

The Second American Empire (2004, Albuquerque, Geshe Michael Roach)
Transcript
April 18, 2004

Hi, thank you for coming everybody. I was in bed this morning and, you know, we travelled here last night and I ... sometimes I just lay in bed and think for awhile and I can't get up, right way. So I am thinking maybe I should start to think about what I am going to say at that book store, you know, and then I was thinking which book I am supposed to be talking about, you know, 'cos there is three books, you know. And then I remembered the tour manager said it was the business book, you know. There is a book about business, which is basically a book about how to make money being a spiritual person, okay. And that book has been a big ... I mean, that book we did before retreat and it's been, it's sold all over the world, it's like very big in the world now and translated into many languages. And people in China are doing groups sessions to read this book together and talk about. So that's like if you have financial problems you need the Diamond Cutter, okay, seriously. And then there is spiritual book call 'The Garden' and then there is a new book call 'The Tibetan Book of Yoga'.

And we decided on the tour, we got the tour schedule, we got it all booked it out and then Doubleday said we wouldn't have any books. So, I have only have one, okay. So I remembered distinctly that the tour manager schedule said I am supposed to talk about this book this morning ... this afternoon. And then when I got up, I mean, last night, late at night, we got in like at ten or eleven, the guy told me, 'no, it's the Diamond Cutter book, you know, it's the business book you are supposed to talk about'.

So I am sitting in bed this morning, laying in book deciding is it the yoga book or the business book? What am I going to say? So those of you who know me well, you know what I chose?

[Student]

I decided to talk about a book I haven't written yet. [Laughter]

It's called the Second American Empire. So today's is a big ... in my mind it's like a historic moment. It's a new idea. It's a new book, okay. Nobody has ever heard about it except me, [laughs] okay. So if you have financial problems, get the Diamond Cutter, it's here, you can order it, I mean, you can get it right now.

[Some one in the audience]

We don't make any money off this. We give away the money, by the way. All the royalties from those books went directly to Tibetan refugee monks. Fifty thousand dollars up front went to ... we just gave it away. That's another story.

But, you know, we went three year retreat, right. This is a silent retreat. You are in a small yurt, in the Arizona desert. You can't go outside of this fence and we were sitting there and we don't know anything about the outside world. We're told people, 'If my father dies, my mother dies, my lama dies, I don't want to know. For three years no communication at all. We don't hear anything from the outside world. And so, all we get is this food basket, you know, under the ... they pass it through a gate in a fence and then we run out and get, you know, like we are all excited, what's going to be for dinner today or whatever. It's like the only thing to look forward to, right. And I start to notice something, you know, I am pulling out these, like we told them after awhile not even to

wrap stuff in newspaper or stuff, 'cos it was very distracting ... you know, you go crazy. And then we start ... and they had to take the price tags off because we don't know, we don't want to know how the economy is doing or anything like that. And then we start getting food and we start getting stuff, we order a shovel, we order a bucket, everything is made in China, you know. Like I start to notice, you know, I was in business for fifteen years, you know, we started this business. I was help start a corporation in New York City. That's what the Diamond Cutter is about. We needed money to support Tibetan refugees. So I went out and started a ... help to start a business. We started it with a fifty thousand dollar loan and then, if you read the book and the principles ... that company now sells two hundred million dollars a year because we ran it by spiritual principles.

So I am very sensitive to where stuff is made. So I am sitting there in this three year retreat. And I keep getting in the basket, made in China, made in China, you know, I think, this is weird, you know, like this is a real trend, you know. Like after awhile, after a year and half of two years in solitary retreat, everything is made in China. I mean there wasn't a single thing ... no, and I know business, you know? What I wanted to say is like, I've been in corporate life, I know business, I know economics, you know, I know about off shore production. I helped build factories in India, in Thailand, in Taiwan, in Singapore, the whole third world I know. We had Dominican Republic was one our big factories. So I know about all this stuff, right and I've just seen this pattern, you know? Like, it's just nothing made in America. Like nothing is made in America. And then I start to think about this American empire, you know. Like you would say, you know, the British empire, right? You know the Roman empire ... what do you call it ... the rise and fall of British Empire or the rise and fall of the Roman empire. And then you would say, 'no we are not an empire' but god this is the empire if any empire was ever an empire it's America, you know. Like it's not a political empire, right, it's an economic empire. And I know cos I was so tied up with it, like I was spending half my time in the refugee camps, the Tibetan refugee camps in India, the poorest country in the world, be a refugee in the poorest country in the world, you know, and then I am spending half my time in this, you know, billion dollar corporations in Manhattan. So I know about the empire. We have had an empire, you know. There have been the first American empire and it's not a small one and it's the biggest one that ever was. We didn't instate that empire by political or military means. I wasn't like we took over other countries politically and it wasn't like we took over other countries militarily, right, like there weren't American troops marching throughout these other countries but we have taken over the world and we run the world, we run our empire, the first American empire as an economic empire and I've been part of it, you see, I know how it goes. I've been in Thailand, I have hired people, you know. My boss was like, we were in Korea, get out of Korea, why? Went up over fifty cents an hour, we got to get out of Korea, find another country. Okay, lets go to Thailand. We move the whole operation to Thailand, you know, keep it under fifty cents an hour, you know. Then you hear about Vietnam opening up, twenty five cents, twenty five cents? Let's get into Vietnam, you know. And there is thing, it's a thing. And so basically our culture, you know, and led by the corporations that which I've been a part, you know, has an empire and then we are sucking , the assets of the world into our empire. We are raping the natural and labour resources of the rest of the world, the words 'Third world' were invented by us and we are, we are eating ... I don't know what's it ... somebody got to look up the web for me, okay, 85-90% of the world's resources, you know, go to... I was in the diamond business, people say, 'how could you do that?' Go to South Africa, you know, look at one of these mines, you know, it's unbelievable. Like imagine Albuquerque ripped up and the hole, this hole down into the ground, the largest hole in the world. It takes like a fleet of nine thousand tractors to keep this hole open, you know. And then the west coast of Africa, there is a

river call the Orange River that flows out, it carries diamonds down from a pipe out to sea and then there is a current that spreads them along the beach, off shore and we have barges out there, the De Beer's corporation, cartel. There is barges there ripping up the ocean floor so that you can have a diamond ring, you know. And we are ... and we support it, we demand it. You see, the demand is coming from us, from our empire. We have created that demand and that mentality, you know.

Like you go to India, you say, 'I'll like to learn music'. They say, there is no music teachers. But I said, 'there used to be a teacher in every village', you know, you could learn music in every village. No, no, no, they are all off in Bombay. Why? Music, for the movies, you know, five hundred coming out of Bombay, they got to pop tunes for them. You can't learn traditional music anymore. There is demand that our empire has created for physical things, material things, and then we've just been living of that, you know, we've just been a silent ... you know this, you know, you know, I flew from the east coast to the west coast couple of weeks, like a week ago and I looked down, there's like lights from coast to coast. So where are you going to put the next generation, you know and who is running the lights, you know what I mean? How much oil to run those lights, you know, like there is lights from coast to coast and you are wondering where they're going to put the next generation, you know, there is no place. And we are all just like this, you know, we are just like pretending it's not happening, you know. And go to India, I mean, go to Thailand, go to Korea. I've been there, I hired these people and I've been in the refugee camps, they don't have enough to eat, you know. I went into ... the Seven Eleven, right, and I wanted to buy potato chips and I ... they said, you have to buy them in this plastic cup thing. I don't want the plastic cup. I just want the potato chips, you know. Like that much oil that went into that cup, could let the lady that I met in India two months ago, would have enough oil to cook for her family and she doesn't have it now. She doesn't have enough fuel to cook dinner for her family and you got that fuel locked up this 'Lays' potato chip cup, you know. I don't want the cup. Let her have the oil, you know what I mean? I don't need that much, you know what I mean?

And so our empire has been like ... I don't know how you say it ... we have created this insane consumerism and then we are in a way which is much more cruel than any military could ever do, we are oppressing the rest of the world economically. We are stealing, literally, the resources, we decide the price of oil by how many 'Lays' potato chip cups you use. And then certain percentage of people in India can't cook dinner. And that's just an equation. That's the way it is. And we live that way and you know it and you feel bad, right? Inside you feel bad about it, you know, and you know it's going ... you are not stupid, right, you know it's going on. You know we are doing it. And you know that your children or your children's children are not going to have enough, you know that but we keep doing it, you know. We just do it that way, so then ... that's where the 'made in China' comes in, right.

I mean, I am Buddhist. I am Buddhist monk. I was trained for like thirty years by these great lamas, in Tibetan monasteries. And then ... you can't get away with this kind of empire, you see, it will fall, you see. You can't keep doing it, I mean karmically, okay. Whatever you do to others will come back, you see. It will fall.

And so then we come out of three year retreat, right? And one of the first people we meet is a guy call Ted Lemon. And I knew him when I taught in New York. And we started all our classes in New York City and he said, I've to talk to you, me and my wife Andrea have to talk to you. And they take us off to, I'm gonna cry [crying] they take us to a wash in the desert and they sit down and they are crying, you know. I said, 'what's wrong?' they said we have tell you something about New York, you know, and so they

started to tell us what happened, you know, with the World Trade Center and a lot of our friends were there. One of my students was walking into the building when it was hit. And it's very hard, you know, to hear. And something clicked in my mind. People will look back. Historians will look back and they will say that the American empire began to end on that day, you see. That was the beginning of the end for the American empire, you know. There is all books about the rise and fall of the Roman empire and the British empire went its way, right? A physical empire. But now there is this economic empire and people will look back and they will say, if we don't change, right, if we don't change karmically what we are doing, they will look back and say, 'that was the time that it started, that was the beginning of the decline of this country' And I like this country, you know I'm sort of attached to it. I am not like flag waving patriot or anything like that but I really like this country, you know, I think it has done a lot of good things, you know. So in a way we stand at some kind of a crossroads, right? Karmically if we continue to pillage the resources of the rest of the world and our children, right, if we continue to just splurge them like a irresponsible kid, teenager with a credit card, you know, and then hand the bills over to your kids and go away, you know. Then karmically the decline will go quickly now, you see. You always think in the back of your mind economically, oh we are covered, you know. Let the Chinese make baskets. Let them import the plastic stuff to Wal-Mart. I don't care if they have the garden tool industry locked up, you know, let them do the schmuck work, [unclear] you know. We still got the computers, the airplanes, the stuff. Then I read a newspaper, you know, high tech ... one third of all high tech equipment is now made in China. Like it's not baskets any more and it's not garden tools any more. It's ... and you can't sit here and think your kids are going to have the best jobs any more. I called the Hewlett-Packard. I like them. They gave us our first grant for refugee ... we have computer programs in refugee camps to save their ancient texts. So we taught them to type their ancient text in, the Tibetan refugees. So I like Hewlett-Packard, they gave us our first grant. This is fifteen years ago. And so I called Hewlett-Packard, I need help with a printer and I get ... there is long delay on the phone, and this, 'this is Minosh may I help you'. And I'm like Minosh, are you Indian. Yes, yes, I am sitting in India, what are you thinking, you know. And I am like, I am talking to someone in India, I just called Hewlett-Packard for help, you know. Yes this is Hewlett-Packard helpline. You are supposed to be telling me problem with your printer. Well, my printer is not ... cable? What is a cable? And then I am like ... how did this ...you mean Hewlett-Packard sends all their technical assistance calls get forwarded to India by satellite and they are answered by people working for ... I know, it's about fifty dollars a month to get you technical assistance. So you can't think that, oh there is a little corner, we got the best, you know, don't worry, we still got the computer stuff, we got the Boeing 747, we still got the what? The satellites? China is sending up satellites now, you know, they don't trust them on American equipment any more, you know, and it's a decline. The country is in a decline. I mean I come out of my retreat, you know, I went to the diamond business, I went to talk to my old boss, he is in New York city. He is running 200 million a year company, I am like ... I am poking around for awhile and I am like, so have you guys done an inventory lately? Yeah, yeah we did an inventory. You know, I mean, what's your worth? What's the diamond up to now? He says, we got inventory up to over ten million dollars now. So I am like, you got ten million dollars inventory, right? Yeah, yeah. That's a lot of inventory to carry. Yeah, it's like, I don't know we did thirty thousand a day, I mean, this is the level. I am like, well, so what's the bank giving you, twelve million, fifteen, what are you getting? No, hundred million a year. What? I said, you got ten million dollars of diamonds, right? Yeah. And the bank is loaning you a hundred million dollars a year? Right. So if you go under, what happens? Well, they get five million by selling ten million dollars inventory, because we always overstate the inventory, you know. So I am like, you are getting a hundred million bucks loan because you have five million dollars to give them in case you collapse.

He said, sure that's the way it works now. And I am like ... and then the whole stock market is working in this way, you see what I mean? There is no equity. There is no production, you see? And everyone's got their money tied up there. If you are retired your money is tied up there, you know. There is no value of the stock market, to tell you the truth, I mean, don't tell anybody, okay. No. I mean I'm in the middle of it, I know corporations. For a diamond company or something like that, at least there is something you can have there. If the place goes under you still get five cents on the dollar, right? But Yahoo or AOL or ... these are running on ideas, they have no net worth, there is no value [cut]

The whole American economy, the empire's economy is running off of a country that doesn't produce anything any more. Nothing. Some food products when we eat them, okay. We don't produce anything. get it. We don't make anything anymore. And we're just moving loans around, you see, and someday, somebody will call us on it, you see what I mean? They will call us on it. Who owns the money in the stock market? Most of it is foreign because they believe that America will somehow be stable, you know, that's all we got. We don't make anything any more, you see what I mean? We don't make anything of value and by the time your children get your age, the cards will be played out and people will call us on it, and it will be nothing. And then you start to get political danger, you see. Then you get somebody thinking, I could blow up the World Trade Center, you see? That's a sign. Oh, nobody could blow up the World Trade Center in the past? Of course they can blow up the World Trade Center, you know, what? We think they couldn't blow it up? You know what I mean? Of course they could have blown it up for the last fifty years but nobody thought of it, you see, cos of empire, you know. And now they see the empire a different way, there is a crack. There is crack in the empire, you see, like we ... karmically, okay, I am Buddhist, right, karmically we have used the world for our own pleasure and now karmically it has to come back, you see, it's not like you can ... and what does a big bully do when it gets tough? You see, what does a strong guy do when things, when they start to lose it? They get violent, you know, they get violent. Like the British in India, right, I mean Gandhi's things started to work. Gandhi was spreading non-violence. The British saw that they were going to lose their ... this piece of their empire, then you get violent, you get nasty, you get irritable politically, militarily irritable, you know, like you are like, don't push me around, I am an empire, you know. Then you start sending out people, you know, for the first time, in just a ... in just a reaction way, you know, like, don't bother me, I could beat you up; I'm still strong enough to do something and then you go pick on some country, you know and kill some people, you know. I'm still strong, that's a sign, you see, people will look back at that and say, that was a second sign that the empire was falling, you see what I mean? They started this thing of picking on people, just cos they are irritated as a people, as a nation, you know, I am the empire. When you start to have to say that it means what? You ain't the empire any more, you see what I mean? When you have to say ... you see you never thought of yourself an empire till the empire started to decline, right? And then you see we had an empire, we had an empire. And, you know, economically it was selfish, based on really selfish. We took the world's resources and selfishly and come one, you knew there were people in Mexico didn't have dinner. You knew there were people in India that didn't have dinner, what do you expect, you know? How is that world going to you now? How is the world going to treat us now? You see. Like, the karma comes back. It's not like that you didn't know, okay. It's not like we didn't know. And we kept splurging, you know. Your kids ... spending this credit card and hand it to your kids?

Anyway ... now we got to get to the second empire which is not so depressing [laughs] we have choice now, you know, we can go two ways, I mean, we can just stick your head

in the sand, get pissed off when people don't respect the empire. This empire is going down, you know, just time. We don't make anything ... hang on one second, I will do a question and answer.

[Lady – you hear them say so many times on television, we are responsible, I am NOT responsible because I am very much against everything that has happened. I am eighty years old now and I've lived through many years of things that I saw that I did not represent or go along with. I am also a Buddhist and my feeling is this that the capitalist you've got three areas this area way up here like with Bush and his cohorts, Dick Cheney and them, and Rumsfeld and [unclear] extremely wealthy people, I call the Bush empire [laughs] In the middle you've got people like, maybe up to here then down below here we have so many people right here in this country who are starving. Children who don't have education]

GMR- the Bowie school, we live in Bowie, Arizona, right, they are close on Fridays now, there is no money for schools. So, what do to about it, you know? I mean, it's not just to stand here to pick on ourselves; we did a lot of things, right? But personally I would the empire to continue or how the second empire, you see what I mean? And that would be another kind of empire.

How does karma work? How does economy work, according to Buddhism? And this is subject of the Diamond Cutter and really it's the subject of the yoga book, okay. If you really want to know about yoga, come tonight ... what's it called? High Desert Yoga if you know where that is, okay. And we will talk about this according to yoga, but anyway, what do you do when people are challenging your empire? Like I gave the example of China. China is dear to my heart. I lived with Tibetan refugees for thirty years. They were pushed out of their country by China. I know how China works, you know, and it's hard, it's tough, you know. Like hard, hard people to compete with. Like I'll say it frankly, you know. They're going to be force to deal with, you know, in economic terms, in social terms. Like, you people, you've never even dreamed of a foreign army in Albuquerque. You know, you've never even dreamed of it. You wouldn't even think of it, you know. It's beyond your ...it's out of your range, you know. Like an army coming in, taking over City Hall and saying, you can't work at the job you work at, you know. You are going to dig silver in a mine in northern New Mexico cos we need it back home, you know. The folks back home need it and we give you enough to live on, whatever, you know, but the folks back home need the silver for their movies and stuff. We need parts for our movie making machines and stuff. So you are going to work in a ... or you are going to work in a sweatshop, you know, your kids working in a Chinese sweatshop, how's that?

We have a project in Russia. We are saving ancient Buddhist text in a Russian libraries. It's been there for fourteen years. We've recovered a hundred thousand texts. A lot of the people in the city, St Petersburg, where we are, are headed for China, especially the women. They work in the bars in China, cos they can make more money, you see what I mean? Huge numbers of Russian women, I mean, you can't, you don't get upset when you think of people in Mexico working in a sweatshop, what, a hundred miles away to make your clothes for banana republic, right? But what about your kids working in a Chinese sweatshop in fifty years? In thirty years, how's that, you know, for their folks back home, is that okay? You know what I mean? And you say, no, you know what I mean. You start to feel a little like ... how do you call that? I lost a lot of words during the three year retreat. [laughter] You are feeling indignant, yeah, exactly. You feel indignant, like my kids working in a Chinese sweatshop in Albuquerque, after they ... come on. Yeah, I'm talking that. So you start to feel indignant, you know like, are we going to

wake up the American giant, you know, like are we finally going to start making something of our own. I'm going to make my own garden tools, you know. We're going to buckle down and we're going to get the plastic industry back where it was, you know, like we are not going to let this happen. I ain't talking about that. Okay? I am not talking about that. Forget that one. Cancel that indignation. I'm not talking about that.

Now the Buddhist approach. The way to start the second American empire and this is just an idea, okay, it's the next book I didn't write yet, okay. It's very weird. It's like crazy wisdom, right? It's very weird and it works. And I can stand up here and say that because my company that I started is making two hundred million dollars in sales a year, you know like, you can say I am crazy. You can say I don't understand economics but my little empire is like vroom, you know, like that. I'm talking from the point of view of two hundred million dollars sales of year, probably the equivalent of the whole economy in half the state that I live in now, seriously, okay, seriously.

So whatever I did, you can say I am wacky, whatever but whatever I did works, right? So, what to do about the Chinese, invasion of our empire, you know, what to do? Help them. Give them everything you can. You got to cook that in your mind, you know. Support them. Give them as many jobs from us as they can take and make sure they get paid well, okay. Like, do everything you can to help the Chinese people and the Chinese economy. Learn Chinese. Learn this ancient culture. Study that ancient culture, beautiful. And the Arab culture, you know, which has invented mathematics for us, you know, kept astronomy alive while we were in the Middle Ages. The stars are all named in Arab names. This music, classical music is from Islamic culture, Arab culture. We are Semitic, the Judeo-Christian thing is some Arab culture. Study these ancient cultures, you know. Love them. Learn them and then serve them. If there is chance to send a job to China, send it. The best jobs. If there is a chance to help an Indian person learn to program a computer, give it away to them, okay, serve them. Be concerned about them and not us. Very radical. Very radical. Get it? Very hard to put your mind around. Give away the best to the ones who are threatening you, okay. Serve them. Honor them. Don't be jealous of them. Don't be envious. China is going to wipe us out. Their economy ... their national gross product, forget it. 60 billion a year going in their country from our country, trade deficit, you know. So what do we do?

Here is the choice, you know, I give two choices.

Restrict the import of Chinese products. You know, create tension with Chinese military. Take a hard stand in Taiwan. Talk about Tibet as much as you can, over here. Over here do everything you can to honor them, to serve them, to make sure that the people China who are not up to our level of living, are brought up to our level of living, as if they were our own people, as if they were Americans. You know, don't put up with Chinese people making \$50 a month, say we don't put up with that. We want them paid what we would get paid. We want them taken care of as well as us. We want their children eating as well as my kids. We want their kids to have the same opportunities that our kids have. One hundred percent. It's not enough that they are half way up to us now. They got to be up with us or better than us. That's how to start the second American empire, you see, then this country will take off.

I'm talking to you from the point of view of a person who went with seven dollar an hour job and now the company is two hundred million a year, got it? Get it? It works. It's radical. It's what this guy ... Jesus Christ is his name, something like that, was talking about, you know. Like, what is it ... give up your life and you will receive your life. you know. Give up your life and then you will get your life. But you got to be willing to make

this jump, you know. You got to 100% goddamn sure. Okay. I will serve the Chinese people. I will make sure they get every opportunity we have. I'll demand of my country that we support their boom, you know, in every way we can and not try to block it or be jealous or envious, like serve them. Get them to our level or better, you know. Make sure their kids have opportunities. Then the second American empire will rise. You will see it. And if you don't do that, it's going to be the pattern it's on now. It's just going to decline. We will be a second rate country in 2001? You know? Okay? And we will be a bully, pushing around people cos we feel like no one respects us any more, you know. So think ... that's all I got to say. That book hasn't been written yet. You can buy it here in two, three years. Doubleday is really slow [laughs] [laughter] Think about, cos it will come up, you see, they will be tension now between us and other countries. It started with the Arabic countries. It's going to go to China soon, you know. I can see it and you got to be ready to stand on the other side and say, 'being mean to people, competing, trying oppress people, is not where prosperity comes from'. It comes from giving away everything you have. You know, instead of being nervous about losing your job, you consciously give it away to a Chinese person. Within a year you will have two jobs, trust me. And I am speaking from, again ... we will be up to a quarter billion next year, okay, in that one company. So think about it, you know. Think about it hard and it was what Jesus Christ taught also. You know. Like give and you shall receive. Give up your life and then you will get your life back. And karmically that's how it all works. So all these books are the same.

We did one for yoga, you know. You want to get strong. You want to get healthy, do yoga with this kind of attitude. And there is certain meditation you can do to get that kind of attitude.

And that's a long story. You can hear about that tonight, seven o'clock at ... what's the place called? High Desert Yoga, if you want to. And then The Garden is just a pretty book about these ideas, for anybody. I think it's particularly good for young people. [Cut]

I think I am out of time but you guys have any questions or stuff you wanted to talk about? Yes?

[Question]

The rents but not the ... I was just there, yeah. It's still seventy five bucks max a month.

[Lady]

Oh, very happy. It's very clear. I mean, you spend three years in meditation, something happens, stuff happens. But I can tell you, if we go this way, I mean, if we go the selfish way, we will fall. We will be a second rate country shortly. It's happening now. People will look back at the World Trade Center and say it's started then, you know. So that's one scenario. That's possible. But the other scenario is ... this is ... wrap your mind around this, okay, get use to it, I'm not ... you don't have to get a A+ on this today, okay, but think about this other idea. According to Buddhism, according to the laws of karma, if we are totally generous to other people, more resources will occur in the world. The net amount of oil, the net amount of useable energy, money itself will be created. Money is created only by generosity. Try to put your mind around that. The total amount of economic worth of this planet is determined solely by the generosity of our planet occupants. It's very hard to conceive, you know. If we are totally generous to the

countries that are competing with us economically, and this applies to your job, you see. This applies to your office. This applies to where you work tomorrow. If you give up a position to someone else at the office, there will be more positions next year and you will get a better one, you see what I mean? If you give your economic resources away, there will be more in the world next year. It's very weird idea. It's a very weird idea, get used to it. [Audience] oh yeah, like that, like that, you see. Like what does it mean, if I take as much concern for the kids in Mexico that I am taking for my own kids, then what does the boundary mean any more? And with the web, I mean, what does the boundary mean any more? What does that imaginary line mean any more? If people in Albuquerque are working as hard for Mexicans as for their own kids, what does the boundary mean then, you see? It will be a very beautiful world. These ideas will spread and actually there will be plenty for everybody. There will be more prosperity for everybody than there was before when we were being selfish. It's very weird because giving is what creates money.

And I'll give an example – the invention of the personal computer or the invention of the web itself. According to a Buddhist that's the karma of helping other people. That only was created by helping other people and now suddenly the economic possibilities are hundred times what they were five years ago, you know. What I am trying to say, they were discover like some kind of new solar chip and we'll all be living of solar energy and there will be plenty of food for everybody and yeah if we don't go the selfish way, according to karma, the laws of karma, it creates money. It creates resources. It creates coal, oil, solar. It's weird. It's really weird. Where do you think they came from? You got three choices. I am not going to make this a Buddhist lecture, of course [laughs]

Is oil ... there is only three choices. This is from the ancient Buddhist scriptures. Is oil created by a big bang? Were the oil resources under the ground in Texas, were they created by some random events three trillion years ago, you know, like are you personally the result of X atoms bumping into each other by damn good luck, after three trillion years? Is it all just random? You know, like the faces in this room which are so unique, each one, so beautiful each one, you know, is that just an extraordinary coincidence of so many atoms colliding with so many other atoms after an initial random incident? I mean that's the first choice. That's what science is actually saying, whether they want to admit it or not. Your face, your life is an unbelievably extraordinary coincidence that so many atoms have bang together, I mean that's the big bang. That's the big bang. There is no other thing deciding that you came here today.

Okay, second choice – there is big guy with a long white beard, you know, and he's like, ah, they ought to go to the book store this morning, you know, okay get them in a car, you know, make sure the car starts. Okay and go to the book store, you know what I mean? Somebody ... there is higher being in charge. That was a viewpoint for a long time in our culture, you know, that somebody was, it's comforting, right? There is somebody, this is not chaos. It's not random atoms bumping into each other. Somebody is directing it. Now good job, bad job, you can discuss that.

Third choice – you get exactly what you do to others. You get one hundred point zero, zero percent exactly what you do to others, you know. You have a nasty economic empire that takes all the steel out ... ore out of India and doesn't leave them any for themselves? They don't oil for their dinner. It's going to happen to you. It has to happen to you. And that's where everything comes from.

It's three choices. And a lot of people like you and me, we want to mix them, you know, like God's taking care of the big stuff and the fact that oxygen is breathable is the

collision of atoms thing. And when I get a promotion it's cos I was a good guy, you know. I mean, we want a certain mix of those things, you know, that's our world view.

Any other questions?

[Question]

Okay. I am going to repeat the question so that they can hear it.

Is there a conflict of interest, do you see a conflict ... I think a conflict coming up between the people who are in power now and this whole idea of a second American empire which is ... I don't know, you guys think of a name for me, cos I can't get a catchy name. It's like before it was an economic empire, and not what is it going to be? It's like a whole group of people who are giving away stuff to other countries because they want prosperity, like a spiritual empire. Maybe a spiritual empire. We could export ideas ... a mitzvah empire. I don't know. Ahinsa, oh, okay. Yeah, no, no I like it. Coming, coming, coming.

Anyway is there a conflict of interest? You know, you want a real Buddhist line? Yeah? Oh, what do we do? How do we deal with that conflict? There will be, yeah, yeah. Lets say this idea gets big, you know. Let's deal with foreign competition by giving them as much help as we can. And then there will be this whole other reaction like fear, you know, like lets cut Chinese imports, you know, that's the only way to deal with them. They are getting too strong. Like, when a country is nice and small and we are helping them out, we feel good. When they start to get as strong as us, it's like, no, no you can't do that. You see what I mean? Yeah and it has also a personal level in your office, you know. You help the people who are really lousy, like you help the clerks, right, but they get up to VP level, you are already jealous and working against them, right? So anyway ... I'll give you the straight Buddhist line, again it's something you got to wrap your mind around. It's very difficult to absorb in one day but sorry we are leaving tomorrow, so I got to do it.

You created those guys in the power. They are a precise reflection of how we behave, you see. If you took all the power desire in your heart and you distilled it and projected it out of your mind, it would be the people in power. They are a reflection, a genuine 100% perfect reflection, of the deepest desire for power in your own hearts. And if you don't like them, what do you have to do?

[Audience]

Yeah. I mean, real Buddhist, real, I mean deeply spiritual ... it doesn't preclude political action. I like political action, I do political action. I've gone to jail for political action, okay. But deep down, the real way to change it is to root out that tendency in yourself and then you won't see it any more. It's called "ahinsa pratishthayam tat sannidhau vairatyaghah" It's in the yoga sutra (II.35). It's an ancient, ancient book. If you don't do violence to others, then within a certain number of years, violence will disappear in your personal world, in your personal experience of the world. It's very interesting.

So it's very important to remember that when you see these big powerful nasty guys, to realize that it's a part of you that you are seeing and you got to root it out and then they will change. Suddenly Bush will be giving this talk instead of me. [Laughter] No, don't ... if you laugh you don't get it. If you laugh you didn't get what I said today, you know, if you laugh you didn't get what I was telling you today, you know. They are a reflections

and anything can happen, anything can happen. Unbelievable stuff can happen. Miracles can happen. Miracles ... this is how miracles happen. I tell you.

I'll give you another story. You guys don't believe me yet. I needed a place to have a retreat center for my students in New York, you know. So we were as generous as possible for like, I don't know, six months, a year or something like that. Pelma was there, she knows. And we kept looking for retreat center. You know, how are we going to raise any money, we can't even pay the rent, we were in Hell's Kitchen in New York. People get their cars stolen coming to class, you know. And we did special meditation, special prayers, then this lady comes up to me ... I am standing, somebody standing in line at a grocery store and they say, I got this estate in Connecticut, we are trying to give it away, you know. And they gave it to us for one dollar, it's a three million dollar estate. And that's karma. You got to know karma, you got to learn how to use karma. It's unbelievable. So the idea that Bush couldn't be giving this lecture next year, here, we'll see. But no, it's unbelievable what you can do with this stuff... I'm trying to tell you, you know. You want to get it, do it. Yeah?

[Question]

Say again. Oh, voting is ... I mean, one thing you got to understand. You express your ... this doesn't preclude political action at all, none at all.

[Audience]

of course, you have to. Yeah, I mean a lama would say, you have to. It's an expression of your desires. You have to elect the people who will carry these ideas, right? Yeah, yeah. One or two more and then we'll have to stop. Yeah?

[Question]

Compassionate empire. Loving empire. Keep thinking. No, I like it. We got so far, spiritual empire, you got a different one?

[Lady]

Yeah, it doesn't happen overnight and it takes hard work, really, it takes hard work. The hardest work is to change your own head. Go sit in a yurt for three years and you know, you think it was like clouds floating above and little angels speaking to you and I said to people, the closest thing that I could compare it to was the Vietnam War, you know, like being in the trenches in the Vietnam War, it's like that.

[Lady]

GMR: I like one thing you said. You said, get it down to something practical, right? What would you say is something practical ... I mean, we're all going to go home, right. It sounds inspiring. I know what will happen, by Monday morning we all forgot it right? What's something practical you can do? I'll give one thing then if anyone else has something.

[Lady]

Ora raise your hand. Ora has got this thing going. She helped build the centers in India where we have Tibetan refugees, mostly women, now it's all women, I think. We teach

Tibetan refugee women to preserve their ancient text. They type in their ancient texts. And then we give them away in the web. People can just take them. And she doesn't know it but we are going to start one in China at Datsang Monastery, with Thomas Lim from Hong Kong and try to promote Chinese people working with the Tibetan people and us to do the same work there and try to get them up to, to what we would pay here, you see what I mean? So if you want to work on something like that, even if you are in Albuquerque. I still don't know how to spell it. I tried this morning for three times. Talk to Ora. I mean if you want to do something practical and this even on a level like you can do it at home. The stuff you could do it at home. You could Xerox stuff for us from the library and stuff like that. The stuff you can do at home that would help with that kind of thing.

Secondly if you really want this American empire idea to go, second one, right? The first one was, it was a good one but it could be better, right? The second one, at work tomorrow, see how you can give away opportunities to other people, you know, like somebody, the boss offers you some kind of opportunity but you have opportunity to take credit for something that happened at work, give it to somebody else and don't tell anybody. I learnt that from a 'Dear abbey column' you know. It's a great thing, now, do something kind for somebody and do it so anonymously that even they don't know that you did it. So like at work tomorrow, it's going to happen to three people in this room, you know, you'll have some opportunity to get credit for something you did or you'll have some opportunity to get a position you wanted, consciously give it away and dedicate it to the second American empire. Okay. According to karma, according to what we believe, it will help the second American empire happen. The spiritual, compassionate, loving empire, right?

Okay, that's all ... thank you very much. If you ... yeah .. you do your thing.

Clapping.

[Lady: so ladies and gentlemen Geshe Michael Roach has a few minutes, if you like to get a book signed, that would be ... I am sorry there is only one of that, the Tibetan Book of Yoga, sorry ... the Diamond Cutter and The Garden, he will be here for another 20 minutes or so. Thank you very much, we appreciate you coming, thank you] [cut]