

**ANTI-SCIENTIFIC  
"ANTI-  
AUTHORITARIANISM"**

***Serving American Imperialism  
and Promoting  
American Chauvinism***

by Bob Avakian

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would have to be considered “authoritarian,” according to the “logic” of the “theorists” of “authoritarianism”):

Chile, Brazil, Haiti, Cuba (before the 1959 revolution), El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, The Dominican Republic, Greece, Poland, Indonesia, The Philippines, South Korea, South Vietnam, China (before the victory of the revolution in 1949), Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Israel

*Again, this is only a partial list of the “authoritarian” governments backed—and often installed through invasions, bloody coups, etc.—by the U.S. imperialists, just since World War 2.*

World-class hypocrites, world-ravaging oppressors.

## END NOTES

\* The article by Bob Avakian, “Shameless American Chauvinism: ‘Anti-Authoritarianism’ as a ‘Cover’ for Supporting U.S. Imperialism, with an ADDED NOTE by Bob Avakian, Spring 2023,” is available at [www.revcom.us](http://www.revcom.us). In the article “Bob Avakian on Impeachment, Crimes Against Humanity, Liberals and Lies, Provocative and Profound Truths” (also available at [www.revcom.us](http://www.revcom.us)), Bob Avakian speaks to the “theory” of “totalitarianism” and how it, too, promotes, anti-scientific thinking particularly in the service of U.S. imperialism.

\*\* The quotes from the *Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America* are from the Preamble of this Constitution. This Constitution, written by Bob Avakian, is also available at [www.revcom.us](http://www.revcom.us).

\*\*\* This statement by Bob Avakian, on the *Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America*, originally appeared in *NEW YEAR’S STATEMENT BY BOB AVAKIAN, A New Year, The Urgent Need For A Radically New World—For The Emancipation Of All Humanity*, January 2021, which is also available at [www.revcom.us](http://www.revcom.us).

Of course, with regard to the exercise of political power by the representatives of this radically different system of socialism—that is, the exercise of *socialist state power*, the *dictatorship of the proletariat*—bourgeois “theoreticians” of all stripes are opposed to that revolutionary state power *in any form*, for the basic reason that *this socialist state power empowers and gives institutionalized backing to the masses of people to uproot the relations of exploitation and oppression on which the capitalist system rests*.

This socialist state power aims for the emancipation of humanity as a whole, in every part of the world, from all relations of exploitation and oppression, with the achievement of communism throughout the world—whereupon the need and basis for any part of humanity to exploit, oppress and exercise dictatorship over any other part, will have been eliminated and abolished, and a world community of freely associating human beings will replace the profound divisions, with their horrific consequences, that now characterize the world, under the domination of the system of capitalism-imperialism.

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### **A Final Point: The U.S. Imperialists Are World-Class Hypocrites, and Big Time Backers of “Authoritarianism” When It Serves *Their* Interests**

In the original article exposing the anti-scientific nature of the “theory” of “authoritarianism,” and its use in the service of U.S. imperialism, I made the point that “the U.S. is today, and has historically been, allied with many ‘authoritarian’ governments throughout the world (and, in fact, has forcibly installed such governments in many countries).”\*

**The following is a list of *some* of the countries where, just since World War 2, the U.S. has indeed been allied with—and in many cases has installed, through invasions, bloody coups, etc.—governments that are “authoritarian” (that**

# ANTI-SCIENTIFIC “ANTI-AUTHORITARIANISM”

## ***Serving American Imperialism and Promoting American Chauvinism***

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In a previous article I examined how the misleading concept of “authoritarianism,” like the closely related “theory” of “totalitarianism,” is an anti-scientific “theory” which serves American imperialist interests and promotes American chauvinism (the sickening belief in the superiority of Americans and “the American way of life”).\* As analyzed in that previous article, this “theory” of “authoritarianism” has been wielded on behalf of U.S. imperialism in its contention with its imperialist rival China, and in the service of U.S. rivalry with Russian imperialism as focused now in the war in Ukraine. Here, I am going to speak further to the actual meaning and purpose of the “theory” of “authoritarianism.”

First, there is the fact that the concept of “authoritarianism,” in itself

has no particular ideological, political or social content, and in fact serves to cover over or obscure actual social, political and ideological content.... speaking of “authoritarianism,” without reference to the actual ideology and political and social content of the “authoritarians,” allows for the pretense that “extremists” of the “right” and the “left” are essentially the same.\*

The “theory” of “authoritarianism” *divorces the exercise of political power from the fundamental nature of the society in question, and in particular the foundation of that society in its economic system* (the **mode of production**) and the corresponding social relations (for example, racial, sex and gender relations). With this wrong-headed approach, ignoring (or covering over) the fundamental nature of the society, it is impossible to come to any real understanding of how that society actually operates, how and by whom it is ruled, why that is the way things are, and what could be done to change this in a positive way.

### “Authoritarianism” and Bourgeois (Capitalist) Dictatorship

What the “theoreticians” of “authoritarianism” mean by this term is that there is a small group (or sometimes they imply that it is just one person, for example Putin in Russia) that dictates to everybody else in society. But to the degree that the concept of “authoritarianism” could be understood to have any real meaning, it is essentially this: *a restricted group of representatives of the ruling class exercises state power while excluding other representatives of this ruling class from effective participation in the exercise of that state power.*

The word “state” here (in the formulation “state power”) does not refer to the kind of geographical and political units that exist in the United States (such as the states of California, New York, Texas and Florida). It refers to *the key institutions of government that represent the concentrated power of the ruling class, and in particular its monopoly of “legitimate” armed force and violence.* “Legitimate” armed force and violence means armed force and violence that is exercised by official institutions, like the police and the military—institutions to which the Constitution and the laws give the right to utilize armed force and commit violent acts in the interests of the existing system and as authorized and ordered by the political representatives of this system, such as

many different directions,” grappling and experimenting with many diverse ideas and programs and fields of endeavor—and once again all this must be “embraced” by the vanguard party and the “solid core” in an overall sense and enabled to contribute, through many divergent paths, to the advance along a broad road toward the goal of communism.\*\*

This principle and method of “solid core, with a lot of elasticity” is applied throughout the *Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America*, with regard to all the governing institutions and important spheres of society including education, science, culture, and the media. The following statement of mine, about the *Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America*, is profoundly true and crucially important:

**It is a fact that, nowhere else, in any actual or proposed founding or guiding document of any government, is there anything like not only the protection but the provision for dissent and intellectual and cultural ferment that is embodied in this Constitution, while this has, as its solid core, a grounding in the socialist transformation of the economy, with the goal of abolishing all exploitation, and the corresponding transformation of the social relations and political institutions, to uproot all oppression, and the promotion, through the educational system and in society as a whole, of an approach that will “enable people to pursue the truth wherever it leads, with a spirit of critical thinking and scientific curiosity, and in this way to continually learn about the world and be better able to contribute to changing it in accordance with the fundamental interests of humanity.”\*\*\***

to and serve the fundamental interests of the proletariat, a class whose exploitation is the engine of the accumulation of capitalist wealth and the functioning of capitalist society and whose emancipation from its exploited condition can only be brought about through the communist revolution, with its goal of abolishing all relations of exploitation and oppression and achieving the emancipation of humanity as a whole.\*\*

At the same time, through the work I have done over decades summing up the previous experience of the communist movement and socialist society in the Soviet Union and China (before capitalism was restored in the Soviet Union in the mid-1950s and in China after the death of Mao Zedong in 1976), and by learning from a broad range of human experience, a new communism has been brought forward, which is a continuation of, but also represents a qualitative leap beyond, and in some important ways a break with, communist theory as it had been previously developed. As applied to socialist society, this involves an emphasis on the importance of dissent, intellectual and artistic ferment, and protection of the rights of the people, particularly against government abuse, within the framework of, and as an important part of, the exercise of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is an application of the principle and method of “solid core, with a lot of elasticity”—which, as set forth in the *Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America*, means that

on the one hand, there must be a continually expanding force in society, with the revolutionary communist party as its leading element, which is firmly convinced of the need to advance to communism and deeply committed to carrying forward this struggle, through all the difficulties and obstacles; and, on the basis of and at the same time as continually strengthening this “solid core,” there must be provision and scope for a wide diversity of thinking and activity, among people throughout society, “going off in

the president (or other officials, at various levels of government, with the ability to legally authorize the use of violence). In this country, where the existing and dominating system is *capitalism-imperialism*, the political representatives and the governing institutions—especially the institutions of *state power*—are *instruments of this system of capitalism-imperialism*; and, in the international arena, they represent and seek to enforce the interests of the capitalist-imperialist ruling class of this country.

State power exercised in an “authoritarian” way is a *particular form of the dictatorship of the ruling class*. Understanding this is crucial in order to see what is really the essence of the difference between the “democratic” form of *bourgeois dictatorship* that has generally existed in this country and, on the other hand, the *fascist* bourgeois dictatorship that the Republican Party is now actively seeking to bring about, with itself as the decisive force in this fascist bourgeois dictatorship, and its rivals in the ruling class (in the Democratic Party) excluded from effective participation in this dictatorship. As also analyzed in the earlier article on “authoritarianism” to which I have referred here, this fascism involves “*a very definite content*: hatred and violent suppression of Black people and other people of color, immigrants, women and LGBT people, unrestrained plunder of the environment, grotesque American chauvinism, crude anti-intellectualism and anti-scientific lunacy.”

To be very clear, the oppression of Black and other people of color, immigrants, women and LGBT people, and plunder of the environment, as well as wars of aggression and crimes against humanity: *All this is built into and required by this system of capitalism-imperialism*. All of its representatives are American chauvinists. *All of them* will ignore, or crudely distort, science and scientifically grounded truths in pursuing and enforcing the interests of the capitalist-imperialist ruling class of this country. The difference is that the “bourgeois-democratic” functionaries of this system (as represented by the Democratic Party) recognize the need for certain *limited concessions* to the struggle against

these different forms of oppression, a certain language of “inclusion,” and a certain adherence to rational thinking—*up to a point*—while the fanatical passion and goal of the fascists is forcefully imposing a situation where there is no such pretense of “inclusion” and there is undisguised and unrestrained enforcement of all this oppression and madness.

To get a fuller understanding of all this, the following from the *Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America* is very important:

Regardless of differences, even very great and qualitative differences, in their political structures, institutions and guiding principles, all states have a definite social content and class character: they are an expression of the prevailing social relations, and most fundamentally the economic relations (relations of production), which have a decisive and ultimately determining role in regard to how the particular society functions and is organized. The state serves to protect and expand those relations and to enforce the interests of the social group—the ruling class—which holds the dominant position in society, as a result of its role in the economy, and in particular its ownership and control of the major means of production (including land, raw materials and other resources, technology and physical structures such as factories, and so on). In capitalist society, it is the capitalist class which holds this dominant position: the government structures and processes—and above all the organs of the state as an instrument of class rule and suppression (the armed forces, police, courts and prisons, the executive power, and the bureaucracies)—are controlled by this capitalist class as a means of exercising its rule over society and its repression of forces whose interests are in significant opposition to, and/or which resist, its rule. In short, all states are an instrument of dictatorship—of a monopoly of political power, concentrated as a monopoly of “legitimate” armed force and violence—

exercised by, and in the interests of, one class or another. Any democracy which is practiced in this situation is democracy on the terms of, and fundamentally serving the interests of, the ruling class and its exercise of dictatorship.\*\*

With regard to the exercise of state power—dictatorship—by the bourgeois (capitalist) ruling class, the criticism of “authoritarianism” by “bourgeois democrats” actually amounts to this argument:

Bourgeois dictatorship is better exercised by having political structures and processes that allow for *participation of representatives of the capitalist class broadly in the exercise of this dictatorship* (in the U.S., Democratic Party as well as Republican Party representatives of the ruling class), rather than restricting the effective exercise of this dictatorship to a smaller group within the ruling class. And the argument:

This bourgeois dictatorship is also better exercised through maintaining “bourgeois democracy”—democracy on the terms of, and restricted within the confines of, rule by the capitalist class—where people are allowed to vote, *so long as the choices for which they can vote are strictly limited to those representing the interests of the capitalist ruling class*, and where people are allowed certain other rights, *so long as the exercise of those rights does not threaten the interests of this ruling class*.

### **Socialist State Power— Radically Different and Emancipating**

The *Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America* makes clear that, in fundamental opposition to the dictatorship of the capitalist class, *socialist state power, the dictatorship of the proletariat*,

in its essential character and its basic principles, structures, institutions and political processes ... must give expression