

Why Non-Communists (You and I) Should See the Film BA Speaks:
Revolution—NOTHING LESS!
February 19, 2013

Here's what I have to say. Feel free to use it.

I have just seen the first two hours, of six, of BA Speaks: REVOLUTION—NOTHING LESS! It was like plunging into a very blue, very icy pool. I got out shivering, sad, angry, and very worried. About my life and all of our lives.

Two wildly strange things came into my mind during the hours afterward. The first is from John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The second is Plato's allegory of the cave, in which Socrates describes a group of people who have been chained to the wall of a cave all their lives, facing the stone. These people watch shadows projected on the wall by things passing in front of a fire behind them. The shadows are as close as the prisoners ever get to reality. Socrates tells us that the philosopher is like a prisoner freed from the cave, who can step outside, at last, into the freshness of truth, the real world.

Bob Avakian's analysis breaks apart the small framework in which we are manipulated. He presents the big picture of Western Civilization and Capitalism—and a corrupted and tragic history it is. Mr. Avakian tell us the truth, wakes us to reality. He urges us to notice how the culture, which we breathe like air, really is in business of blinding, numbing, binding, and using us by its entertainments, diversions, and coercions. How frightening to acknowledge how we have become so enthralled by getting and spending. How we are kept fighting each other instead of the grotesque matrix that holds all of us.

So, the first step toward liberty is to know reality. And reality stings us, because we can begin to see how we have been fooled, how we've let ourselves be gulled and manipulated. But there it is. In the beginning is the adult satisfaction of facing reality. This is good in politics, art, and personal life. Real living and real freedom have to start with the real.

Then what? Well, there are four more hours of Bob Avakian live that I haven't seen yet. And I'm terribly interested to see what he thinks can be done, once reality is grasped. I don't have a clue yet. I confess that I'm temperamentally unsuited to "masses." Masses scare me, and the individual, I worry, shrinks into nothing there. I don't know what a "revolution" means, or how it could be accomplished without anarchy. But, as Mr. Avakian says (and I agree with him): the world is not writ in stone; things can be different than they have been; history and the future are not the will of God.

In the end, I'm open to hear and consider. It seems crucial. We'll all benefit by a splash of the clean, cold water of reality.