself, said, “God bless you Lynne, I’m praying for you every day. It scares me to death what they did to you. It bothers me. I pray for you every day.” I don’t know this man, but this is not an unusual event.

Whether this person can be organized to do anything is the real issue before us with

regard to lawyers. I, of course, had tremendous support from the Lawyers Guild. From day one, they were there for me, an outpouring of support. I just spoke this weekend to their Northwest group as they met, to tell them what my current situation is. And also the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers have been supportive and done an *amicus*, and I’ve spoken at their conventions. And others have spoken on my behalf. They understand how this shoe pinches, and the Guild obviously understands how this shoe pinches.

I think for most of the bar—the unorganized or the disorganized or the individualistic bar—they are scared, and like everyone else, they operate on some level of fear of “I don’t want this to happen to me, this can’t happen to me.” So they are disinclined to ally themselves with me. It’s easier to just take the government line, which is, “She went over the line.”

But we are unstinting in our efforts to get the lawyers behind me. We think for this judge in particular, who really was a lawyer himself for all of his life, was a Watergate prosecutor, he wants to hear from lawyers what they think about the conviction. So we are very busily attempting to organize many lawyers and getting them to write what’s on their mind.

But my sense from the people who’ve spoken to me—of course no one’s going to be mean to me, I guess—the people who spoke to me, they definitely have expressed that they feel there is now some kind of hovering. That there’s footsteps in the hallway behind them. That it’s no longer the autonomy which was governed solely by the rules of ethics. It’s now an encroachment by the government—as I said earlier—into the realm of decision making, into the realm of how best to defend a client. And that really strikes at the heart of the defense function. Because that’s what we decide: “Do I defend this person? Am I raising all the issues and then go into trial? Do I try and make a deal for this person? Do I give up the search issue?” These decisions that we make day in and day out, now there’s a third party sitting in on them. And that’s what makes lawyers frightened.

However, and we always should be sensible of this, we tried to organize in New York what is known as the “white shoe bar.” Those are the folks who basically do corporate work—and maybe this is too remote for them, but certainly the white collar criminal defense bar—and we were unsuccessful.

I think our lack of success stems from the fact that we’re defending people from minority communities who were criminalized by economics, and we’re defending

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Lynne Stewart (back to camera) with co-attorney William Kunstler and Larry Davis during his trial, 1988.

The Danger of the Church and the Challenges Today

by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

EDITORS' NOTE: This is part of a series of excerpts on various subjects — drawn from conversations and discussions, as well as more formal talks, by Bob Avakian — which we will be running in this newspaper over the next period of time. It has been edited for publication and footnotes have been added.

When we talk about the dangers posed by the Christian Fascists and the configuration in ruling structures of U.S. society now, some people say, "Are you people just trying to scare people into scurrying to your banner?" Well, no. This is very real. And one of the things that was very important in the discussion that followed the talk I gave on the dictatorship of the proletariat ("Dictatorship and Democracy, and the Socialist Transition to Communism"), was the question about whether there's "a perfect fit" between this Christian Fascist program and

the interests and needs of the ruling class, at this time at least. (This discussion was published in *RW* #1261, December 12, 2004.) And I believe this was dealt with in a dialectical as well as a materialist way there, in saying "No, there's not a perfect fit, but that doesn't mean this program won't come to predominate." It was pointed out that things have a momentum and dynamic of their own; these Christian Fascist forces are being courted and even manipulated by people like Bush adviser Karl Rove and others, but that doesn't mean they don't have their own agenda, their own interests (in a manner of speaking), their own outlook, and their own objectives that they're fighting for. And the more that they've been organized, the more this takes on a certain life of its own.

As reflected in that *New York Times Magazine* article by Ron Suskind ("Faith,

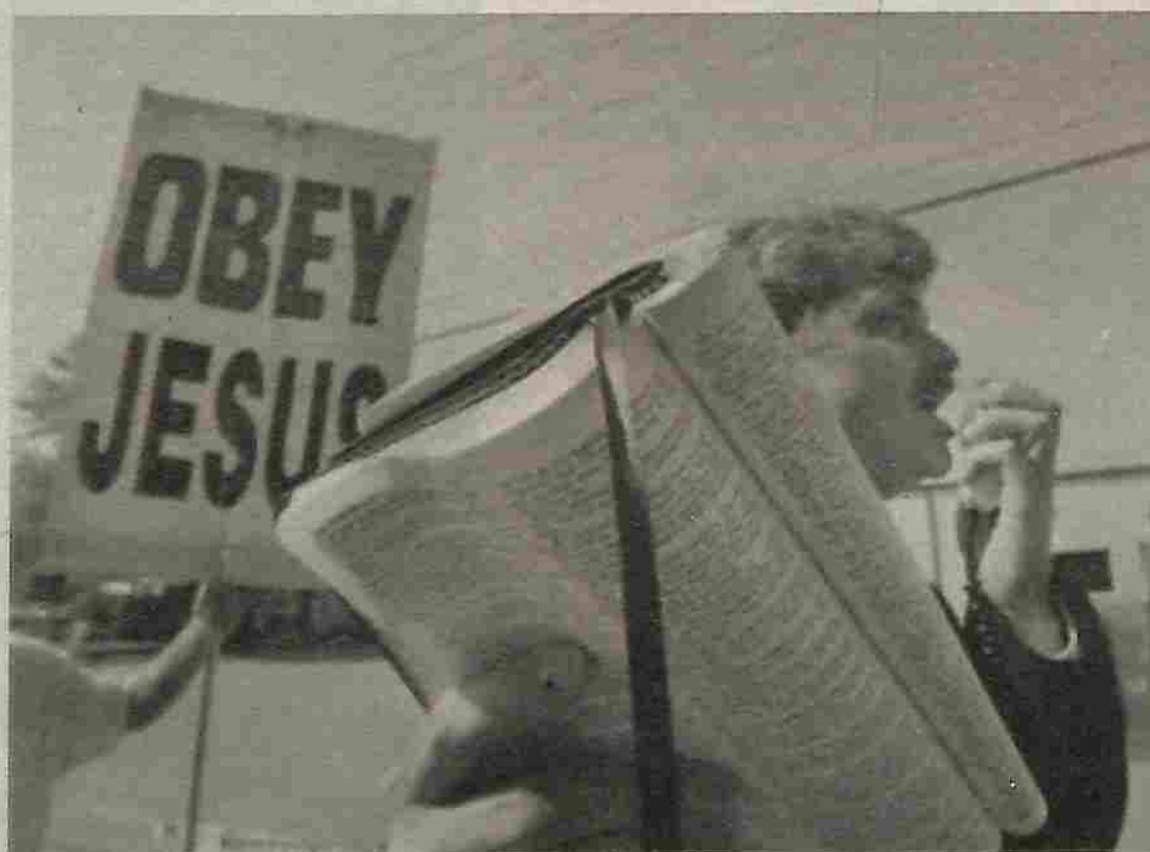
Certainty and the Presidency of George W. Bush"—*New York Times Magazine*, October 17, 2004), this is being recognized even by significant sections of the ruling class and their representatives and spokespeople, and certainly we should not fail to recognize the seriousness of this — both in terms of the dangers it poses, and also in terms of the contradictions it reflects, including in particular the intensifying contradictions within the ruling class. There is a contradiction here, between "not a perfect fit" and the fact that nonetheless there are driving forces behind this Christian Fascist program, which are very powerful and very powerfully connected. That's also a very acute contradiction that's playing itself out and will continue in an even more intense way to play itself out, if not in a straight line necessarily, over a period of time—and perhaps not that long a period of time.

In a number of talks and writings (for example, in the "Right-Wing Conspiracy" piece, *Preaching from a Pulpit of Bones*, the "Pyramid of Power" article, and recent talks I gave on religion¹)—I have been emphasizing that there is a force of Christian Fascists that is *very serious* about implementing this program. Some of the mass base that's being mobilized behind this may not even be fully aware of the implications of this and what it would really look like to implement this program fully, or they may not even be fully aware that some of the driving forces within this *do* have in mind to implement this full program. Now, one of the things I have pointed out repeatedly, including in those talks on religion (and this is also in the "Right-Wing Conspiracy" piece), is that there is an acute contradiction between an insistence upon upholding the Bible literally and absolutely—insisting that every word is the divinely inspired and delivered word of god and must be upheld as such, on the one hand—and, on the other hand, things that broadly in society today, particularly a "modern" society like the U.S., can be accepted as decent, right, and just. This is a contradiction that, by and large, most of the mass base of this Christian Fascist movement is not even aware of. We have to hammer at those contradictions, and this is all the more important because, to a significant degree, the leaders of this Christian Fascist movement do not want these people who make up their base to be aware of this *at this stage* (or at least not fully aware). But, in those talks on religion, I emphasized the point: If you take the word of the Bible as literal and absolute, then you must be in favor of execut-

ing homosexuals — not just condemning them as sinners but executing them. You must be in favor of executing women accused of witchcraft, you must be in favor of insisting that people can't get out of even abusive marriages, and in particular women can't. You must be in favor of insisting that children who are rebellious against their parents should be put to death. And on and on—the list of cruel outrages that the Bible upholds, and insists on, is truly long and horrendous.

Now, if you look around, you will see that — for example, in relation to the whole Matthew Shepard outrage—there were these people from Kansas (or wherever they are), these preachers and their followers, who showed up and denounced Shepard as a "fag" and said he was condemned to hell, showing absolutely no sympathy nor mercy. And if you read David Brock's book, *The Republican Noise Machine*, particularly Chapter 7, "Ministers of Propaganda," he quotes a lot of these people, these Christian Fascist ideologues, saying that a lot of these outrageous things that are in the Bible *should* be done. It is somewhat similar to what's described by Claudia Koonz in *The Nazi Conscience*, where she discusses how Hitler was rather cautious, rather circumspect, even after consolidating power, in terms of toning down his overtly anti-Semitic tirades for a while—while at the same time the *mass base*, the stormtroopers, were running wild with that stuff. And we saw where that all ended up. Perhaps in 1933 or '34 Hitler did not intend to carry out the "final solution," the mass genocide of the Jews, at least in the way and on the scale it was carried out, but that's where the logic led. It might not have led there if things had gone a different way with the war, and so on, but that's where the logic led under the circumstances that actually evolved. I pointed out, for example, in "Right-Wing Conspiracy," that there is a genocidal element in this whole Christian Fascist program—a genocidal program that would be directed toward many people in inner cities and others whom people like the prominent Christian Fascist Pat Robertson

If you take the word of the Bible as literal and absolute, then you must be in favor of executing homosexuals—not just condemning them as sinners but executing them. You must be in favor of executing women accused of witchcraft, you must be in favor of insisting that people can't get out of even abusive marriages, and in particular women can't. You must be in favor of insisting that children who are rebellious against their parents should be put to death. And on and on—the list of cruel outrages that the Bible upholds, and insists on, is truly long and horrendous.



Outside Terri Schiavo's hospice in Pinellas Park, Florida.

You can't uphold traditional morality in this society, with its whole history, and not uphold the most virulent and grotesque kind of white supremacy and repression of Black people and other oppressed nationalities.

1. See "The Truth About Right-Wing Conspiracy...And Why Clinton and the Democrats Are No Answer" (*RW* #1255, October 17, 2004); *Preaching from a Pulpit of Bones: We Need Morality But Not Traditional Morality* (Chicago: Banner Press, 1999); "Elections, Resistance, and Revolution: The Pyramid of Power And the Struggle to Turn This Whole Thing Upside Down" (*RW* #1237, April 25, 2004); "Christianity and Society—The Old Testament and the New Testament, Resistance and Revolution" and "God Doesn't Exist — And We Need Liberation Without Gods!" (audio recordings available at bobavakian.net).

Christian Fascists This Poses

The time of the Enlightenment is when society began to go away from God and towards hell, in these people's view. So, this is a very serious thing, with very serious implications, including this potentially genocidal element to it. And there doesn't have to be a "perfect fit" for this to become the ruling and dominating and operative force and form of bourgeois dictatorship in this country—in this period.

regard as putting the stain of sin onto the land. I quoted Pat Robertson on this and then drew out the logical implications of what he was saying. And I made the point in the talks on religion, and also in the talk "Elections, Democracy and Dictatorship, Resistance and Revolution,"² about why it is that the Bible belt is also the lynching belt. I used that as a metaphor to speak to why it is that you can't uphold traditional morality in this society, with its whole history, and not uphold the most virulent and grotesque kind of white supremacy and repression of Black people and other oppressed nationalities.

Look at Pat Robertson's writings. And who is Pat Robertson? Just some lunatic? Is he a Jeremiah somewhere ranting in the wilderness? No, he's a prominent figure in the ruling structures of this society. Look at the things that are quoted from him in "Right-Wing Conspiracy." Not only his lunatic claims about his personal experience and trauma of undergoing a demonic attack one morning in a hotel near Seattle, Washington, but his statement that it may well be the case that Satan is directly in charge of major cities in the U.S.—and that things like Ouija boards and New Ageism provide openings for the devil to enter. And this is of a piece with his lunacy in general, which is not only unscientific but anti-scientific—including his attacks on the scientifically established fact of evolution. (See, for example, Robertson's book *Answers to 200 of Life's Most Probing Questions*.) I remember reading a book by a woman who got out of this kind of fundamentalism (I mentioned this in the conversation with Bill Martin³—the book is *This Dark World*, by Carolyn S. Briggs): She talks about how she used to go around and get rid of statuettes and things in her house because she was afraid that Satanic forces would enter through them and get to her children. Well, that's one thing—she was a person with barely a high school education, if that, at the time, and she was just a foot soldier for the Christian

Fascists, unconscious largely in terms of the larger implications of this. But for people like Pat Robertson it's very different. Pat Robertson made this chilling statement—that when people get sick of all this decadence and the rest, we will take over.

These people are deadly serious, and there doesn't have to be a "perfect fit." If things go a certain way and there's no other force in the ruling class with both the coherence and the power to prevent it, this may become the ruling force in society. And they have every intention of becoming that. They are not going to go away. And, as has been pointed out, you can't keep making promises to these forces, as the Republican Party does—you can't keep making promises and then leave them unfulfilled, like "we're going to get rid of *Roe v. Wade*, we're going to outlaw abortion." There is a certain tension there that will rupture beyond those bounds at a certain point. We have seen further indications of this in things like the campaign to hound Republican Senator Arlen

Specter after his comment that, basically, Bush shouldn't nominate judges who are going to abolish *Roe v. Wade*. We are just seeing the beginning of things like that.

And there is a genocidal element in this Christian Fascist program. You can see this if you read what Pat Robertson says and follow the logic of it—once again it's the Richard Pryor thing, "the logical conclusion of the logic." As I have pointed out, Robertson doesn't just say that the death penalty should be used for murder, for homicide, he insists it should be used for crimes that bring a stain upon the society, and which alienate it from god. Well, think about the implications of that and how far-reaching that can be, especially when this is being interpreted by theocratic rulers, people with the mindset and worldview of Robertson.

And, although I have been urgently pointing to this phenomenon for a number of years, at this point at least I am not the only one who is commenting on this in these kind of terms. For example, Mark Crispin Miller, a professor of media studies at New York University, who has written a book entitled *The Bush Dyslexicon*, refers to these people as "Christo-fascists." And he makes a very interesting and important observation: Don't expect to see people with swastikas goose-stepping down the street saying "Heil Hitler"—that is not how this is going to come to America, it's going to come in this theocratic religious form; it's already here and it's already powerful. So, I am not the only one recognizing this—and Crispin Miller is a Jeffersonian Democrat (probably a "Big D" but certainly a "small d" democrat), expressly so. He talks about how these "Christo-fascists," as he calls them, want to go back not just before the civil rights movement, not just before the

Continued on page 10

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2. Audio files of the three talks referred to here are available on the web at bobavakian.net.

3. Bob Avakian and Bill Martin, *Marxism and the Call of the Future: Conversations on Ethics, History, and Politics* (Chicago: Open Court, 2005).



Outside Terri Schiavo's hospice, March 2005—Sticker on RW correspondent Sunsara Taylor's forehead says "critical thought."

The Danger of the Christian Fascists and the Challenges This Poses

Continued from page 9

civil war and the abolition of slavery, but back before the Enlightenment.

And the fact is that, as I have pointed out, the more you dig into this, the more you'll see that the Enlightenment is a watershed event in history for these fundamentalist fanatics. To them this is a time when society turned away from God—even before the Supreme Court decision, in the early 1960s, eliminating prayer in public schools in the U.S.—going back several centuries, the time of the Enlightenment is when society began to go away from God and towards hell, in these people's view. So, this is a very serious thing, with very serious implications, including this potentially genocidal element to it. And there doesn't have to be a "perfect fit" for this to become the ruling and dominating and operative force and form of bourgeois dictatorship in this country—in this period.

The fact is that the Christian Fascists are not an ephemeral phenomenon—they are not something that is just going to be around for a little while—a flash in the pan that is going to go away. Nor is this something that's turned off and on like a spigot by people like Karl Rove and other political operatives in the ruling class. This is a force which has been developed, and cohered, and led, and ideologically indoctrinated and trained, and honed over decades; yes, by political and ideological operatives, but some of whom actually themselves believe in this whole vision and these objectives. Had that *not* happened, a lot of these forces would have been more dispersed, they wouldn't have lived as much in a self-contained world, and they wouldn't

The challenge we have to take up is to apply the world outlook and methodology of communism, in a scientific and creative way, to correctly and deeply analyze this reality, in all its complexity, and to act to change it—to bring about a radical repolarization in society in a way that offers the prospect and the hope of the real, the revolutionary way out and way forward for society and humanity.

have had the same impact they have had and are having—being politically organized and ideologically conditioned, and oriented, and primed in a certain way. But that is what has happened, and that does take on a life and a momentum of its own. It's not something anybody can just turn off at this point. In Germany, after he consolidated power, Hitler slaughtered the SA stormtroopers at a certain point, because they were getting in his way. That's what the Nazi leadership had to do, to get rid of that particular force at that time, after Hitler had consolidated power; but it would be a whole other matter to do something like that to these Christian Fascist forces. Plus, I don't know who would have the interests to do that, and the inclinations to do that, within the U.S. ruling class.

So, again, it is very important to understand that these Christian Fascists cannot and will not let up. They will not go away, they will not recede into the background, they will not leave science alone, they will not leave the arts alone, they will not leave education alone, they will not leave social relations alone, they will not leave the culture, broadly speaking, alone. They will not leave daily life and work alone. There was another article recently in the *New York Times Magazine* about these "faith based work places."⁴ These reactionary Christian fundamentalists are creating, on the one hand, their own infrastructure and self-contained universe where you watch Fox News, and religious channels, and you get "the word," about the world as well as about religion, from the Pat Robertson 700 Club or whatever, and you listen to evangelists on the radio and watch them on the TV—and this fundamentalist shit is on 24 hours a day, all day every day, with massive productive forces and sophisticated technology devoted to it. And, frighteningly, but it's the reality we face, there are massive turnouts of people at these fundamentalist church services, even sometimes multinational crowds. They cannot and they will not let up. Mark Crispin Miller made this comment, that if you watch only Fox News and live in this whole world I've been describing, you have about as much sense of reality as people living in the ninth century. Now, again that's exaggeration, it's hyperbole (and he would likely acknowledge that), but there's some reality to that. There have been surveys and studies that show that these people—not just confined to the Christian Fascists, but more broadly people who regularly watch Fox News—are qualitatively more misinformed about basic issues than other people in U.S. society, even more misinformed than those who watch CNN, for example. I think a majority (or near majority) of those who regularly watch things like Fox News still believe that Iraq had

4. "With God at Our Desks," *The New York Times Magazine*, Sunday, October 31, 2004.

weapons of mass destruction, that there was a tie between Iraq and al-Qaida—an operative ongoing link and functioning relationship—and a large number of these people believe that Iraq had something to do with September 11th.

But that's just one manifestation, it's much bigger than that, in terms of not

ing—this is a major feature of the alignment of the ruling class, and of the character of the society.

There *are*, in a very real sense, two different universes, two different worldviews and visions of how the world is and ought to be, that are in fundamental and ultimately antagonistic conflict with each other within U.S.

It is very important to understand that these Christian Fascists cannot and will not let up. They will not go away, they will not recede into the background, they will not leave science alone, they will not leave the arts alone, they will not leave education alone, they will not leave social relations alone, they will not leave the culture, broadly speaking, alone. They will not leave daily life and work alone.

only information and politics but worldview. For example, our Party's national spokesperson Carl Dix talked about how, at a forum on the elections he spoke at, in Harlem, somebody actually raised: "We've got a real problem here, these people can't be swayed or persuaded, they don't listen to reason, they don't acknowledge reason." This is one of the things even the *New York Times* is bringing out: It doesn't matter if Bush lied, because Bush is on a mission from God (not in the humorous, lighthearted way of the "Blues Brothers" movie). Bush is there—like Jerry Boykin, a general who's still being promoted in the U.S. military, said—Bush is there because God wanted him there, even though in 2000 he didn't win the popular vote. It's not because of very earthly machinations, but because God wanted him there. So what difference does it make about facts and lies and so on, if this is what's behind Bush. God's will and purpose is greater than any fact, or any lie.

So these people cannot and will not let up. And there are two different universes here that people are recognizing—and we'd better recognize it. This is not the total configuration of ruling class forces and ruling class splits—even the Republican Party has many different forces within it, and there are contradictions within this, including contradictions between the Christian Fascists and some other forces within the Republican Party. And, of course, in the society more broadly, there is a much more complex configuration—social configuration and class configuration—and different political and ideological, and social, and cultural trends of many different kinds. But the role and importance of the Christian Fascists—within the Republican Party, where they play a major and in many ways dominant role, and within society more generally, where their influence is very significant and is now grow-

society. Newt Gingrich is essentially right in saying that these cannot continue to co-exist without one side or the other finally and decisively winning out and defeating the other.⁵ But right now it is a fact that the alignment, the polarization that presently exists—the way in which the two sides are taking shape politically and ideologically—is not a good thing. It is not a good thing for two crucial reasons: 1) The opposition to the Christian Fascists, and to the reactionary juggernaut in which they are a decisive force, is still characterized and dominated far too much by outlooks and programs which, in and of themselves, cannot mount the necessary opposition because, despite very real and profound differences, they still see things within and operate within the confines of the same system which has given rise to the Christian Fascists and to their becoming a major force within the ruling class as well as the broader society; and 2) the forces in society which represent, at least in potential, a real, revolutionary alternative, are by and large not yet mobilized and organized around a revolutionary worldview and program. Left to its current trajectory and momentum, this can only lead to very bad results.

But, again, that is where we come in. The challenge we have to take up is to apply the world outlook and methodology of communism, in a scientific and creative way, to correctly and deeply analyze this reality, in all its complexity, and to act to *change* it—to bring about a radical repolarization in society in a way that offers the prospect and the hope of the real, the revolutionary way out and way forward for society and humanity.

5. This point is discussed in another excerpt from this series, "The Coming Civil War and Repolarization for Revolution in the Present Era" (RW #1274, April 10, 2005).

From A World to Win News Service

The Empire's New Government in Iraq

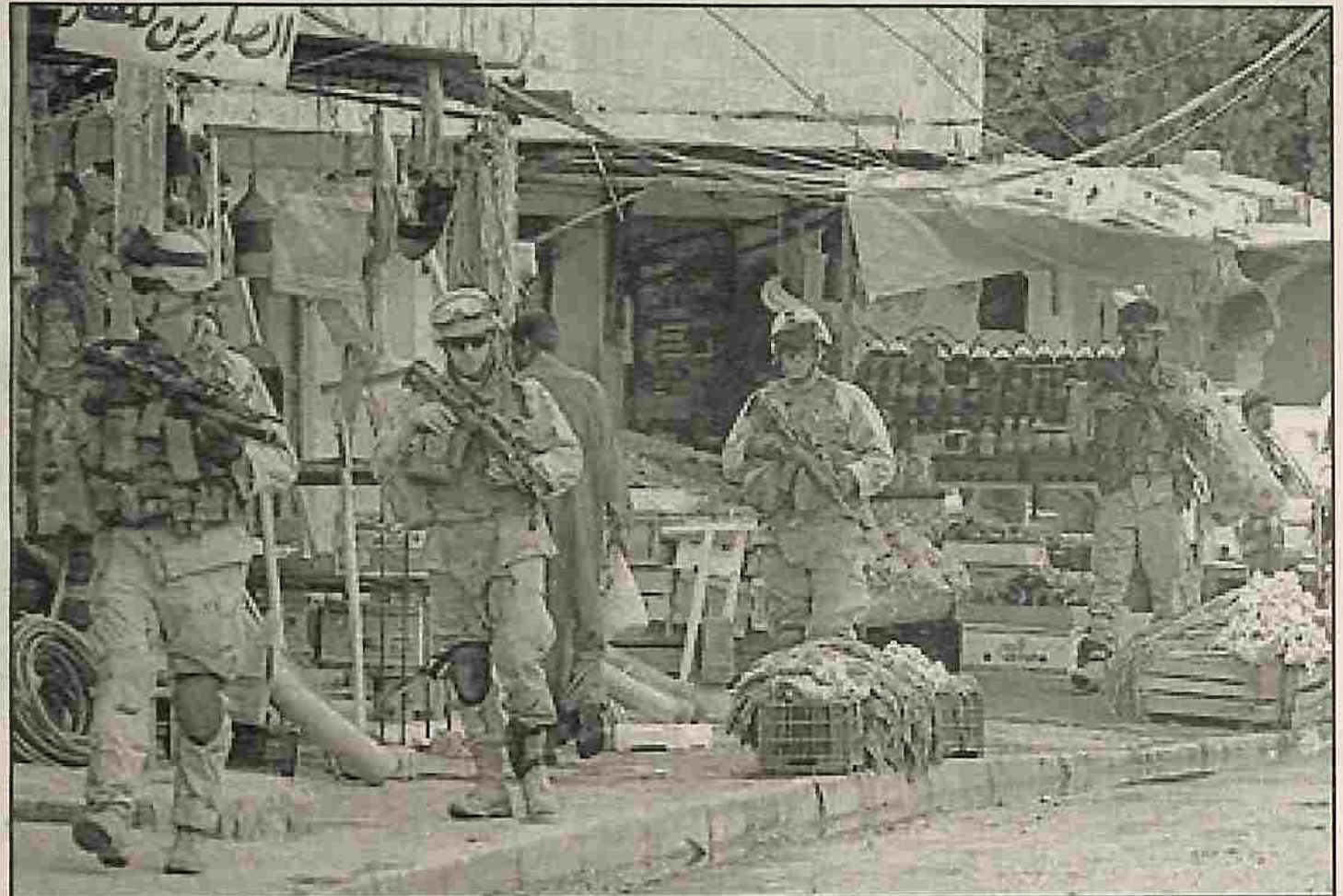
The following is from A World to Win News Service.

April 11, 2005. A World to Win News Service. Remember the elections last January that were supposed to bring about a "new day" for the U.S. in Iraq? Once again, the world's mightiest empire has not been able to achieve its desired results. The occupier's elections did not produce a stable government on which the U.S. can rely. And they have not brought about the collapse of armed resistance against the occupation, or even anything that can be identified at this time as a decisive change in the military situation.

The more than two months of political dogfights necessary before agreement could be reached on dividing up the main government posts speak volumes about the regime's narrow base—as an alliance of U.S. puppets and thieves—and the likelihood that this infighting will be a permanent feature. Named so far have been a president, two vice presidents, a prime minister and two vice prime ministers, and a speaker of the assembly and two vice speakers, all encompassing the worst of Iraqi society. The post of vice premier has no legal basis of existence and was invented on the spot to round out the completion of this alliance of gangsters. The selection of a cabinet, the final step in forming a government, will be no less contentious.

The occupiers bound the new regime ahead of time by a Transitional Administrative Law, a set of rules designed to make sure that the elected politicians do not violate U.S. interests. One of the TAL's provisions is that the government must be chosen by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly, instead of a majority, in order to strengthen the hand of the Kurdish parties, who are the most openly favorable to the U.S. occupation, in their negotiations with the Shia parties, whose victory was certain the moment the elections were scheduled. (The TAL also requires a three-quarters majority to change any of the basic rules, so that in practical terms the American dictates are set in stone.)

It took long and heated squabbling before these parties could come even to a preliminary agreement about how to divide the spoils. Never was any real consideration given to the wishes of the people these politicians supposedly represent. The main



U.S. occupation troops in Mosul, April 10.

negotiations were conducted behind the scenes in secret, and even the supposedly public sittings of the Assembly were closed to visitors and the press. Fittingly enough, as they were deliberating, reality did break in on them, in the form of mortars falling on the American-run Green Zone, where the puppet government hides out.

The leaders of the Assembly and the new government were chosen in reverse order of importance, the least important first. The well-publicized disputes between these criminals about "reaching out" to a Sunni population that overwhelmingly boycotted the elections was revealed by their first choice: for speaker of the Assembly, which they had decided to reserve for a Sunni, they picked Hajim al-Hassani, a member of the Sunni Iraqi Islamic Party who incidentally

has spent most of his adult life in the U.S. When that party pulled out of the American-approved provisional government last year to protest the assault on Fallujah, Hassani resigned from his party rather than give up his job as Minister of Industry, where he has been in charge of privatizations.

But Hassani is relatively powerless, a flunkey's flunkey. Above him as the new president is Jalal Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), a complete sell-out to the U.S. Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul congratulated Talabani on his new job, calling him "one of the politicians in Iraq on whom Turkey places the greatest importance." When a representative of a regime that has long been a sworn enemy of the Kurdish people

A World to Win News Service is put out by A World to Win magazine (awtw.org), a political and theoretical review inspired by the formation of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, the embryonic center of the world's Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties and organizations.

praises a Kurdish politician, that should be food for thought. Gul's message focused on Talabani's commitment to "Iraq's integrity," instead of advocating self-determination (the right to choose autonomy or independence) favored by the immense majority of the Kurdish people in Iraq. That is a development the U.S.-dependent and army-based Turkish regime greatly fears for its possible impact on Turkey's own extremely oppressed Kurdish population. Talabani is also favored by the Iranian regime, with whom he has longstanding ties, again to the detriment of Kurds, this time in Iran.

The deal he reportedly made with Massoud Barzani—head of the rival Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) Talabani once criticized as "tribal" when he first broke with it—was that in return for supporting Talabani's bid for the presidency Barzani's party would get to administer Iraqi Kurdistan.

It is telling of these reactionaries' mutual distrust and conflicting interests that Talabani brought 3,000 of his own Kurdish peshmergas as his private bodyguards when he came to take up residence in a former Saddam palace in Baghdad.

The real strongman in the new line-up is to be the prime minister, in theory, although we'll see what happens. In a possible omen, when Talabani was speaking at a ceremony to announce the choice finally agreed to in backroom negotiations, he suddenly suffered from what he later said was a memory lapse...and could not bring himself to say Ibrahim al-Jaafari's name, leaving the stand instead. In case anyone thought this was just a slip, Talabani did the same thing in an



Watching U.S. soldiers do a house-to-house search in Mosul, April 3.

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The Empire's New Government in Iraq

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interview on U.S. television two days later, calling Jaafari "Zarqawi," the name of the alleged head of the al-Qaida affiliate in Iraq.

Jaafari is a leader of the Islamic Dawa party, the first Shia religious party in Iraq, formed in 1958 to combat the then powerful communist movement. Since the birth of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) in 1979, Dawa was nurtured by that country's regime and its intelligence and military services. Although Talabani and Jaafari are rivals, one thing that brings them together is that both are friendly with Israel. Talabani is all but openly allied with Israel, whose commandos are permitted to operate in Iraqi Kurdistan, as has been thoroughly documented by U.S. investigative reporter Seymour Hersh, among others. Jaafari's links to the Zionist state run through the Islamic Republic of Iran forces backing him. Iran has maintained secret connections with Israel going back to the IRI's earliest years. This relationship first emerged into the light of day during the Iran-Contra scandal under U.S. President Reagan, and then last week when Iranian President Mohammad Khatami reached out to shake the hand of the president of Israel at the Pope's televised funeral.

Jaafari's two vice-presidents are Abdul Mahdi, a member of the Shia Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), the country's biggest Shiite party, directly formed by the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Ghazi al-Yawar. Mahdi is the former Finance Minister who proposed turning over Iraq's national oil company to private foreign investment, which, he explained, meant "to American investors and American enterprise, certainly to oil companies." Yawar, formerly the president of Iraq under the last U.S.-approved government, is the sheik of one of Iraq's most powerful tribes and a prominent businessman.

Next to be named were two vice prime ministers. One of them was the CIA's Ahmad Chalabi, reportedly to be in charge of security, and the other a Kurdish party official. Also agreeing to join the new government in some as yet unspecified form was the pro-U.S. Saddam clone Iyad Allawi, who demanded four cabinet positions for his men despite the fact that his party flopped in the January elections. Allawi at first refused to even resign his current position as Iraq's interim prime minister to make way for the new government, but gave in when offered immunity against investigation on charges of corruption while he was in office. The U.S. wants to keep former secular Baathists like Allawi in key positions, especially the armed forces, but that might not be possible without the overall configuration achieved through the agreement—however temporary and fragile—apparently reached by the Kurdish and Shia parties. It's hard to imagine men who hate each other more than those named to the top positions in the new Iraqi government.

Some observers have written that since the strongest figure in the new government is from the Dawa party, an Islamic fundamentalist outfit once considered a "terrorist" organization by the U.S., the composition of the new government is dangerous for American interests and not the outcome the U.S. sought when it held these elections. It is true that this situation does have potential complications and even dangers for the U.S. But so far, the U.S. and the Islamic Republic of Iran have worked together very closely to try to pacify Iraqi resistance to the occupation. Moqtada Sadr, the young Iraqi Shia cleric who led a rebellion against the U.S. occupation last year, was advised by Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, IRI ex-president and usually considered the most powerful politician in Iran, to tell his followers to lay down their guns and join the electoral process. It should be kept in mind that while the U.S. is currently working for regime change in Iran, it also seeks to carry forward some trusted figures from the present regime into a new one.

The occupiers have counted on Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the real head of the United Iraqi Alliance to which both main Shia parties belong, to make the election process work as they wished. Sistani differed with IRI founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini by advocating the philosophy of "quietism," according to which countries

like Iraq should be Islamic in social and legal terms without direct intervention of the clerics in politics. This stance contributed to the fact that he was able to exercise great influence under Saddam. Saddam had Sistani persecuted and at one point imprisoned, but other ayatollahs were murdered. To put his beliefs in Christian Biblical terms, Sistani is a man who believes in "rendering unto Caesar that which is Caesar's"—that is, recognizing the supremacy of whoever really holds political power. Sistani's ties with Iran go both ways, allowing him to have some influence there as well, especially among the religious opposition. Of course, Sistani's "quietism" has not prevented his hand, however hushed, from regulating Shia politics and brokering power.

As University of Michigan Middle East specialist Juan Cole wrote in the *Washington Post* (August 15, 2004) to explain Sistani's thinking, "Sistani believes that the Shiites made a strategic error in 1920 when they revolted against British colonial rule after World War I. The British turned to the minority Sunnis for support, ensconcing them in power for the rest of the century. Sistani believes that by showing patience, the Shiite majority can come to power in Iraq through the ballot box if it avoids alienating the Americans." Under the circumstances, the U.S. probably can't hope for better than someone like Sistani to hold their puppet regime together and give it some legitimacy. The U.S. imperialists are quite aware that establishing neo-colonial rule in the Middle East or anywhere else—like the kind of extreme reactionary regime they are working to establish in the U.S.—cannot be achieved without using religion as a major political and ideological pillar.

One of the thorniest issues still to be resolved is who will get the Oil Ministry. The Shia parties already control the South Oil Company, which owns the immense oilfields. They are said to operate pretty much on their own without much interference or demands for tribute from the capital. The Kurdish parties want to control the city of Kirkuk and its extensive oilfields owned by the North Oil Company. Kirkuk, historically a Kurdish city according to Kurdish nationalists, was predominantly populated by the Turkmen people until the 1950s, according to other accounts. Saddam Hussein tried to empty it of Turkmen and Kurds and move in Arabs under his patronage; now the two Kurdish parties are moving out the Arabs and Turkmen and trying to build their own patronage and ensure their own control of the underground wealth. The Defense Ministry and Ministry of the Interior are also key prizes.

Another serious question is the official role of Islam in the new government, and to what degree Islamic law (Shariah) is to be in command. By definition, any adoption of Shariah means recognizing Sistani's authority. In much of the country where Shariah is already enforced by Islamic fundamentalist

militias, women are severely oppressed. This is the trend throughout Iraq wherever Islamic rule has been established—including in the Baghdad slums and the south, where Sadr's militia is powerful, and even, of course, in places like Fallujah during the many months when guerrillas and not the government ran the city.

The official institutionalization of this treatment of women would be a big step backward for Iraqi society. It is as good an indicator as any that there is nothing democratic in the regime being built under the protection of American guns in Iraq. It reveals the nature of the alliance of forces the U.S. is trying to cobble together into a neo-colonial regime: a contention-ridden conglomeration of the most backward classes and forces in Iraq: clan and tribal leaders (among both Arabs and Kurds) and religious authorities linked to feudal relations, along with U.S.-dependent big capitalists and their representatives. The cynical U.S. rulers are basically allowing these male forces to console themselves for their own subjugation to the occupation by abusing women. But beyond that, in both social and ideological terms, patriarchy is a key element in the reconstruction of the kind of society the U.S. needs if it is to successfully dominate Iraq.

This is reflected in the sphere of official politics as well, which are little more than an orgy of identity politics in which the contending figures, while appealing to the national, religious, and other sentiments of their "constituencies," are serving their own interests as exploiters allied with the occupation.

The basic principles behind Iraq's new government have nothing to do with the will of the people, who they voted for or what they thought they were voting for, among those who did vote. First came a general agreement among all the thieves involved, and then elections were held to legitimize it. With the positions of parliamentary speaker, president, and prime minister reserved in advance for a Sunni, Kurd and Shia, respectively, the model for Iraqi "democracy" is Lebanon, where government posts are parcelled out along similar lines to preserve the reigning alliance between clan leaders and comprador capitalists allied with them. The 25-member Iraqi Governing Council chosen by the Americans in 2003 was also organized according to a quota for each ethnic and religious group, which suggests that the Lebanon-ization of Iraq was a U.S. goal all along.

The new government was produced by naked power relations, the relations between the contending crabs in this basket—which are certain to shift as the balance of power among them changes—and the relations between the crabs and the occupiers who intend to eat them if they fail to perform the tasks expected of them. Both because of the sharp conflicts of interest between the forces that make up this government and because of the contradiction

between the people and the occupation, the most basic contradiction which is conditioning the unfolding of all the rest, it seems very unlikely that this new government will prove to be stable.

Elections or no elections, new government or not, the U.S. and its ally (the UK—the only other country to play a significant military role now) have not stopped stomping on the Iraqi people, and they never will, as long as they are allowed to remain. While the resistance is politically and ideologically varied, with all sorts of ideas mixed together in many cases, and these ideas matter very much, still the people's resistance to national humiliation is what is driving the development of the whole process.

Even the U.S.'s relative success in holding these elections at all in the face of military resistance and a boycott could turn into its opposite. A Shia cleric who now resides in the U.S. wrote in the *Denver Post*, "Without exception, the Iraqis I talked to inside and outside Iraq saw voting in Sunday's elections as, first and foremost, a vote for the immediate withdrawal of occupation forces and, second, a vote to take control of their day-to-day lives, which have only worsened as a result of the White House's incompetent mismanagement of Iraq."

Similarly, independent journalist Dahr Jamail wrote from Baghdad, February 1, "Every Iraqi I have spoke with who voted explained that they believe that the national Assembly which will be formed soon will signal an end to the occupation." Now it is mid-April, the formation of that government is still not complete, and the end of the occupation is still not in sight.

Before the elections, Sistani's followers were often heard chanting, "No, no, no to America! Yes, yes, yes to elections." On April 9, the second anniversary of the toppling of Saddam Hussein, Baghdad's Firdus Square was filled with many tens of thousands of people, or even hundreds of thousands according to some reports, called out by the Shiite leader Moqtada al-Sadr and Sunni religious authorities as well. They chanted, "No to America, no to occupation!" and pulled down and burned effigies of Saddam, George W. Bush and Tony Blair.

The number of hungry children in Iraq has nearly doubled since the U.S.-led occupation began, according to a report prepared for the UN Human Rights Commission by Jean Ziegler, a renowned specialist and opponent of world hunger. More than a quarter of Iraqi children don't get enough to eat, Ziegler said, and almost 8% are starving.

At the same time, the number of Iraqis held prisoner by the Americans has doubled over the last months to 10,400. These are not signs that the conflict between the occupiers and the people is in any way diminishing.

It is dangerous to lie to the people. And the conditions of the occupation are compelling people to resist.



Voters pass by U.S. troops as they leave the polls.

Lynne Stewart: Then They Came for the Lawyers ...

Continued from page 3

political people who are criminalized because the state wants them criminalized.

They [the white shoe firms] are representing Halliburton, they are representing Enron, they're privileged to begin with. They don't feel they need that same degree of privilege that we do. They're not in the same position because their clients are part of the ruling class, to use a rhetorical term. Because they are there, they don't see the government attacking them in the same way they do a person like me—a person whose whole career has been dedicated to representing minority and political defendants.

RW: There are folks who are so much—as you characterize it—working for Halliburton that they identify their interest wholly with them. But would you see any lawyers, or even broader social forces, who actually see the whole legal rule structure getting changed, who would be concerned and see your case as a harbinger or greater danger to some long-held principles of theirs?

Stewart: I think that's true. When I say these things, they're more interpretive than they are specific. We have lawyers who do come from the realms of the corporate defenders and from other unlikely sources, and they do see it. Because they have a broader view of the law than just "how does this hurt me"—other than just their own self-interest. They do see it as something that impinges on the playing field, if you will. This is not the same thing as calling people before a grand jury and throwing them in jail when they refuse to answer. This is really going after the person who goes with the person to the grand jury, gives them the advice, tells them what the consequences could be or couldn't be.

We must understand, and I think a lot of people do, lawyers included, that this is a tactic of this particular administration. That they [the administration] understand that the lawyers play such a vital role that they're going to keep the lawyers away. We see it at Guantánamo, we saw it in the case of Jose Padilla. Even Moussaoui, who wanted to have his own retained lawyer that his mother was willing to pay for—and was denied that.

It does go hand-in-hand with torture. You can't torture a person whose lawyer is monitoring the situation. Who will raise the hue and cry. Who will go into a federal court with a writ. Who will do something about that. The lawyer is the bulwark against torture, as well as the protection of more ephemeral rights than those.

But this has been a concerted effort: distance defendants on all levels from lawyers, who are, of course, under the law required to defend.

RW: We were talking earlier about this book, *Unholy Alliance* [by the reactionary David Horowitz]. The premise of this book—and it's actually part of the currency out there right now where you have people like Bill O'Reilly talking about the "hate-America crowd"—there's this broad brush being used for anyone who stands in opposition to Bush and company. By their definition, such people are giving aid and support to "the enemy." And they do this by making a superficial chain of connection. While this is ridiculous on one level, its purpose is quite serious. There's a methodology in play, with a wide swath of people being established as "beyond the pale." How do you see your case fitting into this overall climate?

Stewart: You know it's interesting, the first day of my arrest, when I approached the bank of microphones and TV cameras and knew in my own mind how important it was to show sunlight, and bring light, rather than just the heat and energy of the government to the case, I said at that point, "The next thing they'll be doing is arresting the lady who cleaned the Sheik's jail cell." Because in effect she, too, was giving material aid to a terrorist.

That is sort of their position. And, of course, it's the same position, interestingly enough, that was used by Ashcroft to bully the Congress into passing the Patriot Act. "If you're not with us, you're with the terrorists." I don't have any doubt that part of what swayed the jury in my case was the sense that to render a different verdict

might have made them look like they were "soft on terrorism." I'm sure that's the message the government gave them. That this is your role, this is what you can do.

So I think this is rampant. I also think it's part of, if I may say this, a fascist outlook. It's where all righteousness accrues to the state, and anyone who opposes the state is demonized.

How dare they say we are against America. We are for America. We are for the best side, the ideals, the things people died for. They're not for that. They're for the aggrandizement of monopoly. They're for the aggrandizement of the corporation.

This is linked together by saying, "She did this for him, so therefore she's the same as him." I always like to say this: I represented Sammy "the Bull" Gravano, a mob guy from Bensonhurst. I didn't become a racist Italian from Bensonhurst because I represented Sammy the Bull. What I did for Sammy was not to aggrandize the Mafia, it was to help the client. They can see those distinctions [in that type of case]. They refuse to see it in a political context.

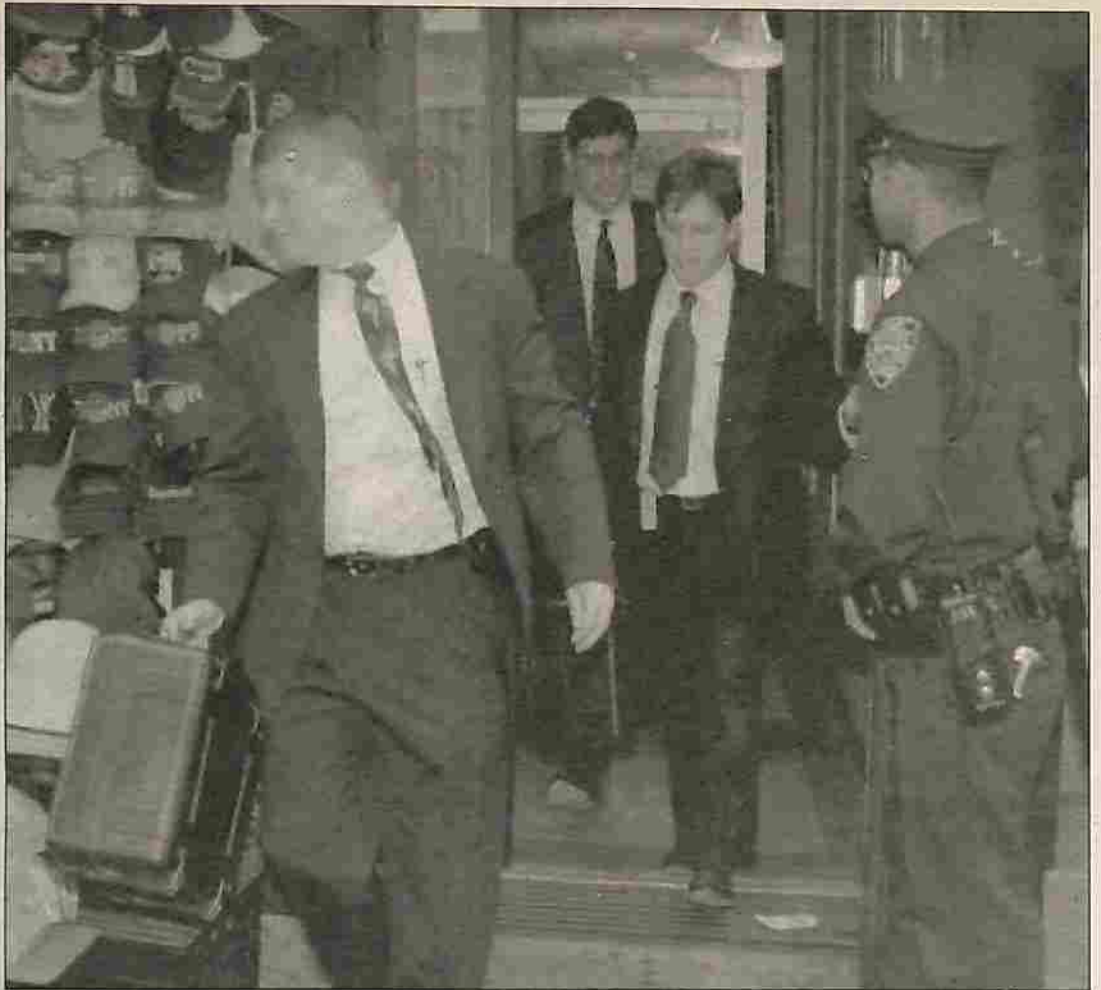
RW: Obviously you are appealing your conviction, but how do you see taking this on more broadly in the decisive realm of public opinion? The government went after you precisely because you are one of those people on the front line who've been challenging them, and they want to make an example of you. What's your thinking on how we can turn this into a different kind of example—one they won't like?

Stewart: That is what I would like very much. And that is why I wanted a victory here so badly. Not just for myself, so I could continue my life, which of course is very important to me, but because I felt like we needed a victory. We haven't had a lot of victories. They [the government] have made a lot of mistakes with Arab defendants, but our movement could have used a real victory, and we weren't able to provide it.

"Is it a wake-up call?" someone asked me yesterday at Riverside Church. In the Sixties, we were able to be outraged and mobilize people. We were able to bring pressure to bear. Why can't we do it today? Why aren't we able to get that same level of outrage? I'm sure we all have answers for that. Thirty years of television is one answer. A media that is controlled and manipulated is another—with the exception of yourselves of course—is another answer. I don't have an answer to that.

I do believe that people thought "she won't get convicted," "they can't convict her," or "it can't happen here." Now that it did happen, there are more people who are more willing to do more. I think that's what we have to build on.

It's not going to come from raising a flag and then everybody follows the flag down the street. It's going to come from real grassroots organizing. People talking to people, people making people understand that this case is not about a personality. It really is about the bedrock of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the things



Government agents removing documents from Lynne Stewart's office, April 9, 2002.

that the government is prohibited from doing. The Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution because people demanded it. And it stands for "the government shall not encroach." If we can organize around that. If people can have a sense that they were instrumental in keeping me out of jail. If people can feel that we have some viability as a movement—and I say this given the fact I am well aware of the different doctrines and the different degrees the left occupies on the spectrum—but everyone has got to understand that this case is so important.

The lawyers must be there. The lawyers must be able to do their function. We know in every totalitarian regime the lawyers were the first to be arrested after the radicals. Without touting lawyers overly, I do see that as being very, very important—to protect the right of lawyers to defend. I do think we can organize around the sentencing. I am inviting the "exploitation of the Lynne Stewart case" for the purpose of organizing as many people as possible to get this judge to not give time in jail.

He has the option of giving up to 30 years. I have no question that the government will urge him to give me a guideline sentence, which under the terrorism law works out to around 18 years—it is in effect a life sentence for me. I think if we can organize people to fight against that to say this is outrageous, this can't happen here, it creates a climate in which even this judge will not feel comfortable betraying the principles upon which the law is supposedly based.

RW: You were saying that some folks say "it can't happen here," and here it has. In talking about your case, the RW has used the Martin Niemöller quote, "First they came for the communists..." How do you see what's happened in that light?

Stewart: I've said this many times, we know that we espouse truthful, but perhaps governmentally unpopular, opinions. We've always had a small cushion of reserve here, that at least if the government came after you, you could call a lawyer, and you could look forward to perhaps a moment when you would be publicly brought to court and your case would be heard by some magisterial person who could then set you free, but at least you would have "a day in court."

I say frequently to people, this means that the government would like to cut your phone line, so when you get the one call there's no lawyer out there to call. There's no lawyer that can come in and defend you, or would want to come in to defend you, that would want to risk coming in and defending you.

That is one of the most important things I think for us. And when I say "us," I mean we who are politically inclined, who have led the activist life. I'll never forget when an elderly man came up to me and said, "You know, I get arrested all the time. But I know one thing, the lawyers'll be there to get me out. I'm not going to be left in some dark dungeon, to live out my years, without ever seeing the light of day again." He said,

"The lawyers will be there. But when I heard you got arrested, I said, oh, what is to become of me." And I think that is the question that should be asked, and I think it has to be answered very forcefully with a response that we're not going to let that happen.

RW: We hope that some day there'll be a liberated world where school kids will be studying about your case from the perspective of the dark but pivotal moment in history that it was. So just to trip out a little—drawing on your particular expertise, what do you think such a world would look like and how would you see the role of lawyers in such a society, one where people "freely associate," struggle, and strive, in the interests of all humanity?

Stewart: I certainly and absolutely believe in that day coming. I have always believed it, and I'm never going to stop working for it. A day when everyone is equal. When we all start at the same starting line. Whether we're impaired, whether we're of a different race, whatever it is, that we all start off equally, that we have the same opportunities. I don't see that happening without a takedown of this monopolistic corporate society, which has as its main motivation greed.

I do believe we must be a society in which—I don't want to be accused of being a Marx quoter—but in which the means of production and the products are all owned by the people. And that the people control what happens. Only in that way can we save the environment, only in that way can we have an education for our children that is realistic and which matters to them. Only in that way can we really go home at night and be safe. In this society people are driven by such fear. But it wouldn't be fearful, because we would not have enemies, we would live peacefully, we wouldn't have dreams of empire.

Also, I know that some of the communist/socialist models do not have an adversary system such as we have in the courts—that basically it is assumed that if the government has brought charges, it's true. I still think there's room for an adversary system. I think that sometimes even a benign and truly elected government can be wrong. And I would like to think that individuals could still get a lawyer who would present their case, whatever that case may be. Make sure, keep the government honest.

I do believe in protracted struggle. I think even were we living in a world where we achieved all our goals, we still have to understand that there's a certain necessity for human beings, for struggle, for—I don't want to say conflict, that's too hard of a word—where people engage in a test to make sure that the government is living up to its standards. I guess Mao called it a cultural revolution, but I think there should be struggle in each and every generation—no matter how widely attained our goals are. And I would want to live in that world. I would want my grandchildren to live in that world.

HUNTERS AND THE HUNTED

ON THE ARIZONA BORDER



Continued from page 5

terrorized them, hunted them down with dogs, and handed them over to the Border Patrol at gunpoint.

Border watch groups and vigilante patrols have been building along the U.S./Mexico border. But what is new is that they have developed deep ties with powerful forces high in the government—and are operating in the era where any paranoid appeal for more security quickly gets official backing and a public hearing. One sign posted in the town of Tombstone read: "Terrorists love open borders—Remember 9/11."

For years, the U.S. government has been militarizing the border, under both Democratic and Republican presidents. Mile by mile, walls and barbed wire have cut off Mexico from the United States, forcing more and more immigrants to cross over in the dangerous desolate stretches of border in Arizona.

It has created an intense conflict zone, as desperate immigrant workers try to cross and survive, and an intensified government crackdown hunts them through the dry hills to trap them, capture them, and deport them back to Mexico.

In the days before the Minuteman Project started, George W. Bush sent between 500 and 700 new Border Patrol agents to the Arizona/Mexico border.

And meanwhile, this reactionary Minuteman movement has emerged to demand even more extreme and violent actions against the immigrants. They have criticized the proposals made by President Bush and Mexico's President Vicente Fox to create a legal program for bringing Mexican immigrants into the U.S.

They have argued that even the last decade of militarization along this border has not been nearly enough—and that all crossings need to be finally and perma-

nently sealed by whatever means necessary.

And they have offered themselves as an armed vigilante force to hunt and capture immigrants, to turn them over to the Border Patrol, and as a public attempt to pressure and shame the government to step up its own efforts.

The Desert

If you ever drive towards Douglas, you will start noticing water bottles all over the desert, as if the desert had started sprouting plastic along with the cacti. Some of the bottles will be barely visible, but clearly empty. Some of these bottles quenched the thirst, maybe even saved the life, of someone who had been walking for days without shade or water in the hot desert sun.

More clearly visible will be the full, untouched gallons leaning on the barbed-wire fence—left by people who want to welcome immigrants, ease their suffering, rescue their lives, and take a public stand against the racist climate.

How many of the waiting water bottles will not reach the dying lips of a Mexican campesino whose last thoughts will be about his family and the annual fair in his home town?

As you drive along these desert roads, you will then start seeing small makeshift memorials consisting of metal crosses, rocks and colorful ribbon: More evidence of death along the border.

Creating A Zone of Danger and Death

"Immigrants will divide our country. We are not going to have a civil war now, but we could."

Jim Gilchrist, reactionary Vietnam vet and Minuteman border vigilante



Protest against the Minutemen, Tombstone, Arizona, April 1.

Year after year, hundreds of migrants die trying to cross the border. The California Rural Assistance League reported that there were 325 deaths at the border during the 2004 fiscal year alone. Their deaths are often horrific—abandoned to be baked alive in sealed railroad cars and trucks. Or stopped by a twisted ankle in the harsh desert, and unable to make it to water or rescue.

Our RW reporting team spoke with a young humanitarian in southern Arizona who is horrified by all this, and who works with a religious group that leaves water bottles for migrants at key crossing points on the border.

This person told the RW, "Some reports say that over 40 percent of migrants who cross the border in these areas are assaulted. Either they are robbed by their coyotes, they are raped, or beat up by people. Those things are typical of a war zone—where civilians pay the cost.... We've heard the Minutemen talk about migrants. They use words like they would if they were hunting animals. They say, 'Hey, we're going to bag and tag some illegals today.'"

The press reported that a man captured by the Minutemen was held against his will, and forced to stand for a photograph holding a shirt with the slogan: "Bryan Barton caught an illegal alien and all I got was this lousy T-shirt."

In the main, the Border Patrol authorities don't publicly support the Minutemen. They warn of the "dangers of vigilanteism." And they urge that civilians trust the official Border Patrol to "do its job." But at the same time, from President Bush on down, there is very little attempt to denounce the Minuteman Project directly, and even less is done to stop them.

Imagine: Armed men gather from across

the country to hunt human beings, spreading through the countryside with nightvision glasses to target anyone who "looks like an alien" to them. And nothing is done to stop them, or prevent their raw terrorization of people.

Imagine, for just a second, if some community of oppressed people in the U.S. suddenly announced that they were tired of the threat of police brutality in their community and formed armed neighborhood groups to keep their communities safe. What would happen? Would these armed groups of people be allowed to roam free? Would the local authorities stand aside and let them do their thing?

Of course not, all the armed might of the state would be brought in to break them up.

But in Arizona, the leaders of the Minuteman Project have gotten shameless support from government officials. Colorado Republican Congress member Tom Tancredo sent Gilchrist and Simcox a letter that said, "Congratulations on a job well done!! Mission accomplished!!" He invited these armed racist thugs to Washington, DC to attend the Congressional "Immigration Reform Caucus" with him.

As you read this article...

Somewhere near the Mexico/U.S. border a man waits for night to arrive. With his right hand he clutches a small bag filled with his belongings and with his heart he holds on to the memory of his wife and son, remembering his promise to them that he will make it to el otro lado to find work and help them survive for at least another day



Legal observers keeping an eye on the Minutemen, Douglas, Arizona, April 3.

Pope John Paul II

Continued from page 3

capitalism. He urged that a conservative Catholic morality and spirituality be unleashed to fill the voids of modern life—and specifically replace the empty preoccupation with material things that is common in capitalist culture. He urged reconciliation of opposing forces—between workers and owners, Israelis and Palestinians, and even between Iraq and the United States—in ways that opposed war but specifically ruled out challenges to the capitalist status quo. He opposed both of the wars the U.S. launched against Iraq, taking a position close to the stand of European governments like France and Germany.

It was a vision of a world where the arch-conservative morality of Catholic Christianity would play a prominent role as a spiritual “glue” for a capitalist world dominated by the U.S. superpower.

To carry out his vision, this pope felt he had to purge his church of dissent and opposition. He placed the arch-conservative Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger at the head of the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to enforce discipline and conformity. And so the modern-day Inquisition was on.

Dissident Catholic theologians were prevented from publishing or teaching at Catholic seminaries and universities. For example, Leonardo Boff of Brazil was silenced by Rome for a year and ultimately forced out of the priesthood. Cardinals and bishops were investigated for loyalty—and those out of step with John Paul’s Vatican were threatened, forced into line, and often replaced by extreme conservatives.

And as part of all that, John Paul promoted the sinister secret clerical-fascist order of Opus Dei. He rushed forward the beatification of Josemaria Escrivá, the Spanish fascist cleric who founded Opus Dei and was once notorious for his open praise of Hitler. (Beatification is the first stage of becoming a saint.) Several Opus Dei members were appointed as bishops and cardinals and will exercise great power over the selection of the next pope.

The Pope could suppress the voices of dissent and take power away from those who openly opposed him—but he could not and did not uproot different powerful currents within his church that continued to question and defy his edicts.

Science and Anti-Semitism

At the same time, in a number of areas, this Pope modified Church doctrine to better serve his purposes on the world stage.

For example he publicly softened the traditional hostility of the church toward Judaism. His church has been notorious for openly teaching that Jews were the killers of Christ. During World War 2, Pope Pius XII collaborated with Italy’s fascist Mussolini regime and with the Nazis themselves—and was silent as Jews were rounded up and killed.

But after World War 2, the Zionist state of Israel emerged in the Middle East as an important strategic foothold for Western imperialism. And the Catholic Church has adjusted its doctrine—in part to be able to recognize and work with Israel.

John Paul established diplomatic relations with Israel and visited there. He was

the first pope to attend a Jewish synagogue and express “sorrow” over the Holocaust.

However, here, too, his approach was marked with a stubborn and reactionary traditionalism. Theologically, he denounced the Jewish rejection of Jesus as Messiah. His regrets over the Holocaust did not include criticizing the policies of Pius XII at that time, and in fact he even worked to elevate Pius XII (and the rabidly anti-Semitic Pius IX) to sainthood.

On his watch there were repeated Church provocations against Jewish people at the remains of the Auschwitz death camp. The Polish Church first built a convent there and then in 1999 raised a giant cross over the site. When leading Jewish rabbis complained, they were met with open anti-Semitic abuse by the Polish Cardinal Glemp and indifference from Pope John Paul II.

John Paul carried out similar limited adjustments in the realm of science. In 1992 he conceded that his church had been wrong to threaten the 17th-century scientist Galileo with death and torture if he did not renounce his discovery that the earth revolves around the sun. And in 1996, John Paul conceded that evolution is “more than just a hypothesis.”

However these concessions to modern sensibilities coexisted with John Paul’s massive promotion of religious mysticism. After all, the very idea of a pope, the infallible voice of god on earth, is an affront to science and reality.

John Paul aggressively promoted all the fantasy culture that surrounds traditional Catholic mythology: he publicly promoted the hoaxes of Fatima and Lourdes (and even claimed that his own near-assassination was foretold by a special visitation of the Virgin Mary at Fatima).

He promoted 473 people for sainthood (more than in several previous centuries put together)—and each beatification unleashed a fantasy search for supernatural powers and documented “miracles.”

Meanwhile, he placed his church squarely in the path of important scientific research, for example condemning the scientific use of embryonic stem cells.

This pope admitted it was wrong to threaten scientists with torture and death (350 years too late!), but he simultaneously promoted medieval belief in blind obedience, submission, divine miracles, and unfathomable “mysteries”—all in direct opposition to scientific and rational thought.

The Deeply Patriarchal Pontificate

For decades Pope John Paul II and his Roman Catholic Church have been in the forefront of an intense global campaign to deny women equality and reverse any gains they may have made.

Without compassion or compromise, John Paul argued that women must not be allowed to exercise control over their own reproduction. He opposed birth control and abortion—and has demanded over and over that his church apparatus be more aggressive in fighting for laws that enforce that opposition.

With his personal guidance and insistence, the Catholic Church has served as a backbone for the anti-abortion movement in the U.S. and the anti-divorce campaigns in Italy and Ireland. It has been aggressive in fighting to keep birth control out of the hands of young people—and where possible, out of the reach of everyone. And he justified all this with an endless stream of flowery and misleading rhetoric about “life” and “human dignity.”

It is hard to overestimate the raw human suffering caused by this campaign against women. Women denied abortion or other



Protesters denounce the pope's reactionary stand on women, Washington D.C., 1979.

forms of birth control lose control over their very lives and futures. Women without the right to divorce are often trapped in the beatings and rape of abusive marriages.

When John Paul toured Africa as the horrific AIDS epidemic was building, he ordered his priests to oppose the use of condoms, even for disease prevention. In 1988 he said at a congress of theologians: “Even for people infected with AIDS or for those who want to use condoms to prevent AIDS, the Church’s moral doctrine allows no exceptions.” Priests and nuns on every continent were ordered to spread the lie that the AIDS virus could pass through a condom—raising protests from the World Health Organization. This stand against condom use condemned huge numbers of his own believers to horrible deaths from this epidemic.

And wherever his own church threatened to depart from such reactionary teachings on women and sexuality—for example in the U.S.—he reined it in, elevated conservatives to power, and sharply demanded obedience.

His declarations said that women would never be considered for the priesthood and that male priests would never be allowed to share their intimate lives with women. His last encyclical, in 2003, sternly insisted that divorced Catholics who remarry should never have acceptance and would be prevented from receiving communion. It was a declaration of permanent second-class status for women in his church—justified by a view of sexual roles that assumes women’s inferiority and “sinfulness.” Such stands have an impact far beyond the walls of his church and outside the immediate issues of priesthood and celibacy.

Repeatedly, the Pope insisted that same-gender sexuality was “intrinsically evil.” In 2003 the Vatican launched an aggressive campaign against the legalization of same-sex marriage and an acceptance of adoption by gay couples—just in time to give papal blessing to the bigotry of Bush’s reelection campaign.

The liberation of women from ancient and horrific oppression is sharply posed by this whole epoch of history. Tremendous changes in life and thinking have made real equality and emancipation possible for the first time. And this pope spent his life opposing that, rallying sinister and hateful forces to his cause, casting a veil of confusion and justification over that whole operation. And then, in death, he was showered with praise from those who continue his anti-woman crusade.

Suffer the Little Children

Because this pope draped his reactionary politics with claims of lofty and divine morality, it is important to point out the gross hypocrisy of his stand on the global sexual abuse of children by Catholic priests. One story tells it all: In Boston, after end-

less denials, it became obvious that Cardinal Bernard Law had protected child-molesting priests from punishment—and moved them from parish to parish as they brutalized more children. Massachusetts authorities estimated that more than 1,000 children had been sexually abused by 250 priests and church workers in the Boston Archdiocese since 1940. A 2004 Church report said that more than 4,000 Roman Catholic priests had faced sexual abuse allegations in the previous 50 years in the U.S., in cases involving more than 10,000 children.

The response of this pope was shocking: After all this had come out, he opposed a “zero tolerance” policy proposed by the American church hierarchy and insisted on continuing the traditional Church shielding of priestly child molesters. In a major symbolic move, he elevated the disgraced Cardinal Law to the prestigious Vatican post as archpriest of St. Mary Major Basilica.

This heartless monster, Bernard Law, was then chosen to preside over one of the funeral masses for his protector John Paul. And he will now be among the other powerful Cardinals who pick the next pope.

This Pope made his stand clear: No tolerance for abortion, birth control, the loving relationships of gay people, or the right of women to divorce—but a belligerent defense of Church temporal power and the privilege of priests, even at the cost of thousands of children.

Imperialist Homage

It was a ominous sign of how far U.S. politics has moved: the heads of the U.S. government—including past and current presidents, leaders of Congress, the luminaries of both the Republican and Democratic parties—all filed reverently through Vatican City to honor Pope John Paul II after his death.

In the U.S. media, there has been a orgy of praise for this reactionary priest-king. And it has been yet another occasion to cement the growing theocratic alliance in the U.S. between extreme conservative Catholic forces and the fundamentalists of the born-again Right. Prominent Protestant figures (who are traditionally anti-Catholic) gushed in praise of this pope and suggested that new laws banning abortion should be passed in his honor.

President Bush made a point of saying that when he met this pope, he experienced a personal awe and nervousness that he never felt with anyone else. At the death of this pope, flags were flown at half-mast at government buildings in the U.S. by presidential proclamation—in complete violation of the separation of church and state.

It was just one more sign of the deliberate assertion that secular power should be subordinate to the symbols and morality of conservative religion.

Such official honors are now treated as so completely natural and normal by the media that many people may not have any idea just how extreme and reactionary this pope was and how inconceivable such governmental homage would have been in the U.S. just a few decades ago.

Here is the mummified body of a reactionary hatchetman—an absolute ruler of a non-hereditary monarchy, the lingering symbol of the medieval “divine right of kings,” a rightwing priest-king who claimed infallibility when he spat out his prejudices and demands. And millions are being told, by media coverage and commentary, to view him as an inspiration.

It is part of a deliberate and growing effort to take reactionary politics, ancient mysticism, and a morality literally hoisted up from the Middle Ages, and offer them all as solutions to the tremendous agonies and insecurities of modern capitalist life.



John Paul denounces Ernesto Cardenal, a priest who joined the Sandinista government, Nicaragua, 1983.



John Paul shares the stage with Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, as the surrounding streets break into a riot of protest, April 1987.

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HUNTERS AND THE

Minutemen vigilantes.

HUNTED ON THE ARIZONA BORDER



Immigrants in Agua Prieta, across the border from Arizona, April 6.

MINUTEMEN VIGILANTES TARGET IMMIGRANTS

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