

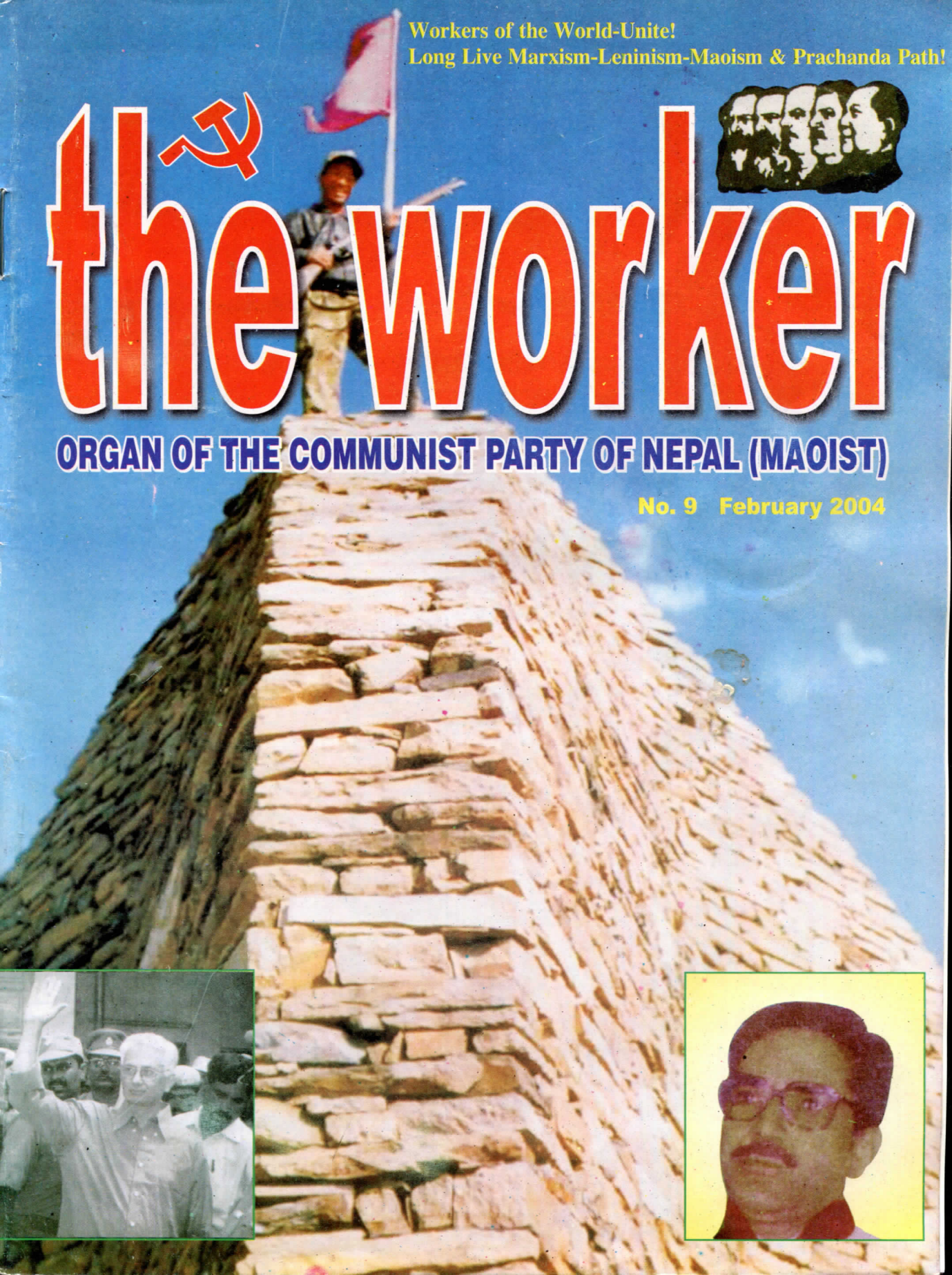
Workers of the World- Unite!  
Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism & Prachanda Path!

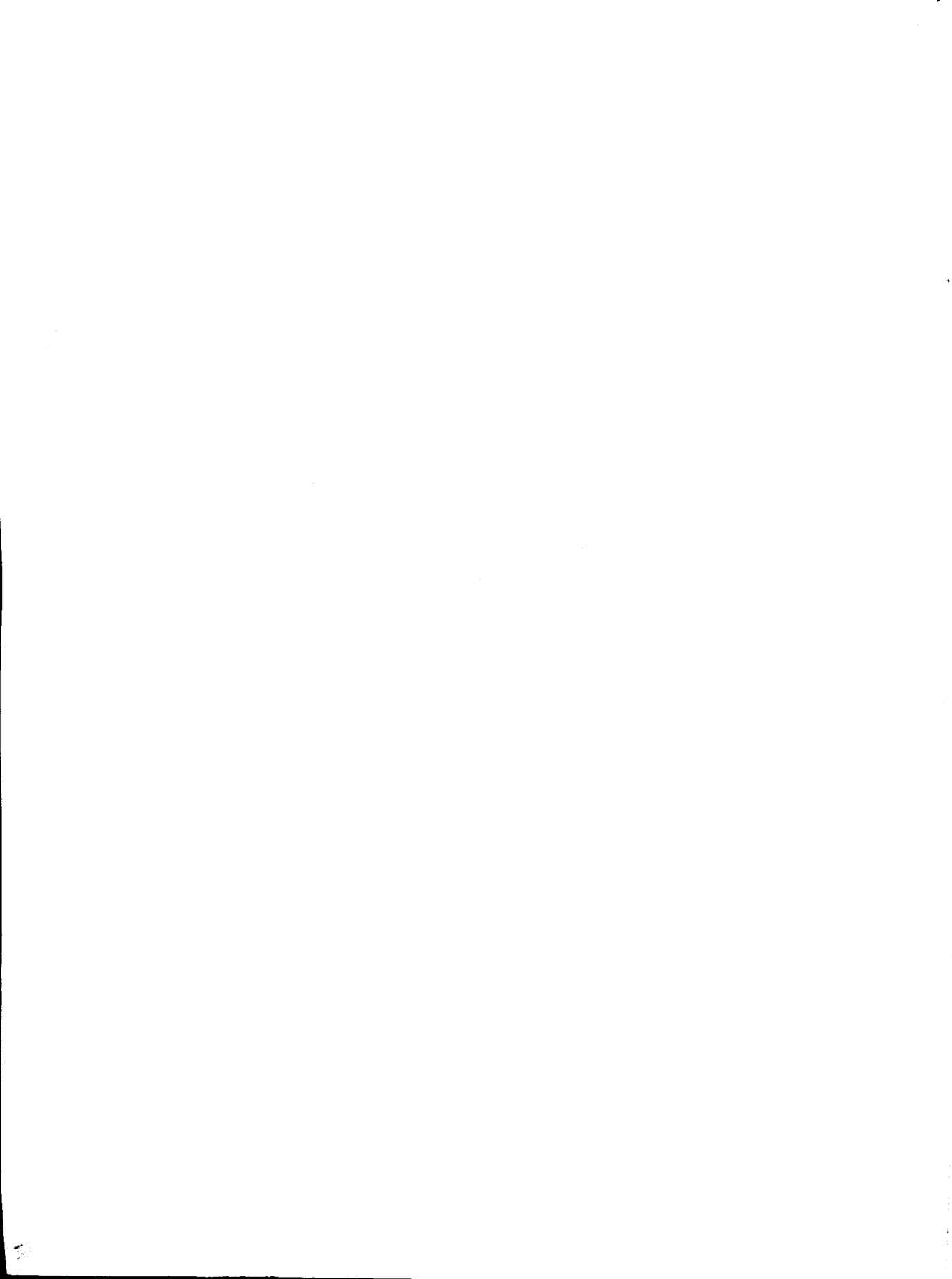
# the worker



ORGAN OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF NEPAL (MAOIST)

No. 9 February 2004







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# THE WORKER

Organ of the CPN (Maoist)

No. 9 February 2004

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*EDITORIAL*

## Glorious Eight Years

On February 13 the historic People's War (PW) has completed its glorious eight years and entered the ninth. The ninth anniversary was celebrated with enthusiasm and gusto throughout the country and abroad. We congratulate all the heroic fighters and general masses and pay our revolutionary homage to thousands of great martyrs on this solemn occasion.

This is also an occasion to take stock of the revolutionary achievements and challenges of the past and foresee the prospects for the future.

As various formal resolutions and public statements of the Party have already proclaimed, the Nepalese PW is now at the preparatory stage of transition from strategic equilibrium to strategic offensive. It is now universally acknowledged that the revolutionary forces control more than eighty percent (according to the International Crisis Group's report it is more than seventy percent) of the country reducing the old monarchical state's authority to mere district headquarters and big urban areas. The formation of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has been upgraded to the division level, with two Divisions, seven Brigades and nineteen Battalions and many more Companies in active operation. Similarly, whole country has been divided into nine Autonomous Regions, and eight Autonomous Region level People's Governments have been formed and publicly declared, except in the Kathmandu Valley. The Party has now concentrated all efforts to prepare for mounting an offensive against the reactionary monarchist state embroiled in acute systemic crisis.

As Mao has said, this "transitional stage of entire war" is going to be "the most trying period" and also "the pivotal one". This is perhaps the most complex and challenging phase of the PW, as it marks a qualitative transition in many aspects of the revolutionary process. Firstly, in this phase of the revolution there will be direct collision with imperialism and now the contradictions will have to be handled at the international level. In the present global context of 'wounded tiger' syndrome madly displayed by the sole super power U.S. imperialism after September 11 and the sensitive geo-strategic positioning of Nepal between two super states of India and China, the international question is bound to be all the more complex and significant. Secondly, whereas the main task of PW so far was destruction of the old state power, henceforth the task would be almost equally divided between the 'destruction' of the old and 'construction' of the new state power in the vast liberated areas. For, even though the destruction of the old would still remain the principal task until the central power is captured, it would be just impossible to mobilize the tens of millions of masses for the final offensive unless the liberated base areas are consolidated enough. Thirdly, and perhaps the most importantly, the nature of war itself would now transform from the 'defensive' to the 'offensive', which would demand a great leap in both quantity and quality of the army and logistics and in the battle techniques. Instead of guerilla warfare now mobile and positional warfare would play a dominant role and the theatre of operation itself would shift to urban and more accessible areas from the hitherto rural areas. Moreover, as synthesized by the Second National Conference of the Party, in the particularity of the changed world situation and the given situation of Nepal techniques of general insurrection would have to be integrated with the protracted PW.

Keeping in mind these and other complexities of the new stage of PW, the Party practiced new tactical moves with significant finesse in the past one year. Of these, the move of ceasefire and negotiations with the old state power was the prominent one. From January 29 (2003) to August 27, a mutual ceasefire was observed and three rounds of negotiations held between the official negotiation teams of the two sides. Though the talks ultimately broke down because of the intransigence of the autocratic monarchical forces principally backed by U.S. imperialism, the politics of negotiations provided a good opportunity for the revolutionary forces to build and expand the bond with the masses and cultivate diplomatic and political relations with different international forces. Also, the political exposure of the monarchy-imperialism nexus and the militarist nature of the monarchical regime, has increasingly transformed the triangular contention among monarchist, parliamentary and revolutionary forces into a bipolar contention between the monarchist and democratic forces. On the military front, a calculated change of tactics to countrywide decentralized actions and more focus on southern plains (Terai) and urban areas has led to constant bleeding of the royal mercenary army and increasingly put them in the defensive. In sum, the political and military moves of the past one-year have contributed significantly for the preparation of the strategic offensive.

Looking back at the tremendous strides in the revolutionary process of the last eight years, apart from the great sacrifices of the masses and the immortal martyrs, the ideological development of the movement based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM) is definitely the principal factor for the great achievement. And the key to future prospects, too, would largely rest on how much this ideological development can be carried forward. Starting with the initial thrust on great leap, rupture with the past and all round rebellion inherent in revolutionary dialectics, the proletarian science of revolution was constantly sought to develop through concrete practice. In this process 'Prachanda Path' was synthesized as a new set of ideas developed through the practice of MLM in the concrete conditions of Nepal during the first five years of PW. The new development since then have definitely raised new questions on the ideological front and we have to grapple with them in the proper MLM spirit. The question of development of democracy has been identified as one of the key issues in this context and the Party Central Committee has passed a resolution on this (see "*Present Situation and Our Historical Task*" in this issue). We expect that an enlightened and solemn debate on the question among the international revolutionary forces would help us to reach a conscientious decision at the appropriate moment.

Even though Mao said, "nobody can predict exactly how many months or years it will last as this depends entirely upon the degree of the change in the balance of forces", in the case of Nepal the transition from strategic equilibrium to strategic offensive may not be too prolonged. However, we must guard against both the Right and 'Left' tendencies of complacency and revolutionary impetuosity.

## The Breakdown of Ceasefire and Resumption of Military Strike by PLA

The seven-month long ceasefire & negotiations between the reactionary monarchical regime and the revolutionary democratic forces led by the CPN (Maoist) ultimately broke down on August 27, 2003. Chairman Prachand made an announcement to this effect through a public statement. It is worth remembering that this is the second time CPN (Maoist) had sat for negotiation. However this cease-fire and thereafter the military strike differs qualitatively from the earlier one. First of all the present ceasefire had been the result of strategic equilibrium between the old state and the new state. The second feature is the involvement of American imperialists in shoring up the crumbling Royal Nepal Army (RNA) thus transforming it into 'Royal American Army'. The incidents such as the conclusion of five-year agreement against so-called terrorism between American imperialism and the old state right at the threshold of formal negotiation, public declaration of the supply of war logistics worth Rs 3000 million by the Indian military chief in the name of "fighting against terrorism" to the old state, and in the later period, open announcement of the inclusion of the Maoist movement in the list of international terrorism by the State Department of America, open threats given by American ambassador in Nepal, the activities and open statements issued by the royal army and the misleading propaganda made by main parliamentary groups, etc all prove the above facts. Meanwhile a report in *Time-Asia* (September 15, 2003), among others, has confirmed large-scale military involvement of US imperialism in Nepal. According to the report, "Up to 50 US special-forces trainers are now pushing 20 battalions of 700-800 men each-a quarter of entire army-through a 12-week counterinsurgency programme. Washington has also supplied the RNA with 5000 M-16s, with 5000 due; Belgium sold Nepal 5500 machine guns, and Britain and India have lent military advisors." According to the study conducted by National Peace Movement, the defense budget has increased by 300% within the last five years period. All these have, however, prepared a favourable ground to raise the PW to the third and higher stage of strategic offensive.

Another specificity has been the highly successful political offensive carried out during ceasefire and negotiations by boldly presenting minimum programme to bring about a progressive democratic change in the country. This prepared ground for moving ahead towards strategic offensive and general insurrection when the old state rejected the political agenda put forward by the Party. In the immediate military plan three stages were chalked out, according to which a plan of carrying out decentralized actions in the first phase, relative centralized ones in the second and big centralized ones in the third. As part of the decentralized actions in the first phase, actions in the form of commando raids, ambush, sabotage and selected annihilations have taken place in almost all the 75 districts of the country. The discernible new trend has been to focus the military actions in the cities and Terai (plain) areas and carry out more of decentralized actions, which has spread panic on the enemy camp.

On August 28, Col. Kiran Basnet, the highest-ranking military officer to have been targeted so far in the PW, was annihilated in Kathmandu in broad daylight. On the same day another Col., Ramindra Chhetri, the notorious spin-doctor of the RNA who headed the so-called psycho-warfare department and used to conduct a regular TV show maligning the revolutionary fighters, was shot in Kathmandu but narrowly escaped the death. Similarly the next day, Devendra Raj Kandel, an ex-Minister of State for Home Affairs who gained notoriety for his outrageous remark: 'Come with bag-full of Maoists' head and go with bag-full of money', when he was in power, managed to survive with multiple gun-shot injuries.

In some of the most daring money-actions more than 10 million rupees were captured from government-owned

commercial banks in Tulsipur (Dang) and Chitwan, located just a few hundred meters away from the RNA barracks, on August 28 and 29 respectively.

Meanwhile the 3-day Nepal *bandh* (general shut-down) jointly called by the Party, PLA and the People's Council against the royal military dictatorship on September 18, 19 and 20 had been a complete success.

One of the most daring, and perhaps the biggest and most successful in the whole period of seven and half years of PW, military action in the form of road ambush with mining took place at Sahajpur in Kailali district (far western Terai region). The brave PLA fighters ambushed three truckloads of RNA convoy at Faltude of Sahajpur at around 12:30 mid-day and attacked with rocket-launchers and other weapons. Forty-one RNA mercenaries were killed, more than two dozens wounded and two military trucks were blown-up. On the PLA side, platoon commander Com. Sagarmatha was martyred and a few injured. This devastating military blow to the royal genocidal regime was almost totally blacked out from the media.

Similarly, hundreds of small and medium military actions in the form of raids/commando attacks, ambush/mining, high sabotages and selected annihilations were carried out throughout the country. Raids/commando attacks took place in Rautahat (September 16), Kapilvastu (September 19), Dadelhdura (September 26), Udaipur (September 27), among others. Successful ambushes and mining were carried out in Kathmandu (September 13), Chitwan (September 15), Dhading (September 18), Mahottarai (September 20), Gorkha (September 27) and others. Selected annihilations of royal butchers, informers and incorrigible criminals were carried out in Banke, Surkhet, Kailali, Baitadi, Kathmandu, Biratnagar, Syangja and elsewhere. And a number of high-profile sabotages including those against the current Prime Minister, four of his Ministers, the chief of the Royal Advisory Council, a former chief of the Election Commission and others sent chills down the spine of the reactionary classes.

Contrary to the claims of the spin-doctors of the royal military dictatorship objective reports from the battlefields showed that the PLA had inflicted crippling losses on the royal mercenary RNA all over the country. During the period of one and a half month after the breakdown of ceasefire more than 300 royal mercenaries were killed and above one hundred pieces of arms including M-16, LMG, SLR, .303 rifles and tens of thousands of rounds ammunition were seized.

After a nine-day break during the Dashain (Dushera) festival from October 2 to 10, the new round of the revolutionary military actions was initiated with a raid on the Armed Police Force (APF) base camp at Kusum in Banke district (far western Terai) on the night of October 10. However, the raid was unsuccessful due to a number of subjective and objective factors and the PLA had to stage a retreat with significant losses. Within 48 hours the loss was partially compensated with another raid over a similar base camp at Bhaluwang, Dang district (far western Terai) on October 12. More than twenty-five royal mercenaries were killed and a significant quantity of arms including 14 SRLs, 1 LMG and 5 .303 rifles were captured.

One of the most devastating ambushes with mining was carried out at Gaira of Ghanteshwar in Doti district (far western Hill) on October 15. In the process 20 RNA mercenaries were killed on the spot and another six captured but released after medication. The PLA captured 11 SLRs, 2 M-16, 1 LMG, 3 SMG, a load of M-36 grenades and heavy quantity of ammunitions from the site.

In one of the most daring money-actions 4 million rupees were captured from the Butwal branch of Bank of Kathmandu Limited in Butwal, one of the important trade center of central Terai region.

Also, annihilation of secret service agents in Kathmandu valley and a high sabotage at the residential premises of a serving minister, S.N. Shukla, in Rupandehi have sent chills down the spines of the votaries of

royal military dictatorship. It may be noted that Shukla has been a notorious landlord and ringleader of criminals in the western Terai region for long and this attack has given a big boost to the fighting morale of hundreds of thousands of peasants of that area struggling for their liberation.

Similarly, on November 15, a brigadier-general Sagar B. Pande, who was the head of the production department of the RNA, along with three others, was blown up to death in a mining ambush near Bhaise in Makwanpur district (central inner Terai).

On December 1, in one of the longest frontal battles with the royal hirelings the PLA gave a deadly blow to the RNA killing 15 of them and injuring 17 others in Khimdi, Pandaun of Kailali district in far-western Terai. The PLA also managed to seize 4 SLRs with 5000 rounds of ammunitions and 20 magazines, four .303 rifles, one magnum rifle, one communication set and a load of different ammunitions and other logistics. Seven comrades were, however, martyred in the process, including battalion commander Com. Prahar and two company commanders Com. Kushal and Com. Sameer.

In the Western Region, a vicious encounter took place with the royal mercenaries on December 13 at Pachhawang of Rolpa district in which more than ten RNA soldiers were killed. However, four comrades including Com. Vivek, battalion commissar, attained glorious martyrdom in the process. On December 18 a big armoured convoy of RNA mercenaries was ambushed in Shivagarhi of Kapilbastu district (Western-Central Terai), where ten armed personnel were killed and a huge damage inflicted to the enemy.

In the Eastern Region, four RNA mercenaries were killed in an encounter at Mangalbare of Ilam district on November 16. In one of the most devastating road mining at Kanepokhari of Morang district on November 18, 11 APF men were killed and 4 wounded. In an ambush at Aitbare Ramite in Morang district on December 4, four RNA mercenaries met their ignominious death.

In another successful attack on the royal mercenaries, fourteen members of the A.P.F. including an inspector and a number of lower ranking officers were killed when their vehicle was blown-up in a road mining ambush along the Jaleswor-Bardibas road in Mahottari district of eastern Terai on December 14.

Another noteworthy development in recent months has been the steady desertions from the armed forces of the old state to join the revolutionary camp. So far more than 500 RNA, APF and civil police personnel have deserted. In the latest incident Platoon Commander Lal B. Ranjali of Surkhet serving in Bajura RNA camp has deserted and joined the PLA. He has brought one M-16 rifle and 150 rounds of ammunitions with him and has appealed others in the RNA to follow his example.

On January 2, four RNA soldiers were killed in an ambush near Manahari along the Hetauda-Narayangarh highway. On January 3, twenty-five RNA mercenaries were killed in an ambush and subsequent encounter in Jalbire along Mughling-Narayangarh highway (Central Region). However, the PLA also met with an irreparable loss in the martyrdom of Com. Salim, battalion commander, in this action.

On January 5, a big encounter took place with the RNA in Mahure forest of Khotang district (Eastern Region), in which half a dozen royal mercenaries were killed, several automatic weapons seized and a number of top ranking officials of the district captured (who were let off subsequently).

In the latest successful military action in the Eastern Region, more than twenty RNA mercenaries were killed and several others wounded in Ramite of Morang district on January 16-18. The royal mercenaries were first



caught in the ambush with mining and later the encounter continued for over two days in the forested area. This humiliating defeat of the RNA was completely blacked out from the old state media.

On January 18, a RNA convoy was attacked along the Dhangarhi-Dadeldhura highway in far-western Region, wherein 13 royal mercenaries were killed on the spot, seven wounded and five captured. In the process PLA was able to capture four pieces of M-16, along with several numbers of magazine, two chains of GPMG and number of bullets, one basket cell of mortar together with M-36 grenade

Whereas decentralized military actions continued throughout particularly in Kavre (January 21), Tanahu (January 22), Lalitpur (February 9) and others, a major encounter took place with the royal mercenary RNA at Kotwada, Kalikot (far western Mountain) on February 15-17. After a forty-eight hour-long confrontation, the RNA retreated with three confirmed casualties and dozens injured and two helicopters severely damaged. As a result the King's proposed visit to the district headquarter on February 17 was abruptly cancelled. One PLA combatant obtained martyrdom in the process.

On February 21, another major battle broke out with the RNA at Aiselukharka of Khotang district (eastern Hill). After a 14-hour long battle the royal mercenaries were forced to retreat with one dozen dead and two dozens wounded. Six PLA fighters were also martyred in exchange.

In a powerful mine explosion on February 22 along Ghorahi-Lamahi road in Dang district (Western Region) 2 RNA mercenaries were killed and eighteen others injured. On the same day in another mining ambush at Surahikhola of Kapilvastu district (central Terai) 2 APF personnel were killed.

Apart from the military blow by the PLA, a number of revolutionary mass and front organizations have given hard public punch in the form of 'bandhs' to the royal military dictatorship.

On December 9, the All Nepal National Free Students Union (Revolutionary) (ANNFSU-R) organized a successful 'eastern Nepal bandh' in support of its long-standing demands, including release of its leaders captured and held incommunicado by the RNA. All the schools & colleges in the entire eastern Region were completely closed for the day.

Similarly, the 'Madhesh bandh' called by the Madhesi National Liberation Front in favour of its demands of rights to national self-determination and autonomous rule, among others, on December 15 was a grand success. Total life in the entire Madhesh (i.e. plains) came to a virtual stand still in response to the strike call. This has given a big boost to the prolonged movement of the Madhesi people for equal rights within Nepal and provided a hard blow to the mono-centred monarchical state.

Moreover, Party regional bureaus and mass and class organizations throughout January and February 2004 have organized a number of district level and regional level bandhs. Among these a countrywide five-day general strike called by the ANNFSU-R for February 25-29 was the most notable (which was later scaled down to a two-day strike).

The All Nepal Women's Association (Revolutionary) has now called for a 'Nepal bandh' on March 8, i.e. International Women's Day, in support of its multi-faceted demands, including equal rights to parental property and equal share of the state.

Increasingly defeated in real encounters with the valiant PLA, the royal mercenary RNA has been massacring dozens of unarmed and innocent masses and political activists in fake encounters every day. Also hundreds of people have 'disappeared' from the custody of the royal butchers. International human rights

organizations, including the Amnesty International, have criticized the genocidal royal regime for fake encounter deaths, disappearances and inhuman torture and rape in custody. Even the US government has censured its Nepalese stooges in its annual international human rights reports released in late February 2004 for the massacre in Doramba (August 17), Mudhvara-Doti (October 13), Kayre, Kathmandu, Chitwan, Bardiya and other places and for widespread "unlawful disappearance, detention and torture."

## Autonomous People's Governments Formed

As per the Party's known policy of granting autonomous rule along with rights of self-determination to the oppressed nationalities and regions, a campaign was launched to form autonomous people's governments in the liberated areas. After completing the process of forming elected people's committees at village and district levels on the basis of revolutionary united front policies, regional level people's governments were installed in different parts of the country.

On January 9, Magarat Autonomous Region People's Government was declared amidst a huge mass meeting of over 75 thousand people in the historic Thawang village in Rolpa district. As may be recollected, this is the main base area of the revolution and is inhabited by the most oppressed Kham Magar nationality. The Autonomous People's Government was formed under the leadership of Com. Santosh Budha Magar, in which members from various other nationalities and classes and masses are represented. Revolutionary felicitation messages from Com. Prachanda, Chairman of the CPN (Maoist) and Supreme Commander, PLA, and from Com. Baburam Bhattarai, Convener, United Revolutionary People's Council (URPC), were read to the masses on the occasion. Com. Diwakar, In-charge, Western Command, and Com. Krishna Bahadur Mahara, Joint-Convener, URPC, among others, addressed the gathering.

Similarly, on January 19, Bheri-Karnali Autonomous Region People's Government was formed under the leadership of Com. Khadga Bahadur B.K. and made public amidst a big mass rally in Jajarkot district. It may be noted that Karnali region is the most remote and backward area of the country. This is also one of the major storm centres of the revolution.

Throughout January and February such Autonomous People's Governments were formed in Seti-Mahakali (under the leadership of Com. Lekhraj Bhatta), Tharuwan (headed by Com. Ram Charan Chaudhary), Tamuwan (headed by Com. Dev Gurung), Tamang Saling (headed by Com. Hrit Bahadur Tamang), Kirat (headed by Com. Gopal Khambu) and Madhesh (headed by Com. Matrika Prasad Yadav) and were declared amidst huge public meetings attended by thousands of revolutionary masses.

Meanwhile, the URPC has recently issued a "Directory for Administration of People's Power, 2004," to bring harmony to the administration of local people's power in the base areas throughout the country. In this Directory, separate chapters are included for the administration of Autonomous Regions and Local Bodies, General Administration, Public Security, Revolutionary Land Reform, Forest Management, Industry, Commerce and Finance, People's Cooperatives, Physical Infrastructure Development, Public Health, Public Education, People's Culture and Social Welfare. Similarly a Public Legal Code has been formulated to administer the New Democratic people's power.

This campaign has immensely contributed to consolidate the Base Areas and to prepare for impending strategic offensive through the country.

## Worldwide Outrage Against Com. C. P. Gajurel's Capture

Com. C. P. Gajurel (Com. Gaurav), a senior Politbureau Member of CPN (Maoist), was captured by the Indian security forces from Chennai airport while traveling to Europe on August 20, 2003. Though Com. Gajurel was ostensibly charged with traveling on a fake British passport, which is a very minor charge according to Indian legal standard, he is still kept in prison in India. As he faces the real danger of getting extradited to the genocidal royal regime in Nepal, a worldwide campaign has been launched for his safety of life and release from captivity at the earliest.

Com. Prachanda, Chairman of CPN (Maoist), issued a public statement on August 23 asking the Indian state to set Com. Gajurel free immediately, as the case against him was not serious and this gesture towards a revolutionary democratic leader fighting against the autocratic monarchy would match with the republican values of India.

Public statements for safety of life and immediate release of Com. Gajurel were issued by a number of Parties and organizations throughout the world including the Committee of RIM, World People's Resistance Movement (WPRM), National Democratic Front of Philippines, Worker's Party of Belgium, Worker's Communist Party of Norway, Communist Party (ML) of Greece, Maoist Communist Centre of India, Coordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organisations of South Asia (CCOMPOSA), Revolutionary Communist Party (Organizing Committee) (Canada), Partito Comunista Maoista -Italia and others.

In Chennai (India), a "Committee to Save the Life of Nepali Revolutionary Leader C.P. Gajurel" has been formed with A. Rahul, advocate, as its Convenor. The Committee includes People's Democratic Youth Association, Revolutionary Youth Front, Thamilagu Odukkappattor Viduthalai Lyakkam, Communist Party of India (M-L) (Red Flag), Centre for Protecting Civil Liberties-Tamilnadu, Nepalese People's Rights Protection Committee-India and Tamil National Lawyers Centre. The Committee has organized a number of programmes to campaign for Com. Gajurel's freedom, including a massive demonstration in front of Alandur Judicial Magistrate Court on 15.11.2003.

Similarly, a Committee in Defense of C.P. Gajurel has been formed in Delhi. It includes prominent university professors, lawyers, journalists, political activists and well-known personalities.

Also, in Europe and America campaign has been launched in favour of Com. Gajurel's safety and freedom. In Istanbul, Turkey, a protest was held outside the Indian High Commission and a delegation of well-known human rights activists and lawyers met with a representative of the Indian government to convey their concern. The WPRM has organized protests around Europe, and faxes and e-mails demanding Com. Gajurel's release have poured into Indian authorities. WPRM Benelux and STOP USA (a platform of more than 50 groups that helped organize demonstrations against the invasion of Iraq) staged a protest rally in front of the Indian Embassy in Brussels on November 12. A protest letter organized by Nepalese students in Norway was handed over to the Indian Embassy in Oslo, Norway, on November 10.

Meanwhile, Com. Gajurel has been regularly produced in court in Chennai to extend his remand after every two weeks. Com. Gajurel has provided written statement to the Indian authorities about his travel details from Nepal to India and his intended purpose of visit to Europe for regular Party work. This has effectively dispelled a number of concocted rumours about his mission in Europe, the nastiest being his planned talks with King Gyanendra then on a visit to London. He has also refused to accept a humiliating bail offer from the Magistrate's court. However, the real danger of his illegal and motivated extradition to the genocidal royal regime in Nepal still persists and the

international campaign, particularly in India, for his safety of life and freedom needs to be accelerated further.

It may be noted that Com. Gajurel is one of the senior most leaders of CPN (Maoist) and is active in the revolutionary movement since the 1970s. He had been very successfully shouldering the international duty of the Party before his sudden capture. He hails from Sindhuli district in eastern Nepal and has a wife, two sons and a daughter.

## **Com. Matrika Yadav and Com. Suresh Ale Also Captured**

On February 8, 2004, Com. Matrika Prasad Yadav, Politbureau Member and Com. Suresh Ale Magar, Alternate Member of the Central Committee of CPN (Maoist) were captured by the Indian State and stealthily handed over by night to the royal regime in Nepal. Com. Yadav was a member of the Negotiation Team of the Party headed by Com. Baburam Bhattarai and is the Chief of the recently formed Madhesi Autonomous People's Government. Com. Ale Magar was member of the International Department and active in WPRM. Both are Members of the United Revolutionary People's Council, the embryonic Central People's Government Organizing Committee.

Chairman Prachanda, on February 10, issued a public statement condemning the conspiratorial and illegal manner of their capture and extradition by the Indian state. The statement also calls upon the international human rights and revolutionary organizations to put pressure for the safety of life and freedom of the two important leaders of the movement. •

*That the war will be protracted is certain, but nobody can predict exactly how many months or years it will last, as this depends entirely upon the degree of the change in the balance of forces. All those who wish to shorten the war have no alternative but to work hard to increase our own strength and reduce that of the enemy.*

*- Mao Tse-tung, "On Protracted War", Widy 1938*

*It is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of socialism or a communist in general. You must be able at each particular moment to find the particular link in the chain which you must grasp with all your might in order to hold the whole chain and to prepare firmly for the transition to the next link: the order of the links, their form, the manner in which they are linked together, the way they differ from each other in the historical chain of events, are not as simple and not as meaningless as those in an ordinary chain made by a smith.*

*-V. I. Lenin, "The Immediate Task of the Soviet Government"*

## On the State and Democracy

-Com. Prachanda

In these days, a process of study and debate is taking place in Party, on the question of democracy in the twenty-first century. The recently held Central Committee Meeting by emphasising the new exigency of synthesising experiences of the great revolutions and awful counterrevolutions, particularities of the present world situation and own experiences of the Nepalese People's War has adopted a draft resolution for debate. With an aim to helping this process of study and debate, some theoretical discussion on the state and democracy has been carried out here.

### Sequence of Development of the State and Democracy: a Theoretical Concept

The question of democracy is inseparably intertwined with the question of state power. Therefore, while talking about the question of democracy, it is essential to understand correctly about the development of the state power. Everyone, who has preliminary knowledge of historical materialism on the development of human society, knows that the state power has emerged from a certain state and contradiction of development of production and the productive forces. There was neither any state nor democracy till a long historical period followed by the development of mankind from ape with a determining role of labour. According to scientific exploration, people, till a long period of about a million years, used to maintain their livelihood through collective efforts without any state and democracy. The process of labour, division of labour, production and the productive forces that developed in the course of that long historical period, also known as primitive communism, led to creating such an objective situation and contradiction because of which a necessity and development of the state gradually took place. On the basis of historical materialism, Marxism invented first time in the history a scientific concept in place of the entire conservative and idealist illusion about the prevalent human society and the process of its development. In his famous book "The origin of the family, private property and the state", Frederic Engels, the co-pioneer of Marxism, has, with a deep discussion on it, presented a scientific conclusion. It has been said there, "... The State, therefore, has not existed from all eternity. There have been societies, which have managed without it, which had no notion of the state or state power. At a definite stage of economic development, which necessarily involved the cleavage of society into classes, the state became a necessity because of this cleavage."

In this way, it is clear that 'a certain stage of economic development' because of which the erstwhile society got entrapped in an insoluble cleavage has been a responsible reason behind the origin of the state. Marxism has, on the basis of historical materialism, also explained the objective ground behind the origin of the state. On the basis of scientific invention of the general laws of social development and investigation of prevalent contradictions in the capitalist society, Marxism has deduced an undeniable conclusion about withering away of the state. Marxism clarified the scientific fact that the class-division and the state standing over its foundation was inevitable in a certain state of development of production and, this cleavage in another definite state of development of the same becomes a hindrance for the society and the state too becomes unnecessary. Frederick Engels, in the same work has further said, "We are now rapidly approaching a stage in the development of production at which the existence of these classes has not only ceased to be a necessity, but becomes a positive hindrance to production. They will fall as inevitably as they once arose. The state inevitably falls with them. The society, which organizes production anew on the basis of free and equal association of the producers, will put the whole state machinery where it will then belong — into the museum of antiquities, next to the spinning wheel and the bronze axe."

Attacking upon all kinds of concurrent idealist illusions, the same work says, "The state is therefore by no means a power imposed on society from without; just as little is it 'the reality of the moral idea,' 'the image and the

reality of reason,' as Hegel maintains. Rather, it is a product of society at a particular stage of development; it is the admission that this society has involved itself in insoluble self-contradiction and is cleft into irreconcilable antagonisms, which it is powerless to exorcise. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, shall not consume themselves and society in fruitless struggle, a power, apparently standing above society, has become necessary to moderate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of "order"; and this power, arisen out of society, but placing itself above it and increasingly alienating itself from it, is the state." In this way, Engels has, in relation to the origin of the State and its definition, presented a very correct and scientific materialist explanation. The state that has emerged as a result of class-contradiction went on being consolidated obviously as a tool of exploitation and repression upon the oppressed classes. The task and role of the state has been, in accordance with the state of economic development, to defend the interest of slave-owners in the slave era, of landlords in the feudal era and of bourgeoisie in the capitalist era, and to repress the masses opposed to it. Despite the form of the state has been changing in different epochs of economic development, no change has taken place in its essence as a tool of repression and cannot happen too.

In the history, because of the contradiction between productive forces and the production relation, whatsoever revolutions have taken place from the slave era to the capitalist one have all of them finally reinforced the state. Marxism, following a deep investigation of contradictions in the capitalist era, presented a very new and a historic task of shattering the state power forcefully, not of seizing the old one and consolidating it, and establishing a transitional one (which will gradually advance ahead in the direction of withering away) to smash the resistance of bourgeoisie. Lenin has mentioned the conclusion — "All previous revolutions perfected the state machine, whereas it must be broken, smashed" - as the main and basic factor of Marxist theory on the state. Karl Marx, mentioning the work named "Eighteenth Brumaire" and clarifying this fact in a letter to Kugelmann, has said, "I say that the next attempt of the French revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but to smash it, and this is essential for every real people's revolution on the Continent. And this is what our heroic Party comrades in Paris are attempting."

The aforesaid conclusion has, on the one hand, drawn up a clear demarcating line between the anarchism that opposes all kinds of powers including the state and, on the other, the right opportunism that by looking through bourgeois eyes conceives of the state as an eternal and universal. From the time of Marx and Engels to today, a clear ideological struggle has been going on against anarchism and bourgeois reformism on the question of state power. What is required to be clear here is that without forcefully destroying the bourgeois state power it is impossible to open up the way to withering away of the state.

Asserting the 'centralized state power' as the 'specificity of bourgeois society' Lenin has said, "Two institutions most characteristic of this state machine are the bureaucracy and the standing army. In their works, Marx and Engels repeatedly show that the bourgeoisie are connected with these institutions by thousands of threads." He further says, "The development, perfection, and strengthening of the bureaucratic and military apparatus proceeded during all the numerous bourgeois revolutions which Europe has witnessed since the fall of feudalism." It is clear that this 'development, perfection and strengthening' of the bureaucracy and the military mechanism is guided by the necessity of bourgeois class to repress upon the entire workers and labouring masses.

As a brilliant and authentic explanation of Marxism on the state, the following quotation from "Anti-Duhring" by Frederick Engels can be taken up:

"The proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production in the first instance into state property. But, in doing this, it abolishes itself as proletariat, abolishes all class distinctions and class antagonisms, abolishes also the state as state. Society thus far, based upon class antagonisms, had need of the state, that is, of an organisation

of the particular class, which was pro tempore the exploiting class, for the maintenance of its external conditions of production, and, therefore, especially, for the purpose of forcibly keeping the exploited classes in the condition of oppression corresponding with the given mode of production (slavery, serfdom, wage-labour). The state was the official representative of society as a whole; the gathering of it together into a visible embodiment. But it was this only in so far as it was the state of that class which itself represented, for the time being, society as a whole: in ancient times, the state of slave-owning citizens; in the Middle Ages, the feudal lords; in our own time, the bourgeoisie. When at last it becomes the real representative of the whole of society, it renders itself unnecessary. As soon as there is no longer any social class to be held in subjection; as soon as class rule, and the individual struggle for existence based upon our present anarchy in production, with the collisions and excesses arising from these, are removed, nothing more remains to be repressed, and a special repressive force, a state, is no longer necessary. The first act by virtue of which the state really constitutes itself the representative of the whole of society — the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society — this is, at the same time, its last independent act as a state. State interference in social relations becomes, in one domain after another, superfluous, and then dies out of itself; the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of processes of production. The state is not “abolished”. It dies out. This gives the measure of the value of the phrase “a free people’s state”, both as to its justifiable use at times by agitators, and as to its ultimate scientific insufficiency; and also of the demands of the so-called anarchists for the abolition of the state out of hand.”

This lengthy quotation has clarified so many facts on the state. The state continues to exist as a state up to which it suppresses a certain class of the society. Its role as a state also vanishes when a situation in which it represents the whole of the society develops.

This fact applies on the question of democracy also. Whenever the state exists there cannot be anything like ‘a democracy for all’, ‘the full democracy’ or ‘a free people’s state’. When a situation in which the entire society acquires democracy develops, then the need of the democracy itself vanishes. Along with withering away of the state, the democracy, which is inseparably linked with the emergence of the state, is obvious to vanish. It is clear that the state exists till the classes exist in the society and the character of democracy also is class-based till the former exists. In fact, the state is democracy and the democracy is state. It can also be understood in other words - the state is dictatorship and the democracy is dictatorship. It is because the democracy of the exploiting class under their state becomes a dictatorship for the exploited class, whereas, the democracy of the proletarian class under their state becomes a dictatorship for the bourgeois class. There cannot be anything like a state for both, a democracy for both and a dictatorship for both. Democracy for the entire people is nothing other than the hypocrisy of the bourgeois class to confuse the working masses.

In today’s capitalist imperialist era, there cannot be any bigger dishonesty and hypocrisy than to speak of ‘adult franchise’, ‘independent and impartial election’ and ‘democracy for all’, on the part of bourgeois class, before the standing army and bureaucracy, the main organ of the state power, which is the most centralized, consolidated, gigantic and merciless and destructive as well. The bourgeois exercise of rendering “divinity” to the so-called parliamentary system as an ‘eternal’ and ‘universal’ expression of democracy is not at all a thing that can conceal their militarisation, military insolence and plunderer and genocidal character. Lenin, in his work *‘The State and Revolution’* has clarified by saying that it is “To decide once every few years which members of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament — this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics”. He has further clarified in it, “from America to Switzerland, from France to Britain, Norway and so forth — in these countries the real business of “state” is performed behind the scenes and is carried on by the departments, chancelleries, and General Staffs. Parliament is given up to talk for the special purpose of fooling the “common people”.

## On the Proletarian and Bourgeois Parliamentary Democracy

We talked in short about the basic Marxist theory on the state and democracy. Here we will discuss more about the relation between the democracy of the proletariat and that of bourgeois class.

It is well known to everybody that the first historic experience of the proletarian democracy is the one of Paris Commune in France, in 1871. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels themselves worked out the theoretical synthesis of the Paris Commune experiences. As the first historical experience of proletarian democracy opposed to bourgeois parliamentarism, Marx, from his status of the great proletarian thinker, sharpened his ideas further by taking up lessons from it. During the period of transition from capitalism to communism, Marx put forward sharply the conclusion that the form of transitional state of the 'proletarian class organized as a ruling class' cannot be anything other than the dictatorship of the proletariat. As an important reason behind the failure of Paris Commune, he criticized in clear words the liberalism that it had shown while suppressing the bourgeois class. On the basis of the experience of Commune, Marx drew up in both the theoretical and practical sense a line between the proletarian and bourgeois parliamentary democracy. Marx said, "The Commune, was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time..." "... Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to represent and repress the people in parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people constituted in communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for workers, foremen and accountants for his business." (Lenin - *The State and Revolution*)

Karl Marx has elucidated the difference between two democracies of two classes through the aforesaid expression. Marxism does not oppose adult suffrage and the representative institution elected thereof, moreover, wants to transform it from a gossiping centre of the bourgeois class into a working institution of people's servants. How can it take place? Marx was not any hypothesist. Citing a very simple and practical example, he said that the role of the masses in the proletarian democracy would definitely be like that of a master and, all the officials of the state will act as a servant of them. Marxism has lucidly synthesized that when the task of elected representatives becomes not only that of legislative but also becomes to implement the laws they have enacted, and, when the masses have right to revoke the representatives who go against people's interest, then the representative institution becomes a working centre of the masses and not a gossiping one. Drawing up the essence of Paris Commune experiences, Karl Marx has discussed on the specificity of the proletarian democracy in his work "Class struggle in France". There it is said, "The first decree of the Commune, therefore, was the suppression of the standing army, and the substitution for it of the armed people"; "The Commune was formed of the municipal councilors, chosen by universal suffrage in the various wards of the town, responsible and revocable at short terms. The majority of its members were naturally working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class"; "Instead of continuing to be the agent of the Central Government, the police was at once stripped of its political attributes, and turned into the responsible, and at all times revocable, agent of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, the public service had to be done at workman's wage. The vested interests and the representation allowances of the high dignitaries of state disappeared ... Having once got rid of the standing army and the police — the physical force elements of the old government — the Commune was anxious to break the spiritual force of repression, the "parson-power" ... The judicial functionaries were to be divested of that sham independence ... Magistrates and judges were to be elective, responsible, and revocable."

The aforesaid explanation of the Paris Commune experiences put forward by Karl Marx helps considerably to understand the basic specificity of proletarian democracy. 'The end of standing army', the election of entire functionaries of the state by the masses and provision of revoking them when the people feel necessary, equal salary for all the functionaries of the state, what can there be an ample democracy for the people other than this?



## A Brief Introduction to the Policies of the C.P.N. (Maoist)

-Com. Prachanda  
Chairman, C.P.N (Maoist)

### Ideology & Ultimate Goal

It is well known that the guiding principle of the C.P.N. (Maoist), the political representative of the Nepalese proletariat, is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM), and its ultimate goal is socialism and communism. While firmly adhering to its principles and goals the Party has been developing its policies in a flexible manner on the basis of concrete analysis of concrete conditions. The Party has been particularly stressing on creative application and development of the principles with ceaseless struggles against dogmatism and empiricism in the realm of ideology. According to this scientific understanding, the Party has synthesized 'Prachanda Path' as a particular set of ideas of its own in the course of providing leadership to the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist democratic revolution of the Nepalese people. Prachanda Path has provided a new dimension of ingenuity and creativity to the communist movement with the proposed new idea of 'Development of Democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'. The C.P.N. (Maoist) may not be cognizable to those who fail to understand this ingenuity and creativity of the ideas and view it from the old perspective.

### Political Strategy

On the basis of study of history of the Nepalese society and its economic, political and cultural specificities the Party has concluded that feudal production relations and imperialist exploitation and interventions are the main obstacles to the progress of Nepal. The Party is firm in its conviction that the development process of the productive forces would take a forward course and the progress of the Nepalese society would be ensured only when it is freed from the feudal production relations. Hence, the basic political strategy of the Party is to free the Nepalese society from feudalism and imperialism through the bourgeois democratic revolution. The military strategy of People's War (PW) is objectively based on the goal of achieving this political strategy.

### Political Tactics or Immediate Policy

In the light of the particularity of the total international situation and the prevailing balance of power within the country, the Party has been pursuing a very flexible political tactics. A round table conference, an interim government and election to a Constituent Assembly are the minimum political tactics proposed by the Party in this context. Only a new constitution made by a Constituent Assembly can in reality institutionalize the sovereign rights of the Nepalese people. There can be no reason for anybody to disagree with this supreme modality of democracy to let the Nepalese people determine their own destiny and future.

On the basis of this flexible tactical line the Party entered into negotiations with the old regime twice. However, both the times it was proved that the old regime was not in favour of a political solution but was in the path of conspiracy and regression. Rejection of the supreme democratic method of Constituent Assembly to make a new constitution by the old regime merely proves that it does not rely on the people but on armaments, army and terror.

The past 53 years of political developments in Nepal have proved time and again that the feudal monarchy is the principal impediment to the democratic rights of the people. The eight years of PW, the infamous Narayanhiiti palace massacre and the regressive step of October 4, 2002, have inflated the hatred and wrath of the Nepalese people against the King and the monarchy to its peak. Scared of the reality that republican consciousness has

now become the consciousness of the general masses, the fake monarchy erected after the palace massacre has consistently opposed the proposal for a Constituent Assembly. Now it is making a vain attempt to perpetuate the rule of genocide and terror on Nepal and the Nepalese people by appeasing and kowtowing mainly American imperialism.

As a conspiracy to hoodwink the international community and to perpetuate its feudal military dictatorship, the old regime has labeled the great & historic democratic movement of the Nepalese people as "terrorism". The Party has been cautioning the international community against the false and conspiratorial propaganda of the old feudal regime of Nepal that has degenerated into a pawn of American imperialism to maintain its hegemony in South Asia.

In this context, the Party once again reasserts its commitment to the following minimum policies and programmes:

- The Party still maintains the proposal of round table conference, an interim government and election to a Constituent Assembly to make a new constitution as its immediate minimum political proposal for a forward-looking political solution to the present crises in the country.
- The Party wants to institutionalize a republican form of state through the Constituent Assembly and believes that in a free and fair election the mandate of the Nepalese people would be in favour of a republic.
- In the given context of the existence of two ideologies, two armies and two states in the country, the Party is agreeable to demobilization of both the armies and carrying out of elections to the Constituent Assembly under the supervision of United Nations Organization and international human rights organizations.
- The content of the new constitution would be:

**(a) Political**

Full sovereignty to the people; secular state; elected house of representatives as the highest representative body of the people; reorganization of a unified national army; provision of national and regional autonomy along with rights of self-determination; provision of constitutional changes or refinement according to the wishes of the people; guarantee of multi-party competition, periodic elections, adult franchise, rule of law and fundamental rights including freedom of speech and press; provision of special rights for women and dalits (i.e. oppressed caste); etc.

**(b) Economic**

Revolutionary land reforms for judicious redistribution of land on the principle of 'land to the tiller'; self-reliant and national industrial policy; promotion and development of national capital; formulation of an integrated national policy for proper utilization of natural resources; etc.

**(c) Social**

Development of a mechanism for strict punishment to the corrupt, smugglers and profiteers; development of

employment-oriented national and scientific education system; universal health service; provision of state care for the destitutes, the elderly and the children; end to all forms of exploitation, discrimination and dishonour to women and dalits; guarantee of minimum wages and worker's participation in industrial management; guarantee of intellectual & academic freedom and professional rights; promotion of democratic and scientific culture in place of feudal and imperialist reactionary culture; plan of integrated national infrastructure development; guarantee of full employment to all; fulfillment of demands of class and mass organizations; etc.

#### (d) Foreign Policy

- Independent foreign policy of maintaining friendly relations with all on the basis of Panchasheel (i.e. five principles of peaceful coexistence) and non-alignment.
- Abrogation of all unequal treaties from the past and conclusion of new treaties and agreements on a new basis.
- Promotion of good neighbourly relations with neighbouring India and China with mutual cooperation in the fields of utilization of natural resources, trade and transit, etc. for mutual benefit, keeping in view the particularity of economic, political, cultural, historical and geographical relations with them.

It is obvious that these immediate policies reflect the most flexible and democratic methods for peaceful and forward-looking political solution to the ongoing civil war in the country. However, the old feudal régime that has lost all support and confidence of the people is unleashing a naked military terror on the people relying on the military assistance of imperialism. In this context the Party highly values the solidarity of all the democratic forces inside and outside the country against the autocratic monarchy and in favour of the republican movement of the people. Hence the Party appeals to all concerned to lend their voices in favour of the democratic movement of the Nepalese people.

### ***Just Published!!***

1. *Some Important Documents of Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), Janadisha Publications, 2004; pages IX+174*
2. *Problems & Prospects of Revolution in Nepal [A Collection of Articles by Com. Prachanda and Other Leaders of CPN(Maoist), Janadisha Publications, 2004; pages VI+300*

## The Question of Building a New Type of State

- Com. Baburam Bhattarai

*"The basic question of every revolution is that of state power. Unless this question is understood, there can be no intelligent participation in the revolution, not to speak of guidance of the revolution."*

- V.I. Lenin, (1917b: 34)

The question of state power has now become the central question for the New Democratic revolution in Nepal, which is marching forward to capturing central state power after building revolutionary base areas and local power in the vast rural areas. The question has assumed significance and may be discussed primarily from two angles. Firstly, in the universal context; and secondly, in the concrete national context. Firstly in the universal or general sense, the proletarian (i.e. New Democratic or Socialist) state power is of a 'new type' as compared to all the state powers of minority exploiter classes in history. Further-more, after the downfall of all People's Democratic or Socialist state powers including those in Russia, China and others in the past, the proletarian state powers arising in a new setting in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have to be of a further newer type. Secondly, in the concrete semi-feudal and semi-colonial national context of Nepal, where even the old bourgeois revolution and state has not been accomplished, the prospective proletarian state would naturally be, and have to be, of a 'new' type. Hence, we would first make a general review of the historical experiences on the question of state and strive to analyse the fundamental characteristics of a new type of state.

### 1. Historical Background

#### A. International Context

The question of state power has been the central question in every major ideological political struggle in the international communist movement. Struggles against the anarchists during Marx-Engel's time, struggles against the revisionists during Lenin's time and struggles against the revisionists and dogmato-revisionists during Mao's and our own time are principally centred on the question of state power. It would thus be useful to make a brief historical review of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist or proletarian view against the anarchist, revisionist and dogmato-revisionist views, which may also be called petty-bourgeois, bourgeois and bureaucratic bourgeois views on the state and lay the foundation for a new type of state.

As per the historical facts available so far and their historic-materialist interpretations, origin of the state followed the division of classes in society as a means of dictatorship of one class over the others. Hence the state has been the centre of class struggle in every historical stage starting with the primitive state-communal formation through the slave and feudal societies to the modern capitalist society, and every victorious class has further sharpened and strengthened this weapon of the state according to its class interest. The state, which was initially born as 'servant' of the society, gradually separated itself from the society and took the form of 'master' of the society. By the time the state reached the 'highest' and 'ultimate' stage of the bourgeois republic it became terrible parasitic machinery over the society armed with a huge bureaucracy and standing army. However, according to the law of dialectics that requires everything that is born to meet with its death, the state is also inevitably destined to die someday.

The latest development of the social productive forces to a very high level has made this both possible and essential. This is the fundamental principal of Marxism on the origin, development and end of the state.

Among the founders of Marxism, Marx through his works, principally, "Class Struggle in France" (1850), "Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" (1852), "Civil War in France" (1871), "Critique of the Gotha programme" (1875), etc. and Engels through his works, particularly, "Anti-Duhring" (1878), "The Origin of Family, Private Property and State" (1884), etc. laid the foundation of the scientific conception of the state.

However, the issue of utmost dispute and debate in the international communist movement and the one deserving maximum attention while building a new type of state, is the question of elimination of the old type of state in its highest and ultimate stage in the form of a bourgeois republic and construction of new type of transitional state in its place. Marx and Engels had to wage the main ideological struggle on this question while fighting against the anarchist trend particularly led by Sterner, Prudhon, and Bakunin. While the anarchists idealistically talked of immediate destruction of all types of state and opposed building an alternate state of any kind, Marx and Engels viewed the state objectively and put forward the concept of building a new type of transitional state in lieu of the bourgeois state, whose essence would be the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Elucidating the fundamental difference between the Marxist and the anarchist views on the state, Engels has said:

"While the great mass of the Social-Democratic workers hold our view that state power is nothing more than the organisation which the ruling classes-landowners and capitalists-have provided for themselves in order to protect their social privileges, Bakunin maintains that it is the *state* which has created capital, that the capitalist has his capital *only by the grace of the state*. As, therefore, the state is the chief evil, it is above all the state, which must be done away with and then capitalism will go to blazes of itself. We, on the contrary, say: Do away with capital, the concentration of all means of production in the hands of the few, and the state will fall of itself. The difference is an essential one: Without a previous social revolution the abolition of the state is nonsense; the abolition of the capital *is* precisely the social revolution and involves a change in the whole mode of production." (Marx and Engels 1985:425)

Thus it was well established that the state is not an abstract concept created by somebody's subjective wishes but a concrete object developed and demolished by the objective necessity of society.

Engels had further expounded that after the displacement of the state of the minority exploiter classes by the social revolution of the conscious masses the majority exploited classes should establish a 'transitional' state to apply dictatorship over the defeated exploiter classes and to move towards a classless society, and such a state would be "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word". (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984:120) Marx and Engels had time and again highlighted the Paris Commune of 1871 as the best example of such a transitional proletarian state.

After the experience of the Paris Commune Marx had all the more emphatically proclaimed that the form of the state needed for a long transitional period from capitalism to communism would be nothing but the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is expressed thus:

"Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can nothing but *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*." (Marx 1975: 26)

The Paris Commune which was created through direct election and participation by the workers of Paris, which was directly defended by the armed masses after dissolution of the standing army and which was equipped with all the executive and legislature powers was upheld as the most shining example of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' by Engels till the end of his life. This is amply reflected in the following assertion of Engels on the twentieth anniversary of the Paris Commune on March 18, 1891:

"Of late, the Social-Democratic philistine has once more been filled with wholesome terror at the words: Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Well and good, gentleman, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the dictatorship of the Proletariat." (Marx and Engels 1985:189)

The founders of Marxism had visualized the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of a new type of state ending all states in history, not as a permanent object separated from and lording over the society but as a temporary product that would wither away by itself in course of time. This is well articulated in this initial formulation by Marx himself:

"And now as to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: 1) *that the existence of classes* is only bound up with *particular historical phases in the development of production*, 2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to *the dictatorship of the proletariat*, 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to a *classless society*." (Marx and Engels 1977:528)

The expression "this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to... a classless society" clearly asserts that the new type of state in the form of dictatorship of the proletariat is not a state 'in the proper sense of the word' and is a means to do away with all the classes and state.

How the new type of proletarian state (or the dictatorship of the proletariat) gradually withers away and ultimately dies out as a state is further expressed by Engels as follows:

"When at last it becomes the real representative of the whole of society, it renders itself unnecessary. As soon as there is no longer any social class to be held in subjection; as soon as class rule, and the individual struggle for existence based upon our present anarchy in production, with the collision and excesses arising from these, are removed, nothing more remains to be repressed and a special repressive force, a state, is no longer necessary. The first act by virtue of which the state really constitutes itself the representative of the whole of society- the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society- this is, at the same time, its last independent act as a state. State interference in social relations becomes, in one domain after another, superfluous, and then dies out of itself: the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of processes of production. The state is not "abolished". It *dies out*." (Engels 1880:147)

This long quotation is by itself so crystal clear and sharp that it needs no additional explanation. However, as the great Paris Commune in existence only for seventy-two days was the only example of a new type of proletarian state in the form of dictatorship of the proletariat during the life time of Marx and Engels, there was no possibility of any practicing of withering away of the state as visualized by the founders of Marxism.

After the death of Marx and Engels, their worthy successor Lenin made additional contributions to the question of state power, both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, his "*State and Revolution*" (1917) laid a new foundation for the Marxist knowledge and science on the question of state power, and his other works including "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" (1917), "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" (1918), "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" (1919), etc. elucidated the Soviet system as a new type of state. Lenin practically played a pioneering role in building a new type of socialist state by accomplishing the historic October Socialist Revolution and by defending and developing the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviet system against internal and external attacks for seven years.

The concept of a new type of proletarian state put forward by Lenin on the eve of the October Revolution was like this:

"The proletariat... if it wants to uphold the gains of present revolution and proceed further, to win peace, bread and freedom, must "smash", to use Marx's expression, this "ready-made" state machine and substitute a new one for it by *merging* the police force, the army and the bureaucracy with *the entire armed people*. Following the path indicated by the experience of the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Russian Revolution of 1905, the proletariat must organize and arm *all* the poor, exploited sections of the population in order that they *themselves* should take the organs of state power directly into their own hands, in order that *they themselves should constitute* these organs of state power". (Lenin 1917a: 326)

The question of 'smashing' the old state and merging of the army and bureaucracy with 'the entire armed people', and that of 'organizing and arming' the masses and taking the organs of new state power 'directly' into their own hands by the masses, is definitely the most significant aspect of the concept of new type of state advanced by Lenin. This was sought to be implemented in the new state built in the form of 'Soviets of workers, soldiers and peasants' after the October Revolution.

Similarly, Lenin had envisaged to build a new type of state devoid of a 'standing army' and an 'officialdom placed above the people', and vowed thus:

"...I advocate not the usual parliamentary bourgeois state, but a state *without* a standing army, *without* a police opposed to the people, *without* an officialdom placed above the people" (Lenin 1917c: 49)

However, Kautsky and other Right revisionists of the Second International had sought to discard the very class concept of the state and the dictatorship of the proletariat and to spread the illusion of bourgeois parliamentarism in the form of so-called "pure democracy" within the proletarian movement, against which Lenin had launched a severe polemic. In his famous work "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky" (1918), Lenin had amply clarified that in a class divided society 'democracy', too, would have a class character and bourgeois democracy and constituent assembly were mere concrete forms of bourgeois state.

While replying to the critics of the Soviet system, Lenin had enumerated the specificities of the Soviet democracy thus:

"In Russia... the bureaucratic machine has been completely smashed, razed to the ground; the old judges have all been sent packing, the bourgeois parliament has been dispersed and *far more accessible* representation has been given to the workers and peasants; their Soviets have replaced the bureaucrats, or *their* Soviets have been put in control of the bureaucrats, and *their* Soviets have been authorized to elect the judges. This fact alone is enough for all the oppressed classes to recognize that Soviet power, i.e., the present form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic." (Lenin 1918: 33-34)

Thus, an extensive network of local to central Soviets of workers, peasants, soldiers and other revolutionary classes developed in the model of the Paris Commune was the practical expression of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' and a new type of socialist state after the October revolution. When there arose a contradiction between the bourgeois representative organ, the constituent assembly, and the socialist representative organ, the Soviet, *immediately* after the revolution, the constituent assembly was dissolved as a historically retrograde organ, and the forward-looking Soviet democracy was institutionalized. Even when a vicious imperialist aggression and internal civic war ensued in the immediate aftermath of the revolution, the congress and meetings of the elected Soviets were held in short and regular intervals and all-important decisions of the state were taken through the Soviets. However, when the civil war got stretched and a 'New Economic Policy' (NEP) with features of state-capitalism was introduced to tide over the problems of the economic construction after the end of the civil war, there was gradual erosion in the dynamism and liveliness of the initial Soviet system. The higher-level executive committees started getting more active and powerful at the cost of the Soviet Congress and local

organs. The organs of the state, Party and army (which was getting transformed into a standing army from the initial 'Red Guards') were getting intertwined inseparably. A bureaucratic apparatus in the old Czarist mould, cut-off from and placed over the people, started rising up gradually. Similar other bureaucratic deviations were cropping up menacingly in the new Soviet state system. As Lenin was a rare genius of revolutionary firmness and dynamism and a past master in applying revolutionary science in the concrete time and place, he made concerted efforts till the end to curb the rising bureaucratic tendencies in the Soviet state system and to ensure the initiative, supervision and participation of the revolutionary masses in the new state power through 'Worker's and Peasants Inspection', 'non-Party Worker's and Peasant's Conferences', etc.

A glimpse of the problem of bureaucracy in the Soviet state and the Party can be had from the following comment by Lenin towards the end of his life in 1923:

"Let us hope that our new Worker's and Peasants' Inspection will abandon what the French call *pruderies*, which we may call ridiculous primness, or ridiculous swank, and which plays entirely into the hands of our Soviet and Party bureaucracy. Let it be said in parentheses that we have bureaucrats in our Party offices as well as in Soviet offices." (Lenin 1923:419)

In this context it would be worthwhile to note the warnings of Rosa Luxemburg made from a left revolutionary angle, despite her certain idealist and voluntarist limitations, on the future of the Soviet state:

"Without general elections, without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free struggle of opinion, life dies out in every public institution, becomes a semblance of life, in which only the bureaucracy remains as the active element. Public life gradually falls asleep, a few dozen party leaders of inexhaustible energy and boundless experience direct and rule. Among them, in reality only a dozen outstanding heads do the leading and an elite of the working class is invited from time to time to meetings where they are to applaud the speeches of the leaders, and to approve proposed resolutions unanimously-at bottom, then, a clique affair- a dictatorship, to be sure, not the dictatorship of the proletariat, however, but only the dictatorship of the handful of politicians, that is a dictatorship in the bourgeois sense...". (Luxemburg 1918:118)

After Lenin's death in 1924, Stalin made efforts to continue and develop the Soviet state in a socialist direction. However, firstly due to a type of economic deterministic thinking that envisaged the development of the productive forces per se would lead the society towards communism, an one-sided stress was laid on economic development through central planning. Secondly, in the particularity of heightened contradictions with imperialism in and around the World War II, the 'external' cause was accorded primacy and the policy of applying force of state power to settle internal contradictions within the state and the Party was followed. Consequently, by the time of Stalin's death in 1953 the Soviet state was caught in a vicious bureaucratic quagmire, and with Khrushchev's advent it assumed an open bureaucratic capitalist and totalitarian character, which was ultimately transformed into naked capitalism in 1989.

With the 'peaceful' degeneration of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia into the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, Mao sought to draw grave lessons from it and developed the theory of continuous revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, or the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR). Even beforehand during the Chinese revolution, Mao had developed the concept of a new type of state in the form of 'people's democratic dictatorship' or 'New Democracy' to complete bourgeois democratic revolution under the leadership of the proletariat in pre-capitalist or semi-feudal and semi-colonial societies and to move towards socialism. These are incorporated in his celebrated works like "On New Democracy" (1939), "On People's Democratic Dictatorship" (1949), etc. After the revolution when there was the danger of the people's democratic dictatorship (till 1956) and the dictatorship of the proletariat (1956 onwards) undergoing bureaucratization and degenerating into bourgeois



dictatorship, Mao searched for new methods to ensure supervision and participation of the masses in the state and to correctly handle contradictions prevalent in society. In this process were penned such important works like "On Ten Major Relations" (1956), "On Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" (1957), etc. Later on in the Sixties, when the Khrushovite revisionists blatantly abandoned the principle of dictatorship of the proletariat and advanced the bourgeois concept of the 'state of the entire people', Mao launched a powerful polemic against the same, which is widely known as the 'Great Debate'.

The method of ensuring maximum and continuous participation of the masses in the state through the practice of 'great democracy' under the leadership of the proletariat, is the question of utmost importance in checking bureaucratic deviations and building a new type of state, which is reflected in Mao's assertion: "We must have this much confidence. We are not even afraid of imperialism, so why should we be afraid of great democracy? Why should we be afraid of students taking to the streets? Yet among our Party members there are some who are afraid of great democracy, and this is not good. Those bureaucrats who are afraid of great democracy must study Marxism hard and mend their ways." (Mao 1977:347)

There is no doubt that the GPCR carried out from 1966 to 1976 under the leadership of Mao made historic contribution in the development of a new type of proletarian state. In this context particularly noteworthy are: widespread slogans of "It is right to rebel", 'Bombard the bourgeois headquarter' etc; revolutionary committees made up of non-Party masses to conduct state functions in the model of Paris Commune; formation Red Guards in millions through the arming of the masses; inclusion of the rights of workers to strike in the state constitution; etc.

Nevertheless, the incidence of counterrevolution from within the existing state and restoration of bourgeois dictatorship in China after Mao's death in 1976, has added further responsibilities on the shoulders of the new age revolutionaries to build a new type of proletarian state. In this context we should move further ahead after drawing positive and negative lessons of practices of dictatorship of the proletariat from the Paris Commune through the Russian Soviet to the Chinese GPCR. It is obvious that as long as the era of imperialism prevails and there is the compulsion of building socialism within a single country, nobody can and should objectively deny the possibility of counter-revolution after a revolution. Even then, if we can't provide scientific and logical answer to the subjective factors behind the relatively easy and more or less 'peaceful' occurrence of counter-revolution and restoration of bourgeois dictatorship in nearly half of the world that had dozens of socialist and people's democratic state systems in the twentieth century, we won't be able to win the confidence of the masses to accomplish revolution and defend and develop the same up to communism. In this sense it is imperative to firmly grasp that the question of building a new type of state in the twenty-first century means the building of the state that would prevent counter-revolution after revolution and would lead to communism through a continuous revolution; or it is a state that would bring about its own end as a state.

Similarly, as there would be a ceaseless process of revolution and counter-revolution so long as the class division in society remains, we should beware of the dangers of reactionary psychological warfare against the possibility of another revolution after a counter-revolution and resultant proliferation of pessimism and liquidationist, agnostic, nihilist, reformist and revisionist thoughts within the revolutionary camp. For this we should correctly grasp the dialectical law of opportunism donning different guises according to varying time and place as seen during the days of Marx, Lenin and Mao. For instance, on the question of the state in Marx's time as there was the need to fight against the anarchist tendency, which tended to negate the state instantly, Marx and Engels had to stress more on the 'necessity' of a transitional state in the form of dictatorship of the proletariat. When this 'necessity' aspect was one-sidedly exaggerated by the revisionists of the Second International and sought to perpetuate the bourgeois state through cosmetic 'reforms', Lenin launched a vicious ideological

struggle against it and developed the new Soviet state power after carrying out the October Revolution. On Lenin's death and during the period of Third International and Stalin, though there was mechanistic stress on the 'necessity' of dictatorship of the proletariat from a dogmato-revisionist angle, the question of continuous revolution and withering away of the state was put in the back burner and consequently the dictatorship of the proletariat itself got distorted and ultimately degenerated into bureaucratic bourgeois dictatorship or totalitarianism. It was only during the period of Mao that both the revisionist and dogmato-revisionist tendencies were attacked and a balanced stress was placed on both the questions of dictatorship of the proletariat and of 'continuous revolution' and withering away of the state. As Mao's efforts during the short period were grossly inadequate and incomplete, the revolutionaries of the present age should dare go beyond all the past experiences and build a new type of state power while firmly grasping the question of dictatorship of the proletariat and continuous revolution.

## B. National Context

The centralized feudal state of Nepal was set up nearly two and a quarter century ago under the leadership of King Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha. Though there have been minor reformist changes in 1951 and 1990, the class character of the state has remained semi-feudal and semi-colonial and its political form has been basically autocratic monarchical. As the basic socio-economic base of society has remained semi-feudal and semi-colonial and the standing army, since its inception during the central state formation days, and the bureaucracy, along with its development since 1951, have been primarily loyal to the monarchy, attempts to introduce 'constitutional monarchy' in the following decades after the 1951 and 1990 political changes have not been successful. The latest experiment in 'constitutional monarchy' and bourgeois parliamentary democracy has virtually ended with the qualitative development of the class struggle in the form of People's War (PW) since 1996 and the old state has once again donned the guise of nakedly autocratic monarchy and military dictatorship since October 4, 2002.

As per the general national and regional structure of the feudal state, the old state of Nepal is based on Arya-Khas high caste chauvinism and is of a unitary and over-centralized type. As a result the majority Tibeto-Burman and Austro-Dravid nationalities and Madheshis (i.e. inhabitant of Terai plains) and the regions of far-western Seti-Mahakali and Karnali are subjected to intense oppression of the unitary and centralized feudal state. Moreover, the *dalits* treated as untouchables in the so-called Hindu *varnashram* system (i.e. caste hierarchy) and women under patriarchal domination, are naturally subjected to worst form of oppression by the feudal state.

Thus it is axiomatic that a new type of state in the context of Nepal means a transitional state that would first complete the bourgeois democratic revolution and then would advance towards socialism and communism. In keeping with this objective reality the CPN (Maoist) has since its inception formulated a minimum programme of establishing a New Democratic state based on the people's democratic dictatorship and set the goal of attaining socialism and communism through carrying out continuous revolution. It has also been envisaged that in the concrete condition of Nepal the form of the first phase of bourgeois democratic revolution would be joint democratic dictatorship of different oppressed classes, nationalities, regions, gender and communities under the leadership of the proletariat.

In the light of the destruction of the old state in most of the rural areas and the rising up of different levels and forms of revolutionary people's power in its place, 'United Revolutionary People's Council' (URPC) has been developed since September 2001 as an embryonic central state power to coordinate and guide the local people's power, which is a broad revolutionary united front of different classes, nationalities, regions, women and others under the leadership of the CPN (Maoist). The 75-point 'Common Minimum Policy and Programme' adopted by the First National Convention of the URPC provides a general outline of the New Democratic or People's Demo-

cratic state to be built after the revolution. This Minimum Programme has sought to incorporate many important aspects of proletarian democracy (viz. supervision of the masses over the state, public criticism of the state functionaries, etc) developed during the GPCR.

Keeping in view such specificities like the stage of strategic equilibrium of the PW, the triangular contention among revolutionary democratic, parliamentary and monarchist forces in the country, sensitive geo-strategic positioning of the country sandwiched between two gigantic neighbors, etc, the Party has advanced a further proposal of minimum forward-looking political solution of completing the bourgeois democratic revolution through peaceful negotiations. An outline of a transitional state which is a step below the New Democratic/People's Democratic state has been provided in the "An Executive Summary of the Proposal Put Forward by CPN (Maoist) for the Negotiations" [See, CPN (Maoist) 2004] proposed by the Party during the latest round of negotiations on April 27, 2003. The Party believes that the concept of such a transitional state rising above the bourgeois parliamentarism but not yet reaching the level of New Democracy is appropriate both theoretically and practically in the concrete conditions of Nepal.

Though the concept of New Democratic state developed by Mao is generally correct and appropriate, the CPN (Maoist) has found it imperative to further develop the concept of democracy in the light of the past experiences of counter-revolutions and continuously changing national and international conditions. In this context a recent resolution passed by the Central Committee of the Party for a public debate says:

"A Party, which may be proletarian revolutionary, and a state, that may be democratic or socialist, at a particular time, place and condition, may turn counter-revolutionary at another time, place and condition. It is obvious that the synthesis of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, namely the masses and the revolutionaries should rebel in such a situation, is fully correct in its place. However, as if a particular Communist Party remains proletarian for ever once a New Democratic or Socialist state is established under the leadership of the Party, there is either no opportunity, or it is not prepared, or it is prohibited, for the masses to have a free democratic or socialist competition against it. As a result, since the ruling Party is not required to have a political competition with others amidst the masses, it gradually turns into a mechanistic bureaucratic Party with special privileges and the state under its leadership, too, turns into mechanistic and bureaucratic machinery. Similarly, the masses become a victim of formal democracy and gradually their limitless energy of creativity and dynamism gets sapped. This danger has been clearly observed in history. To solve this problem, the process of control, supervision and intervention of the masses over the state should be stressed to be organized in a lively and scientific manner, according to the principle of continuous revolution. Once again the question here is to dialectically organize scientific reality that the efficacy of dictatorship against the enemy is dependent upon the efficacy of exercising democracy among the people.

" For this, a situation must be created to ensure continuous proletarianization and revolutionization of the Communist Party by organizing political competition within the constitutional limits of the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist democratic state. Only by institutionalizing the rights of the masses to install an alternative revolutionary Party or leadership of the state if the Party fails to continuously revolutionize itself the counter-revolution can be effectively checked. Among different anti-feudal and anti-imperialist political parties, organizations and institutions, which accept the constitutional provisions of the democratic state, their mutual relations should not be confined to that of a mechanistic relation of cooperation with the Communist Party but should be stressed to have dialectical relations of democratic political competition in the service of the people. It should be obvious that if anybody in this process transgresses the limits legally set by the democratic state, he would be subjected to democratic dictatorship." [CPN (Maoist) 2004:148-49]

Certainly the questions raised in the above resolution regarding the development of democracy will have far

reaching significance not only in our own national context but also in the international arena. Thus, only by correctly grasping this we may be able to build a new type of state in the coming days.

## 2. Important Questions on Building a New Type of State

In the light of the above historical experiences and the new necessities of the ever-changing space and time, it would be worthwhile to analyze the important questions on building a new type of state.

### A. The Question of Smashing the Old State

One basic precondition for building a new type of state is the complete smashing of the old state. The more completely and deeply the old state is smashed, the better would be the probability of building a more stable and complete new state. This is the objective law verified by historical experience and facts. The main reason for this is the mutually exclusive rationale and basis of the 'old' and 'new' state. The fundamental characteristics of the old state as manifested in the primitive class state power to the highly developed bourgeois republic is the use of force or exercise of dictatorship over the majority of laboring classes in society on behalf of the minority exploiting classes. As antithetical to this, the characteristic feature of the new type of proletarian (or people's democratic, or socialist) state is the use of force or exercise of dictatorship over the minority parasitic classes on behalf of the majority laboring classes. Because of this polar opposite characteristics of the two types of state, it is just impossible to transform the old state into the new one in toto or with general reforms. Particularly in the context of the modern bourgeois republic with a huge standing army and bureaucracy, which is linked with every nook and corner of society with innumerable fibers, it is just unthinkable to build a new state without first completely smashing the old one.

This is the reason why the propounders of scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, have always forcefully hammered on the question of smashing the old state. While showering praises on the Paris Commune, they had said:

"One thing especially was proved by the Commune, viz., that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes." (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984:115)

Furthermore, in his letter to Kugelmann on April 12, 1871, i.e. just at the time of the Paris Commune, Marx had written:

"If you look up the last chapter of my *Eighteenth Brumaire*, you will find that I declare that the next attempt of the French revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but to *smash* it [Marx's italics], and this is the precondition for every real people's revolution on the continent. And this is what our heroic Party comrades in Paris are attempting."

This was prominently quoted and highlighted by Lenin in his pioneering work *State and Revolution*. (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984:215)

The principal rationale and basic of the strategy of protracted PW advanced by Mao is also the revolutionary tactics of smashing the old state power part by part from below and concurrently building the new state power in the predominantly rural and agrarian semi-feudal and semi-colonial countries. In this sense there is an inalienable and interdependent dialectical relation between the destruction of the old and construction of the new. If we intently analyze the experiences of revolution and building of new state in Russia, China and elsewhere, it can be seen that where there has been destruction of the old with greater intensity there has been construction of the new with reciprocal stability. In Russia, as the revolution had started from the cities and the impact of revolution

in the rural areas had reached in lesser degree and late, there was greater difficulty in building the new revolutionary state in the latter. This historical fact was even acknowledged by Lenin. It is also seen that the new state changes its color more easily and swiftly if we have to induct more officials and technicians from the old state after the revolution. This is the reason why Marx had stated that the workers had to pass through the experiences of intense civil war of fifteen, twenty or fifty years so as to be capable of running the new state.

Certainly some organs of the old state like financial institutions, postal system, communications, transportation etc. can be adapted to the new state. But they are not the principle organs of the state. Standing army, bureaucracy, judiciary etc. are the principle and decisive organs of the state, which have to be mandatorily smashed to build the new state. Along with this the ideological and cultural organs of the old state need to be systematically dismantled to lay the ideological and cultural foundation of the new state. In this context all genuine proletarian revolutionaries should firmly grasp that to reject all revisionist and reformist illusions of 'peaceful transition' from the old state to the new one is not just a question of tactical expediency but a question of strategic and theoretical importance.

## **B. The Question of Class Dictatorship and Proletarian Leadership**

The most important and fundamental question in the context of building a new type of state is the question of class dictatorship and proletarian leadership. Because, the 'state' in its literal sense and essence is the means of forcibly exercising the will or dictatorship of one class over the other and without the leadership of the last class in history, which has 'nothing to lose but its chains', i.e. the proletariat, no state can be 'new' in its real sense. In essence, by 'new' here it is meant to be the new means, which would negate itself like the proletarian class.

The word 'dictatorship' has been in dispute since the beginning and it is for the use of this word that the bourgeoisie still castigates the communists the most severely. Shaken by such castigation the revisionist 'communists' of the world, including those in Nepal, have sought to discard this word of 'dictatorship of the proletariat' from their policies and programmes and vainly attempted to appease the reactionaries. But, just as the sun does not stop shining even if someone closes his eyes, so the inherent character of class dictatorship of any state does not change even if someone stops using the word 'dictatorship' about it. The only question to be chosen is: the dictatorship of which class? If it is not the dictatorship of the proletariat, or the 'peoples democratic dictatorship' in a multi-class society like ours, then it is the 'dictatorship of the bourgeoisie', or 'feudal-bureaucratic bourgeoisie dictatorship', or any other single or multiple class dictatorship. There is no such thing as the 'free people's state' as claimed by the anarchists of Marx and Engels time, or the 'state of the whole people' as parroted by the Khrushovite revisionists of the later period.

Stressing on this very issue Engels had written in his famous letter to August Bebel in 1875:

"As, therefore, the state is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, to hold down one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a free people's state: so long as the proletariat still *uses* the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist." (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984:120)

As an exception in special situations of two struggling classes being in the position of a stalemate, Marx and Engels have talked of the state temporarily assuming a non-class and neutral status and have put forward the examples of the initial stages of the rules of Napoleon Bonaparte (1798-1815) and Louis Bonaparte (1848-1871) in France. (See, Marx 1871 and Engels 1884). However, there should not be any iota of doubt among the revolutionaries that these exceptional conditions are temporary and that the historical rule is for the state to ultimately assume the form of dictatorship of one or the other class.

Hence, while building a new state the revolutionaries should first of all determine with utmost gravity and clarity which class dictatorship it is and against which class this dictatorship is applied. In a semi-feudal and semi-colonial multi-class society like ours, it should be firmly grasped that at the initial stage the new state would be a joint democratic dictatorship of all anti-feudal and anti-imperialist classes, or all the progressive classes from the proletariat through the peasantry to the national bourgeoisie except the feudal and comprador and bureaucratic bourgeoisie. After the completion of the bourgeoisie democratic revolution and transition to socialism the state's character would be the dictatorship of the proletariat and all types of dictatorship would whither away only in communism.

In this context the proletarian revolutionaries should be clear of one general misconception that the 'dictatorship' to be applied against the reactionary classes and the rule of law or 'democratic centralism' to be practiced among the non-antagonistic classes and the general masses are not one and same thing. Dictatorship is the means of eliminating the enemy classes through use of force and suppression, which is carried out primarily through the armed force, jails, etc. On the contrary, the method of non-antagonistic struggle and punishment used among the ranks of the non-antagonistic classes and masses so as to transform them is 'democratic centralism'. Elucidating this point Mao says:

"Dictatorship does not apply within the ranks of the people. The people cannot exercise dictatorship over themselves, nor must one section of the people oppress another. Law-breakers among the people will be punished according to law, but this is different in principle from the exercise of dictatorship to suppress enemies of the people. What applies among the people is democratic centralism." (Mao 1957:387)

The method or process of applying dictatorship over the reactionary classes also needs to be developed with the demands of the time. The Italian Marxist thinker Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) had put forward the concept that the reactionary ruling classes maintain their dictatorship ('hegemony' in his word) by organizing a form of 'consent' among the people through cultural and ideological means apart from the use of the armed force (see Gramsci 1971), and this had created quite a debate in the international communist movement. This is, however, not an entirely new thing but a supplementary means of psychological use of force to aid the principal and ultimate use of physical force, and is in essence a dictatorship. Nevertheless, in view of the increased role of propaganda war with the advance of information technology in recent years, the new type of state should pay more attention to use the cultural and ideological weapons to maintain its dictatorship.

Whereas the bourgeoisie has been very craftily practicing its dictatorship under a parliamentary 'democratic' cover and in the name of the 'whole people', there has been a long debate in the international communist movement about the form of proletarian dictatorship and the practical method of assuming proletarian leadership over the state. In view of the serious setbacks received by the models of proletarian dictatorship practiced in Russia, China and elsewhere in the twentieth century, the present day revolutionaries should draw appropriate lessons from these experiences and dare experiment and develop new models. After the experiences of the Paris Commune and the Russian Soviets a general understanding was developed that the proletariat should exercise its leadership through the Communist Party organized as its vanguard and the dictatorship should be applied through the Soviets or People's Councils modeled after the Paris Commune. Giving a concrete expression to this, Lenin in 1920 had said:

"...the dictatorship is exercised by the proletariat organized in the Soviets; the proletariat is guided by the Communist Party....." (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984:473,

Similarly, Mao had formulated the method of people's democratic dictatorship and proletarian leadership this way:

“...People’s democratic dictatorship under the leadership of the proletariat (through the Communist Party) and based on workers and peasants unity”. (Mao 1948)

After the October Revolution Lenin had time and again stressed that dictatorship of the proletariat should be applied through the Soviets. However, his expression while addressing the Third Congress of the Comintern in 1921 that ‘the dictatorship of the proletariat would not work except through the Communist Party’ was later taken mechanistically rather than in a general sense. As a result grave errors were committed everywhere to virtually erase all differences between a Communist Party and a socialist state. The present day revolutionaries should definitely dare correct them. In the light of the bitter experiences of gradual erosion of the distinction between the Party and representative institutions, the gradual conversion of the Communist Party itself into a bureaucratic bourgeois Party and the Party’s claim of the leadership of the state as a monopoly, we should develop a correct and new method to apply class dictatorship and to exercise proletarian leadership over the state. We should firmly grasp that the dictatorship is not that of a Party or a person but that of the class, and the proletarian leadership is not to be claimed as a monopoly but is to be won over through revolutionary practice and to be applied democratically. We must end at the earliest such paradoxical situation that the bourgeois dictatorship with a reactionary essence has been able to mislead the masses by presenting itself in an attractive form but the people’s democratic or proletarian dictatorship with a revolutionary content has had an ugly external form and been discarded by the masses. For this, first of all, it should be established in practice that the Communist Party does not receive the leadership right as a ‘monopoly’ but gets it because of its proletarian revolutionary character, and an institutional mechanism should be ensured for the class and the masses to reject and abandon a Party that has lost its proletarian character. Similarly, it should be firmly grasped and implemented in practice that the dictatorship of the proletariat is not the dictatorship of the Party or its higher leadership but a class dictatorship applied through the elected representative organs (i.e. the Soviets or the People’s Council) of the masses. Even though the ‘content’ of the dictatorship is principal, the dialectical principle that if the ‘form’ is not correct it will ultimately hamper upon the ‘content’ should be correctly grasped and implemented. The future of building a new type of state principally rests on this cardinal question.

### C. The Question of Democracy

The main essence of the new type of state is dictatorship over the reactionary classes and democracy for the majority of the progressive and patriotic masses. Hence there is a complex dialectical interrelation between applying dictatorship over one particular section of society and availing democracy to the other section. Only in the process of articulating this interrelation that it is possible to build a new type of state. If one attempts to divorce democracy and dictatorship from each other or to merge the both into one, then there occur serious problems and accidents. This has been proved by the bitter experiences of building new type of state in the past century.

Democracy and dictatorship are two sides of the same coin. In a class divided society democracy for one class is dictatorship against another class and dictatorship over one class is a democracy for another class. Hence in the new proletarian state to apply dictatorship over the handful of exploiting classes is to provide democracy for the overwhelming masses, and to expand the scope of democracy for the masses is to tighten the noose of dictatorship over the reactionary classes. In this sense democracy is also a form of state and as soon as the dictatorship of the proletariat becomes unnecessary democracy, too, becomes unnecessary or withers away.

Hence the revolutionaries should be freed of the hypocritical illusion of absolute democracy or ‘democracy for all’ as spread by the bourgeois. The bourgeois democracy, or formal democracy, is a concept born out of the

struggle against absolute monarchy. Though it has a progressive character and role in a particular historical context, in another historical context it becomes retrograde and it is imperative for proletarian democracy to replace bourgeois democracy; and proletarian democracy itself will be negated in yet another historical condition. This may be made clearer from Lenin's statement:

"The dialectics (course) of the developments as follows: from absolutism to bourgeois democracy; from bourgeois to proletarian democracy; from proletarian democracy to none." (Lenin 1958:42)

In the context of building a new type of state our main concern is how to make proletarian democracy, or in our semi-feudal and semi-colonial context the people's democracy, more lively, dynamic and extensive. That means, once again, to mobilize the masses to the utmost for applying all-round dictatorship over the reactionary classes, on the one hand, and to correctly handle the contradictions among the people, on the other. As democracy is not an end in itself but merely a means to attain a specific goal, to think otherwise while talking of democracy in the present context would not only be wrong but also harmful. Hence our foremost democratic task should be to mobilize the masses to the maximum extent possible for exercising people's democratic dictatorship over the pro-feudal and pro-imperialist elements in all the political, military, economic & cultural organs of the state. Similarly, our next important democratic task should be to solve the contradictions among different strata of the people by means of democratic centralism without any physical application of force and through ideological struggles and legal remedies. In the past, principal subjective factor for counter-revolution in the socialist and people's democratic states was the failure to constantly mobilize the broad masses for exercising dictatorship over the enemies and for practising democratic centralism among the people and the lacunae in the organization so that the masses could rebel when the need be. It is imperative for us to acknowledge this and to practice proletarian democracy in a new way from the very beginning.

Another important task is to find an appropriate method and institutional process for practicing democracy with these clear objectives. As in the hypocritical formal democracy of the bourgeoisie, we cannot confine the proletarian or people's democracy to formalism by fixing certain formulae. Nevertheless, in the light of the experiences of the Paris Commune through the Russian Soviet to the Chinese GPCR, we can generalize and institutionalize certain methods of proletarian democracy and must dare adopt additional methods and principles going beyond them according to the new needs of the twenty-first century.

In this context as the model of direct democracy practiced in the Paris Commune is worth emulating even today, it would be useful to quote Marx's description of it as below:

"The Commune was formed of the municipal councilors, chosen by universal suffrage in the various wards of the town, responsible and revocable at short terms. The majority of its members was naturally working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class. The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive & legislative at the same time....the police was at once stripped of its political attributes, and turned into the responsible and at all times revocable agent of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the Administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, the public service had to be done at **workmen's wages**...."

"Having once got rid of the standing army and the police, the physical force elements of the old Government, the Commune was anxious to break the spiritual force of repression....The priests were sent back to the recesses of private life, there to feed upon the alms of the faithful in imitation of their predecessors, the Apostles. The whole of the educational institutions were opened to the people gratuitously, and at the same time cleared of all interference of church and state. Thus, not only was education made accessible to all, but science itself freed from the fetters which class prejudice and governmental force had imposed upon it.

"The judicial functionaries were to be divested of that sham independence which had but served to mask



their abject subservience to all succeeding governments to which, in turn, they had taken, and broken, the oaths of allegiance. Like the rest of public servants, magistrates and judges were to be elective, responsible, and revocable.

"... the Commune was to be the political form of even the smallest country hamlet, and that in the rural districts the standing army was to be replaced by a national militia, with an extremely short term of service." (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984:75-76)

Similarly, as practiced during the GPCR, such methods like guaranteeing the freedom of expression, press, strike etc. for the masses, public criticism of and mass action against persons in high authority of Party and state, etc. should be institutionalized. Also, drawing correct lessons from the bitter experiences of failure of the masses to stage organized rebellion against counter-revolution in the past, we should ensure a system in the new context whereby political parties may be allowed to get organized keeping within definite progressive and revolutionary constitutional limits and they may be encouraged to function not only in a 'cooperative' manner but in a 'competitive' spirit vis-à-vis the formal Communist Party. There can be no objective and logical reason for the Communist Party claiming itself to be the representative of the majority proletarian and oppressed classes to hesitate to enter into political competition within a definite constitutional framework, once the economic monopoly of the feudal and bourgeois classes over land and capital and military monopoly over the mercenary professional army, which are the sources of their political hegemony, are thoroughly smashed. One should earnestly acknowledge that this is not an advocacy of bourgeois pluralism but is a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist method to objectively solve contradictions among the people as long as the class division in society exists. Though it could not be practiced for various reasons in the past, the fact that Mao himself was contemplating in that direction can be deduced from his following statement:

"Which is better, to have just party or several? As we see it now, it's perhaps better to have several parties. This has been true in the past and may well be so for the future; it means long-term coexistence and mutual supervision." (Mao 1956: 296)

Whatever it may be, we should be prudent and daring enough to develop proletarian democracy or people's democracy as per the new needs of the twenty-first century. This is the rationale of the new decision of our Party, under the leadership of Chairman Com. Prachanda, in relation to the development of democracy. Moreover, keeping into consideration our specific situation of existence of autocratic monarchy and non-completion of even a bourgeois republic, we should not rule out the possibilities of having to pass through various mixed and transitional forms of democracy in the process of marching from autocratic monarchy through bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy.

#### **D. The Question of Armed Force**

Armed force or the army is the backbone of every state in history. To conceive of a state without an armed force is like dreaming of a sun without any light. In that sense, the principal organ of the new type of state would surely be the armed force. The same is the implication of Marx's observation: "The first condition of the dictatorship of the proletariat is the existence of a proletarian army" (*Seventh Anniversary of the International*). In what sense and to what extent such an army would be 'new' would ultimately determine how much 'new' the state would be.

The professional standing army of the old state, generally rising from the period of absolute monarchy, has now become the largest and the most lethally equipped standing army in history under the modern bourgeois republic. As it fights for the minority exploiting classes and against the majority oppressed classes and is cut off from the masses and productive labour and thus reduced into a mercenary army, the inherent character of the reactionary

standing army is utterly brutal, anti-people and counter-revolutionary. That is why the pioneers of proletarian revolution and state have always stressed on smashing the old standing army and on arming the masses to defend the new proletarian state.

While eulogizing the Paris Commune, Marx had said:

“The first decree of the Commune... was the suppression of the standing army, and the substitution for it of the armed people.” (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984: 75)

Similarly, in the decree on the formation of the Red Army issued by the Council of People's Commissars led by Lenin on January 12, 1918, i.e. immediately after the October Revolution, it was said:

“The old army served as the instrument for all class oppression of the toilers by the bourgeois. With the transfer of power to the toiling and exploited classes, the necessity has arisen of creating a new army which would at present serve as the bulwark of Soviet power and which would in the near future provide the basis for replacing the regular army by the armed people, and give support to the impending socialist revolution in Europe.” (Quoted in Trotsky 1969: 45)

However, due to different factors as cited earlier, the Red Army in Russia could not fulfill the dream of the Bolsheviks that it “*would in the near future provide the basis for replacing the regular army by the armed people*”. On the contrary, in course of time the Red Army itself got converted into a large professional army and ultimately it became an instrument of counter-revolution. Similarly, the Chinese Red Army, steeled in the twenty-two years long vicious PW, too, gradually changed its colour as a standing army after the revolution and ultimately served as a weapon of counter-revolution. On the basis of these bitter experiences and guided by the scientific ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism on the question of army and state we should strive to build a new type of army as a defender of the proletarian state and medium of continuous revolution, which would be equipped with revolutionary ideology and politics, intimately linked with the general masses and capable of organizing rebellion of the armed masses against counter-revolution.

In this context we should be serious to implement the following resolution recently adopted by the Central Committee of our Party:

“...it should be guaranteed that the people's army of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is not marked by modernization with special arms and training confined to a barrack after the capture of state power but remains a torch-bearer of revolution engaged in militarization of the masses and in the service of the masses. It is only by developing armed masses from both ideological and physical point of view that one can resist foreign intervention and counter-intervention; this fact must be made clear before the armed forces right from the beginning. The main thrust of work for the 21<sup>st</sup> century people's army should be to complete the historical responsibility of developing conscious armed masses so that they may learn to use their right to rebel.” [CPN (Maoist) 2004: 147]

## E. The Question of United Front

Another important aspect of building a new type of state is the correct handling of united front policy. In the real world there are several other classes in between the feudal/bourgeois and the proletariat, and in the particular semi-feudal and semi-colonial context like ours there are national, regional gender and other forms of oppressions apart from the class one. Hence, during the transition period the proletariat that has to bear the historical responsibility of providing the leadership for liberation of all the exploited and oppressed sections should be able to practice a correct united front policy and make the state a joint dictatorship of all of them. The question of united front is in essence the question of correct practice of democracy and dictatorship.

In this context, we should correctly grasp that one of the major reasons for the defeat of the historic Paris

Commune was the inability of the Paris workers to materialize a timely united front with the rural peasants and one of the principal problems of socialist construction in Russia was the inability to correctly handle the contradictions among the rural peasants. Particularly in a semi-feudal context like ours, one of the principle basis of building a new type of state would be the correct united front policy with the various strata of the peasants. The revolutionaries should acknowledge this with deep seriousness.

Similarly, another big problem encountered while building a proletarian state in the past was related to correctly handling the question of liberation of oppressed nationalities. In the light of all those historical experiences, we should firmly grasp that the best way to solve the national question is to implement the right to self-determination of oppressed nationalities under the leadership of the proletariat according to the concrete time, place and conditions. The new state should strive to correctly handle the national question in the spirit of the following analysis of Lenin:

“In the same way as mankind can arrive at the abolition of classes only through a transition period of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, it can arrive at the inevitable integration of nations only through a transition period of the complete emancipation of all oppressed nations, i.e., their freedom to secede.” (Lenin 1916:160)

The question of liberation of women, occupying half the heavens but subjected to patriarchal oppression for ages, is another important task before the new state. This is the main essence of Lenin's exhortation that 'the subject most starkly demarcating bourgeois democracy and socialism is the status of women in them'. Hence the specific task of a new proletarian state should be to guarantee special rights to women for a definite period and to ensure them equal rights and status as the men in all spheres.

Similarly, in the specificities of South Asia, the new state should scientifically solve the question of liberation of *dalits*, who are treated as untouchables according to the Hindu *varna* (caste) system, and other minority communities oppressed by the old state in different forms.

In sum, the real essence and challenge of the new state is to solve the non-antagonistic contradictions among all the oppressed classes, nationalities, regions and gender not through the method of 'dictatorship' but through that of 'democratic centralism' and to organize a joint dictatorship of all of them against the reactionary classes.

## F. The Question of Construction of Economic Base

There is dialectical interrelation between economic base and political superstructure of society. Whereas initially the economic base gives rise to political superstructure, later on the continuous intervention of the superstructure makes impact on the economic base. Hence, for moving forward towards communism after building a new type of proletarian (i.e. people's democratic or socialist) state, it is imperative to build a corresponding economic base.

In fact the initial basis for the origin of the state and the principal basis of life of the class state so far has been the anarchy of social production. This is what he meant when Engels said:

“In proportion as anarchy in social production vanishes, the political authority of the state dies out.” (Engels 1880:151)

Thus the quintessential task of the new type of proletarian state is to end the anarchy of production inherent in the feudal, petty bourgeois, bureaucratic bourgeois, etc. economic systems and to construct large scale planned, balanced, organized and controlled socialist economic system.

Moreover, without the development of labour productivity to definite higher levels, the material base for socialism and communism cannot be prepared. For, without sufficient production in society that enables distribu-

tion to all "according to necessity", one cannot materially conceive of classless and stateless communism. Hence the new proletarian state should prepare the economic base for socialism and communism by increasing the capacity of labour through rapid expansion of education and culture and by increasing productivity through maximum utilization of science and technology and organization of large-scale production.

However in the past, particularly in Russia during the period of Stalin, a mechanical and metaphysical conception that the development of productive forces by itself would usher in socialism and communism was prevalent and a wrong outlook prevailed that equated state ownership with 'socialism'. These, of course, were proved wrong by the later developments. The development of the productive forces and state ownership are necessary preconditions for socialism, but they themselves are not adequate and complete. More important than this are the socialist labour relations of production and socialist transformation of all the organs of the superstructure including the state and the development of socialist consciousness of the masses. Drawing lessons from these bitter experiences, Mao's China, particularly during the GPCR, had developed a new system of socialist economic construction based on the principle of 'grasp revolution, promote production', which the present day revolutionaries should emulate and strive to develop further according to the changed circumstances. One should constantly keep in mind that the economic base for socialism and communism can be prepared only by resolving the long-standing contradictions between advanced productive forces and backward production relations, between physical labour and mental labour, between rural and urban areas, between agriculture and industry, between economic production and defense production, etc., through conscious and planned struggles.

In a most backward and primarily agrarian and rural semi-feudal and semi-colonial economic context like ours, the path of economic construction from people's democracy to socialism would be all the more protracted, arduous and complex. Hence we should strive to transform the backward agrarian economy into an advanced industrial economy through cooperativization, collectivization and socialization and to lay the foundation of socialism and communism by constantly placing the revolutionary politics in command and by arousing the initiative of the masses. Only on such a material base that the new type of state can be built and can it march forward.

## G. The Question of International Relations

In the present era of imperialism, due to the inherent unequal and uneven nature of development of capitalism, there is the need and possibility of bringing about proletarian (i.e. people's democratic or socialist) revolution even in one particular country of the world. However, as the whole world is increasingly tied into the economic, political, military, cultural stranglehold of imperialism, international relation would be a very complex and significant dimension in building a proletarian state in one country alone.

The following analysis of Lenin about the international relation of proletarian state in such a huge country like Russia after a year of the October Revolution may be equally or even more relevant in our present context: "...From the very beginning of the October Revolution, foreign policy and international relations have been the main question facing us. Not merely because from now all the states in the world are being firmly linked by imperialism into a single system, or rather, into one dirty, bloody mass, but because the complete victory of the socialist revolution in one country alone is inconceivable and demands the most active co-operation of at least several advanced countries..." (Lenin 1986: 117)

In the past century, even though the more than a dozen of the socialist or people's democratic states in the world perished mainly due to their own internal causes, there can be no doubt that world imperialist sabotage and interventions played an important secondary role in their downfall. Hence it is imperative for the new type of

proletarian state to be built now to follow a policy of marching ahead while resisting against imperialism/ expansionism/hegemonism from the very beginning. For this, it is necessary, on the one hand, to unite with all proletarian forces of the world on the basis of proletarian internationalism, strategically, and on the other, to maintain diplomatic relations with all the countries on the basis of the policy of peaceful coexistence with different state systems and to attempt to derive maximum advantage out of inter-imperialist contradictions, tactically.

Within this general policy and in the specific geo-political context of Nepal, we should strive to maintain diplomatic relations with the two immediate big neighbours on the basis of non-alignment and mutual benefits and to march forward to establish South Asian Soviet Federation after completing revolution in whole of South Asia as envisioned by our Party's Second National Conference held in 2001.

## **H. The Question of Continuous Revolution and Withering Away of the State**

The main reason why the proletarian state or the dictatorship of the proletariat was termed 'no longer a state in the proper sense of the word' by Marx and Engels is that it is not a medium of preserving or defending class contradiction as in traditional class society but is a medium of transition from class society to classless society and the object of withering away of itself in the process. Thus the main essence or particularity of the new type of state is, firstly, that it is the means of continuous revolution against the residual and newly emerging classes, and secondly, that it withers away in the process. This is not separate but a single interrelated process.

Furthermore, what ought to be correctly grasped is that 'withering away' does not mean physical liquidation of the state, but, as Engels has said, a transformation from the means of 'government of persons' into means of 'administration of things'. For, with the end of class contradiction in communism only the 'political' role of the state as a 'special coercive force' is over, but the mechanism of voluntary organization to manage the essential goods and services in society remains intact.

However, it is a bitter truth that in the past the proletarian state powers instead of serving the masses and acting as instruments of continuous revolution turned into masters of the people and instruments of counter-revolution, and rather than moving in the direction of withering away transformed into huge totalitarian bureaucracies and instruments of repression. The present day revolutionaries should draw appropriate lessons from this and should strive to lay proper foundation for the new type of state from the very beginning.

In this context the first thing the new state power should acknowledge and practice from the very inception, as Lenin initially propounded and Mao subsequently raised to a new height, is the concept of GPCR or continuous revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. As the defeated reactionary class can again raise its head in a new form and the material condition of the state power itself can give rise to a new bureaucratic capitalist class from within the revolutionary camp, we should institutionalize a mechanism of continuous struggle with the participation of the wider masses under the leadership of the proletariat in every sphere of the state and the superstructure. In other words, advancing from the GPCR in China we should look for new methods to exercise all round dictatorship over the old and the new reactionary classes and to continue this process till all classes are abolished in society.

Secondly, to transfer the state power that had become master of the people in the past into servant of the people and to lead it towards ultimate withering away, methods of ensuring participation of the wider masses in the state or expanding greater democracy in society should be institutionalized. In this context it may be worthwhile to keep in mind the following statement of Lenin:

"From the moment all members of society, or at least the vast majority, have learned to administer the state *themselves*, have taken this work into their own hands, have organized control over the insignificant capitalist

minority, over the gentry who wish to preserve their capitalist habits and over the workers who have been thoroughly corrupted by capitalism—from this moment the need for government of any kind begins to disappear altogether. The more complete the democracy, the nearer the moment when it becomes unnecessary. The more democratic the “state” which consists of the armed workers, and which is “no longer a state in the proper sense of the word”, the more rapidly *every form* of state begins to wither away.” (Lenin 1917d: 334-5)

Thus, continuous revolution against the residual ‘pugmarks of the old state’ and newly emerging classes and participation of the wider masses in such a continuous revolution is the method of withering away of the state initially hammered by Marx and Engels and later developed by Lenin and Mao. Withering away is, therefore, neither the abolition of the state immediately after the revolution as contended by the anarchists, nor is it first developing in a bureaucratic form like the old state of the bourgeoisie and then miraculously collapsing some day in the distant future as claimed by the revisionists, or more particularly by the dogmato-revisionists. Withering away means cessation of only the ‘political’ function of the state as an instrument of coercion, and it begins on the very day of consummation of the revolution but gets completed only with the total victory over the residual and newly emerging classes through continuous revolution and with the ultimate submersion of the state in the sea of the masses. The new proletarian (including the people’s democratic) state should correctly grasp and implement this, and only in that sense would this state be different or ‘new’ from the old one.

### 3. Conclusion

Despite the contrary propaganda of the imperialists, the 21<sup>st</sup> century will once again go through a vicious class struggle or war for the state power. Our great PW is part of the same worldwide process. Hence it is imperative for all to focus their attention on the question of state power, which is the central question in every revolution. Every state is in essence an instrument of dictatorship over certain classes and that of democracy for some others. In this sense dictatorship and democracy remain as two sides of the same coin in every state, and it is just ridiculous to talk of a state with either only dictatorship or only democracy. But it is a great paradox of history that whereas the proletarian state with an essence of dictatorship over the limited exploiting classes and that of democracy for a majority of exploited classes has been denounced as ‘dictatorial’, the bourgeois democracy with an essence of democracy for a handful of exploiting classes and that of dictatorship over the majority of working classes is hailed as an ideal model of universal and eternal democracy. Apart from the class bias and disinformation campaign of the imperialists certain grave short comings in the practice of the proletarian state in the past, (for example, practical cessation of differences between the Party and the state, gradual inaction and demise of the people’s representative institutions, development and expansion of the standing army in place of arming the masses, virtual emasculation of the electoral system and freedom of speech and press, use of state force to solve contradictions within the Party and among the people, lack of people’s participation, supervision and intervention in the state affairs and development of totalitarian tendencies, etc.) are also responsible for this. In this background, we should dare develop the model of a new type of proletarian state with the ideological guidance of MLM and Prachanda Path and keeping in mind the experiences of revolutions from the Paris Commune through the Russian Soviet and the Chinese GPCR to our present revolution.

In this context it is imperative to keep in mind what Lenin has said:

“The transition from capitalism to communism is certainly bound to yield a *tremendous abundance and variety of political forms*, but the essence will inevitably be the same: *the dictatorship of the proletariat*” (Lenin 1917d: 286) (emphasis added).

In other words, the essence of the transitional revolutionary state to be built after smashing the old reactionary class state would be dictatorship of the proletariat or democratic dictatorship of the oppressed people. But the

political forms of such transitional revolutionary dictatorship can be varied in keeping with different time and places, and we should exercise our revolutionary creativity in practicing and developing such forms. Particularly in the light of the historical experiences of easy degeneration of the past proletarian states into totalitarian bureaucratic capitalist states, we should strive to find newer forms of the 'transitional' state, which is said to be "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word".

In the transitional period of a backward society like Nepal, where the transition has to take place from semi-feudal autocracy through bourgeois democracy to communism, there would be naturally more diversities and complexities. However, if we succeed to exercise continuous dictatorship over the handful of reactionaries with active participation of the masses by forging a united front of different sections subjected to class, national, regional, caste and gender oppressions under the leadership of a correct proletarian Party, we shall definitely attain the goal of classless and exploitationless society. The main thing is the correct proletarian outlook of the leadership and the question of ensuring continuous and active participation of the masses in the state affairs. This is the rationale behind our Party's recent attempt to raise the question of democracy from a new perspective. The proletarian revolutionaries should firmly grasp that the question of democracy and new type of state are inseparably interlinked, and they should initiate the process of withering away of the state by submerging the state in the sea of the great democracy of the masses, as Lenin had said: "The more democratic the 'state'... the more rapidly every form of state begins to wither away." In this context, we should defeat the anarchist tendency that denies the very necessity of a transitional state, the Right revisionist tendency that gets swayed by the formal democracy of the bourgeoisie and abandons dictatorship of the proletariat, and the dogmato-revisionist tendency that vulgarizes the proletarian (or people's democratic) dictatorship into a totalitarian bureaucratic capitalist dictatorship, and must-strive to establish the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist-Maoist thought that leads to a classless and stateless communism through continuous revolution and withering away of the state by exercising great democracy under the dictatorship of the proletariat (or people's democratic dictatorship). In this eventuality no body can stop our great campaign to build a new type of proletarian state in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and march towards communism through continuous revolution and withering away of the state.

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*We must bring about a political climate which has both centralism & democracy, discipline & freedom, unity of purpose & ease of mind for the individual, and which is lively and vigorous.*

-Mao Tse-tung

*Stereotyped forms & uniformity imposed from above have nothing in common with democratic and socialist centralism...*

*The Paris Commune gave a great example of how to combine initiative, independence, freedom of action and vigour from below with voluntary centralism, free from stereotyped forms. Our Soviets are following the same road.*

-V. I. Lenin, "How to Organize Competition?"

*Democracy is a method, and it all depends on to whom it is applied and for what purpose. We are in favour of great democracy. And what we favour is great democracy under the leadership of the proletariat.*

-Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works*, Vol. V, Peking, 1977, p.343.



# Women's Participation in People's Army

-Com. Parvati

*Nothing is impossible if you dare to scale the heights.*  
-Mao.

## Introduction

The historic People's War (PW) was started under the leadership of CPN (Maoist) in 1996 with mere sticks, sickles, khukris and literally two guns. Today after eight years of PW the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has GPMG, LMG, SMG, SLR, rocket launchers. Similarly in the initial phase of PW there were combat, defense and self-defense forces, today it has expanded to the level of 2 divisions, 7 brigades, 19 battalions, several companies, platoons, sections and tens of thousands of militias. Earlier the preliminary forces of CPN (Maoist) were engaged with local police force but today it's fighters have to face American backed Royal Nepalese Army (RNA), also called Royal American Army. Amongst many specificities of Nepalese PW, women's phenomenal participation in PLA, particularly in direct combat, is one such important characteristic.

In the historic third expanded meeting of CPN (Maoist) in 1995, it was decided that at least two women will be made mandatory in each defense squads. Today they represent about one third in the PLA. Qualitatively they have reached vice-commander in battalion level and commanders and vice-commanders up to company level and political commissars at the battalion level. Recent martyrdom of Com. Sapan Shiela, who was a company commander, on September 17, 2003, is one such example. She met a heroic death while fighting against RNA in Bhawang-Jankot area, in Western Nepal.

In several daylight daring urban guerilla actions in Terai, Kathmandu (the capital city of Nepal) and urban centres, women have participated in capturing banks, selective annihilation of enemies and destroying key points of the state. At militia level their participation has been phenomenal, sometimes even surpassing that of men in places. They constitute important vanguards to protect several regional and district level revolutionary people's councils and at the same time to consolidate base areas by participating in several construction activities. In this way they have become part of the spine of the new emerging state from their earlier spineless position. The concept of "one citizen, one army" brought by the Directory for Administration of People's Power (United Revolutionary People's Council, 2004) makes it all the more relevant to militarize the women, who hold half of the sky.

Today the development of PW has reached the stage of transition to strategic offensive from the stage of strategic equilibrium. Since the coming period is a decisive period for the Nepalese revolution, it is important to generalize and synthesize the experiences of women combatants in the PLA, and to know the scope, limitations and challenges they face. But before putting these, it is worth noting how women have participated in wars in general.

## Women and Wars

Ever since the end of matriarchal primitive system, the contradiction between the human race and nature has shifted to contradiction within the human race in the form of class wars. In pursuit of private wealth, profit, women were relegated to biological function of reproducing and maintaining the classes. Under such a situation their

participation in war as combatants has been generally supportive. They are seen as morale boosters (such as famous actresses and celebrities sent to war-fronts), as heclers (by making gifts of bangles to men symbolising their loss of masculinity) as logistic supporters (as was widely mobilised in World War I and II) as nurses (like Florence Nightingale) as spies (like Matahari). Where they have actively participated in war-fronts as combatants, they have done at a very limited and individual level, that too under sheer compulsions such as Laxmi Bai in India, under sheer desperation such as Joan of Arch in France. In such cases many of them had to join war wearing men's clothes in order to hide their gender identity. The much published Amazon women fighters in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Dahomey Kingdom was in fact a result of desperate act whereby armed regiment of women were placed at the rear so as to make Dahomey's force appear longer and bigger. But in actual fight, the king discovered that they fought valiantly. This resulted in recruiting women in regular army. Even in Tamil liberation movement, the LTTE women were at first recruited as logistic supporter or as secondary force to assist the main men's force. It was only after they proved their prowess that they were incorporated into more visible frontal battles.

### Women and Class Wars

It takes revolutionary class wars to mobilize women to the scale and quality that precedes earlier participation in wars. This is because class wars directly address the oppressive socio-economic relation, production relation and poverty related other issues from which the women are the worst sufferers. Thus class wars have direct bearing on women's oppression thereby not only shaking the foundation of reactionary states but also family structure, which is deeply entrenched in religion. Unlike ethnic, religious, regional wars, class wars are not divisive; instead they lead to universality the more they develop to higher levels. They draw their strength from collective actions of the masses, particularly the oppressed masses, amongst which women constitute the largest encompassing oppressed mass. Also the application of dictatorship by the revolutionary states over those who oppress them and safeguarding the democracy of the oppressed masses has big appeal for women. Such states not only consolidate their productive functions but also safeguard their reproductive functions. Since oppression of women is deeper than other oppressed communities hence they understand the need to wage deeper class wars. Hence history is replete with their participation in class wars.

Direct participation of militant proletariat women in the revolution, Paris Commune in 1971, marks the first watershed in oppressed women's movement. The lining of them together with their male comrades before the firing squads of invading reactionary force proves the height of hatred generated amongst reactionary forces for their participation in the revolution.

Similarly women combatant's participations in Soviet Union during the World War II while fighting against Nazi occupation were phenomenal. The following figure gives the idea.

"The official figures states that about 800,000 women participated in the Red army and about another 200,000 in partisan (irregular) forces. These figures put women at about 8 percent of overall forces (with 12 million men). Of the total of 800,000, about 500,000 reportedly served at the fronts, and about 250,000 received military training in Komsomol schools." (Goldstein 2001: 65).

In China exclusive women militias were formed to attack on areas controlled by Japanese force during their occupation in China and later to fight against the white army who continued to raid it's borders even after the birth of Republican China.

Vietnam war is infact marked by women's high participation. The picture of burly big American soldiers being led by small, scantily clad Vietnamese women keep haunting American rulers, even today. The following discription gives the quantity and quality of their participation in Vietnam's national war. "Madame Dinh was made a general

of the People's Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF) based on her credentials as a co-founder of the NLF and the leader of the Ben Tre uprising. Her position also reflected the significance of women in PLAF... about 40 percent of the PLAF regimental commanders were women." (Barry 1996:47).

### **Protracted People's War (PPW) and Women's Participation**

*Women are the powerhouse of the War.*  
-Ho Chi Minh.

The very nature of class and sex oppression of women is protracted, thus this makes protracted People's War (PPW) very attractive to oppressed women. Although PPW is a methodology of attaining New Democratic state, but within this process, continuous transformation, breaking down feudalist culture, and resisting imperialist culture helps women in realizing their worth as dignified human beings. PPW is specially important in Nepal where women have to take a leap from medieval feudal patriarchy (where virgin women are still worshipped) to new democratic revolution, demanding long period of metamorphosis in their mindset.

Distinct features of PPW, such as learning warfare through war, putting ideology before weapon, need for mass based, local initiative, self-reliant, conservation of force, attacking on weakest link of the enemy or inducing enemy to make mistakes or luring the enemy in deep, attacking when in strong position and retreating when in weak position and specially the sixteen character formula: "The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue" etc; all these are conducive to women's participation as this war-fare is the methodology used by weaker section of the society to fight against stronger state force. The concept of base area is especially conducive to women's liberation as it is here that the gains and fruits of their struggle (even when war is going on) can be practically realized. The implementation of equal rights over parental property, co-operative or communal farming, restaurants, and child-care centers can be realized. Similarly their special rights to the seats in new emerging states are guaranteed. The progressive development of war to the advanced formation, gives women enough scope for reflecting, correcting and improving their newly acquired skill of fighting. Not only that PPW prepares women for insurrection war where speed, surprise and concentrated efforts are needed for the final capture of the central state power. It should be noted that the fusion of PPW and insurrection right from the inception of PW should be taken into consideration in today's growing polarized world where the emphasis on PPW in underdeveloped countries and emphasis on insurrection in developed countries should be considered. Hence women's participation in both PPW and insurrection needs to be strategically considered. However, in Nepal's specificity women's participation in PPW has more importance.

In specific condition of Nepal, the property less status of women together with their gross negligence by the state despite being the backbone of self sustaining peasant economy has prepared material ground for joining women in mass in PLA. Being left alone to tend old and young children while men go to mercenary service or as labourers in urban centres of Nepal and India, they are like de-facto single-headed female households who have to fight against hunger in remote difficult terrain. What makes them desperate for revenge is when most of them land up getting co-wived after having shouldered double burden. And the feudal legal system condones such multiple marriages with light punishment. Thus allowing their daughters to join PLA, while they themselves become sympathizers or whole timers for the PW manifests this revenge. Also the tendency to get the daughters married at young age to offload the burden of chastity makes young Indo-Aryan unmarried women to run away to join PLA to break the feudal chain. Similarly Tibeto-Burman women, although relatively free in making their own choice of partners land up being caught up in vicious circle of rigorous, monotonous reproductive life, thus PLA

offers them direct chance to explore and experiment with their relative freedom. PLA has also offered new avenue for the recently freed bonded labours of Tarai, the Tharu women who were not only economically exploited but also sexually exploited by the higher castes Brahmins and Chhetris from the mountain region. By arming Dalit women, PLA has given them teeth to bite against the rigid caste system, which treats them worse than dogs.

Unlike men, women in Nepal have little scope for employment in terms of finding jobs in urban centers in Nepal (because of low urbanization), and in India where they fall into the trap of prostitution racket. So they are left behind in rural areas and it is them who are being targeted by royal Nepal army (RNA) in the form of looting, burning their homes, cattle, standing crops and often raping and killing them. This has accelerated the process of joining in PLA for direct revenge. They are thus like what Marx had said about the proletariat, they have nothing to lose but their chains!

## Role of PLA in transforming Women Combatant's Character

*"The communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations, no wonder that its development involves the most radical rupture with traditional idea."* (Marx and Engels 1977: P.126)

The PLA has not only transformed women in essence but also in form. Basically it has given meaning, value, respect, dignity not only to their lives but to their deaths as well. For too long they have been taken for granted. For too long they have been bearing private and public violence silently. Today hooligans, goondas, womenisers can't dare to come near Maoist women, unless accompanied with armed reactionary force. It has turned insecure women to insurgents. In form it has totally undressed them from their feudal frills to functional unisex dress. Today she is not only conscious of her ideological development but also her physical development. Not only that she is very conscious with her sexuality as it is directly related with her marriage and reproductive activities which has direct bearing on her work. PLA has not only helped her from breaking the four walls of her house, it has also stretched her reach to four corners of the country. It has expanded her sphere of activity from uterus to universality. It has transformed her from invisible domestic slave to a very visible rebellious professional fighter wielding authority. It has steeled her physically as well as mentally making her more objective minded and detached for fulfilling the rigorous life of combat. Earlier she had no idea of time, slogging from dawn to dusk (even past midnight), today she is recording time while planting time bomb. Previously she could only pull other's hair, today PLA is teaching her to pull 3-0-3. From a god-fearing woman she has transformed onto a fierce woman! In the past her ears yearned for gossip today she is craning her neck to hear local FM, national and international news in the radio. Earlier she only bled to throw away her menstrual blood; today she is bleeding to throw away American imperialist backed monarchy system.

Fighting on the strength of ideology and using warfare skill her body language has changed into a very confident smart dignified woman, from illiterate woman she has become literate with enriched vocabulary of ideological and military terminologies. Today she has become philosophical about life and death as the two sides of the same coin, defining it in term of necessity and chance etc. She understands dialectics in terms of seeing positive in negative and vice versa. She understands the laws of contradiction in terms of identifying principal enemies and secondary enemies, she knows how to judge things in relatively, in contradiction and in leaps and bounds. She now knows relationship between state and government, between imperialist and Third World countries and even between American imperialist and other imperialist countries. Indeed women in PLA are found to be more forward than women in frontal organizations of the Party. The rate of transformation in PLA is

so fast that women hesitate to leave this field when their health problem or reproductive function comes on their way or are transferred to other fields. All these reminds one of Com. Lenin's saying that war brings transformation in 10 days what it takes 10 years in normal time.

## Role of Women Combatants in Transforming the Nature of PLA

Strategic participation of women in PLA has not only made it wholesome, it has also lent mass character to the army by making it multi-functional, multi-character thus making it truly people's army in appearance as well as in essence. The infusion of women in PLA has made it easier to expand its activities from fighting to organizing and engaging in productive activities. It has brought gentleness; compassionate feelings in rigorous combatant life. Above all it has smashed the masculine image of the fighting force. Their input has facilitated PLA to swim smoothly in the sea of masses by acting as barometer to check the temperature of water so that PLA can sail through smoothly.

### Fighting Force

Women's participation has made fighting force more tenacious, disciplined, and high cultured and more focused. In field it has been generally found that where men combatants gave up, women continued to fight, and where men left their weapons, women combatants clutched their guns even in most adverse circumstances, where men faltered in the face of enemy's torture, women resisted even at the cost of torture and death. It was also found that where men hesitated to go in offensive assault, women were found to go for it without looking for excuses. They seldom refused the task given; they would always give it a try. Also during set backs, it was women who showed more patience and sense of composure, while men tended to feel restless and irritative. Their sense of commitments and hard work has helped in shedding go-easy attitude amongst the men combatants. Also their involvement has self-cleansing effect on PLA as drinking, gambling, cheap entertainments and womanizing cannot go hand in hand with their participation in war. It also boosts men's morale in PLA while it demoralizes enemy's army. Lastly their infusion makes PLA gender friendly and class-conscious force. This gets more reinforced when their women combatants are brutally tortured, raped and killed by the reactionary force.

Women's participation has made PLA more approachable to reactionary army's families, thus increasing its persuasiveness and politicizing power to discourage their men from fighting with PLA and to join it instead. It has enabled the People's Army to get wider and deeper intelligent networks at local level. It has also made medical work more efficient and gentle in PLA. By infusing women in PLA it has catalyzed the process of integration between different castes, races, ethnic groups, regional groups through inter-marriages between these communities within PLA, thus mitigating non-class distinctions and making PLA more class conscious and multi-national, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic, multi-racial. This is in sharp contrast to what exists in RNA, where the armed force is divided on the caste, class, ethnic, religion and regional basis.

Women's participation in PLA not only helps in checking militarist tendency but also from drifting to roving guerillas. It has facilitated PLA in militarizing the masses.

### Organization Force

What makes people's army distinct from the reactionary army is that it also acts as an organizational, political force. In fact PLA is essentially an ideological army with military face. In hostile areas, it is the PLA, which organizes the masses in which women combatant's input is very vital. This is because women combatants are more readily accepted and believed thus it helps in removing initial fear of the masses. Their presence in people's

court makes masses, particularly women more accessible, more at ease and more hopeful for egalitarian justice. This increases the organizational power of PLA. Also the multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-regional and multi-gender character of PLA enriched by mixed marriages together with widow re-marriage makes PLA a real social engineer in removing decadent monolithic feudal culture of the backward society. Women's participation in PLA has facilitated in rehabilitating runaway families and reactionary families in base areas. This is because handling of relationships and contradictions within the families and the communities has been the traditional domain of the women in general, thus, their incorporation in PLA helps in strengthening the organizational capacity of the PLA.

## Production Force

The existence of base area even while on war, makes possible for PLA to work as production force for consolidating the base area. Infusion of women in PLA has made production work more diversive. By involving women combatants in otherwise male dominated construction works such as building roads, bridges, houses, culverts, irrigation channels etc and by involving men combatants in otherwise women dominated work such as collecting fodder, fuels, food processing, mess works et. PLA has thus been able to break the traditional division between physical and mental work and public and private work, thus helping the masses to identify with new progressive culture. Their infusion in PLA has also made production work more pleasurable, complimentary, cooperative and catering to all sections of masses such as men, women, children, old aged and disabled. There have been many instances where PLA has helped single-headed households to complete their seasonal works in peak hours. Due to the presence of women combatants, people find PLA more approachable as it is much easier for them to communicate their problems through women combatants than men.

The emphasis that PLA is people's army and not the old, anti-people, bureaucratic and barricaded standing army of the reactionary class can only be realized if PLA takes women's participation as strategic. This is because women's incorporation in PLA will not only make it visibly people's army but also make armed institution structurally radical to counter the old habits of centralized barricaded army.

## Women Combatants and Royal Nepal Army (RNA)

*Know the enemy and know yourself and you can fight a hundred battles.*

-Sun Tzu

One of the biggest contradictions faced by reactionary army around the world is that while it is an instrument of coercion for the ruling class, but it has to rely upon the oppressed class from which it draws its manpower to enforce its rule. It tries to solve this contradiction by creating a strong centralized hierarchical bureaucratic set up whereby a limited few but highly powerful rank of officers (mostly belonging to the ruling class, caste, gender, religion, region and lingual group) make decisions and pass on the most arduous, risky and dirty job to ordinary soldiers belonging to the oppressed class. Having monopolized its power within the armed institution, it then goes about killing natural class affinity soldiers have towards the masses by deliberately brutalizing and dehumanizing soldiers so that they can crush the masses ruthlessly. It is here that women as an instrument of brutalization takes specific feature which needs to be highlighted. First of all brutalizing women of its own class is much easier and effective because it is an extension of domestic violence, which can be easily co-opted in military training. Secondly, such acts on soft targets give them false sense of superiority complex badly needed to boost their morale in absence of justifiable ideology. Thirdly, their long barricaded life style makes them insecure about loosing their wives, thus it becomes easy for the reactionary class to direct such men's frustrations against the

rebellious women by raping and killing them. Fourthly, reactionary army is fed on religious ideology, which sees rebellious women as heretics who deserve to be punished. All these combinations make reactionary army all over the world most brutal, anti-women and anti-people institution.

In Nepal's context the RNA is in fact one of the most hated armed forces of the reactionary state, for the masses in general and women in particular and specifically for the women combatants in PLA. The reason being it is the traditional support base for the monarchy system, which has been consistently used against any democratic movements in Nepal since 1951 (when oligarch Rana system was overthrown). Of late it has become even more hated because it has additionally become puppet of US imperialism, thus losing even semblance of its so-called nationalistic characteristic. For women in particular this institution represents the defender of much hated masculine feudal patriarchy, which keeps them under the darkness of ignorance, oblivion and religion. For women combatants in PLA specifically, it represents a force against which they have to not only wage class war but also gender war in order to overcome rape, torture and death.

The universal phenomenon all over the world is that reactionary class always underestimates the strength of people. This is all the more true for women in general and oppressed women in particular. Hence the reactionary feudal army, the RNA has been generally under-estimating the strength of women combatants in PLA. However this is changing. In the initiation period of PW the police force took men more seriously than women combatants in PLA, by killing them in mass but not yet killing women combatants in such a scale. They were often jailed and were raped sporadically. When the concept of armed police force came, then there was a marked increase in rape and torture cases along with sporadic killings. In the latest move when RNA came into the scene there is a marked shift of brutality on women: now women combatants, cadres, even sympathizers are getting raped and killed. The perpetuation of mass rape by RNA is seen amongst the people too, which often go under-reported or not reported at all.

RNA has always looked at women combatants in PLA from sexist point of view. They see their involvement in PLA in the form of gaining sexual gratification with men combatants. There are many instances where they have highlighted the discovery of condoms in jungles in media. Rude, dirty abuses and obscene body languages showed on women PLA in war zones has at one end made women more gender conscious, determined, committed and fierce-ful while fighting against them, at the other end it steels the determination of male PLA to take revenge on the reactionary army. The brutal rape, torture and murder of women PLA has made PLA more gender-sensitive, thus reinforcing class unity while it has made reactionary army more brutal and sexist in attitude.

Increasing brutality on women has in fact created impetus for women to join directly in PLA in order to take revenge against army who rape them or kill their near and dear ones. This has resulted RNA to reverse its earlier policy of banning recruitment of women in RNA. Recently they have advertised for recruiting women in their force. How far this is going to increase the firepower of RNA can be judged by experiences in other countries. The class character and the gender aspect of reactionary armed force hinders their very purpose of recruiting women, as a result women's position is still secondary, more for decorative value than for actual fighting. The fact that they are recruited not as choice but as necessity because of increasing participation of women in street fighting and various movements and wars, makes their involvement as a temporary, practical and tactical phenomena. Following examples can give some glimpses of women's participation in reactionary army.

The experience of much referred women combatants in Israel need to be demystified. They are not deployed in combat (Goldstein2001: 86). They are used as secondary force, mostly in civilian department as nurses, paramedics, typewriters, driving tanks etc. Women combatants in rich countries like USA, are seldom sent in direct combat zone since experiences has shown that men combatants tend to show excessive concern for the well-

being of their women combatants (another form of humiliating women combatants) at the expense at the mission. Also there are repeated cases of verbal abuses, sexual harassment and rape of combatant women by their colleagues, which are time and again reported in various medias. Thus men combatants are either overprotective like knights in shining armour during operations or they are just against women combatants. In Third World countries like India the experience is even worse. Women armed forces are humiliated and often ridiculed as "Token Battalion" or "Petticoat battalion", " by their men (Singh 2003: P16). Thus class nature, hence the patriarchal outlook and henceforth the bureaucratic structure of the army will not allow full participation of women in combat zone. It is certain that women's experience in RNA will be no better than above examples, infact much worse, because RNA draws it's strength from most reactionary archaic patriarchal institution: the monarchy.

## **Challenges that Lay Ahead of Women Combatants**

*".... Fight, fail, fight again, fail again, fight again... till their victory; that is the logic of the people, and they will never go against this logic..." (Mao 2000: P. 68-69)*

Any new experiment, especially in the field of breaking age-old fossilized tradition; one is bound to face some initial hiccups and challenges. This is no less true in the field of fighting force where women in Nepal are participating in People's Army for the first time along with men. There are multiple factors, which they have to overcome.

### **Patriarchal Outlook**

Feudal patriarchal outlook first of all do not treat women as individuals, secondly it sees them in the light of their reproductive function. This outlook is bound to effect on PLA too, in someway or the other, although political education is trying to remove them. This is reflected by men's tendency to underestimate women's capabilities'. Even if they prove their prowess, men tend to see it as temporary phenomena, which will wear off after they get married and bear children. Hence there is strong tendency to see any inconvenience, temporary rest, or illness related to reproductive system as a sign of physical weakness or to seek marriage as solution to women's problem. There is also tendency amongst most men to see women's leadership positions in army as imposed by the Party, rather than as a result of their hard work. They are thus not that enthusiastic to establish women's authority in PLA, as they would have done to men. This also results in not involving women in framing new plans, policies, instead relegating them to traditional gender specific works. Women thus have to work hard twice, even thrice to establish their authority over the PLA; fortunately they are able to do so in majority of cases.

### **Problem of Taking Initiative**

If men have problem of being too confident, women have problems taking imitative in their hands. It is generally found that even if they have necessary skill, they wait for men to take imitative. They are found diligent, obedient, sacrificing but when it comes to formulating new plans, handling new weapons, debating on political lines they are found shirking. As a result they land up doing repetitive gender specific works more than the challenging ones. They also allow themselves to be victim of circumstances; this is often seen in their unplanned motherhood status, robbing their continuity and chance of developing leadership quality in PLA. This is also seen in the field of reporting, they have problem synthesizing their work despite having rich experience in their field, and this results in underreporting and marginalizing their work. Due to feudal patriarchal oppression right from childhood they are more prone to suffer from inner conflict, resulting in reflective reactions such as fits, hysteria. Their narrow outlook gets reflected more amongst themselves than when they are with men. This is



manifested in showing jealousy amongst themselves, in doubting women's leadership and thereby taking men's leadership more seriously.

## **The Question of Continuity and Development of Leadership in PLA**

Women in Nepal have indeed taken a big jump from kitchen to combat arena. However, the question of continuity and development of leadership in this field is still challenging. This can be generally seen by the fact that in combat activity while men well above 40 are fighting where as one hardly finds women above 25 fighting in the field. Since the progressive development of leadership in army is intimately linked with rigorous, continuous practice and focused attention, women's lack of continuity in this field due to marriage and reproductive functions is robbing them of leadership positions in PLA. This has also resulted in progressive decline in numbers as one moves from militia to division level.

While limiting the minimum age of marriage to 20 (the official minimum age of marriage for women as stipulated by old state is 18) has to many extent given women longer space to concentrate on their newly acquired activity but by not stipulating minimum age for conceiving this has lead to early pregnancies leading to their discontinuity. There are many reasons behind these phenomena, which needs to be addressed at philosophical, ideological, physical and practical level.

It is often found that it is the men who insist on early pregnancy. The rate of casualty and uncertainty of death seem to make them keen to leave behind their physical mark. Political maturity would have made them more conscious of leaving behind their ideological mark. Although women-combatants in general are not happy to be mother at such productive age, however it is generally found that they land up becoming a mother, at least a mother of one child. This is despite the fact that their lives as combatants are uncertain and vulnerable. This implies that although there is no dearth of courage to sacrifice one's life for the sake of revolution, but there is still hesitation to sacrifice mother-hood or fatherhood for the sake of revolution. Thus from theoretical point of view the question of continuity and development of leadership in PLA becomes more complex for women as they have to deal with natural division of labour which is associated with their reproductive functions. It is here that the question of freedom and necessity needs to be delicately and dialectically handled. The rigorous, uncertain, war conditioned life style does demand sacrifice from motherhood, fatherhood, at least for certain period. But this cannot be forced upon them: this can be instilled in them by raising their ideological sharpness.

From the practical point of view, the unavailability or the high rate of failure amongst the available family planning measures have also contributed to unplanned childbirth. On top of it the one sided burden of childcare and absence of proper child-care facilities has also been contributing to loss of women in PLA. Luckily boarding facilities for children of martyred families and whole timers have come up in special zones at regional level in Rolpa and Rukum. Similarly many childcare centers have come up in special zones at district levels. Also the rapid expansion of PLA has enabled it to have many auxiliary departments. Earlier pregnancy, childbirth, injury or sickness etc was factors for transferring them to organizational fronts. Such transfers often resulted in learning new skills all over again and at the same time it resulted in permanently losing armed manpower, thus wasting newly acquired military skill. But now they can be observed within PLA, carrying their positional status without having to loose connectivity with the military related activities. This has also facilitated them to return to trench faster.

### **Health Problem**

Health problem has been one of the general problems men and women combatants face in Nepal. However there

seems to be greater awareness for women's health problem. Women are found to be more malnourished than men when they join People's army. The rigorous life style of combatants, together with irregular food supply makes them more vulnerable. This is especially seen during menstrual period, when additional nutrition is most required. On top of this there is scant awareness of the importance of maintaining health and reproductive system in order among women specifically. There is tendency to hide problems related to menstrual disturbances and white discharges. Timely intervention often consisting of simple surgery or medication or preventive measures can prevent these problems. There have been cases where women combatants have deliberately hidden their problems (despite concerns showed by their male commanders and commissars) fearing their chance of missing big training camps or military operations. Often women themselves feel that their source of weakness is their womb; that it is the menstrual period that makes them weaker than men; that men are stronger because they are bigger, taller and more muscular. What needs to be understood is that the self-cleansing system of menstrual period and the biological protection that womb gives to women against any epidemic disease in its pursuance to save expectant fertilized egg from outside disease, makes them biologically stronger than men. Similarly while men may exhibit more strength in short duration it is the women who can retain energy for longer period. Hence the quality of strength in both cannot be compared precisely because they are different. Therefore the knowledge about the anatomy, specificities of man and woman's health in terms of their specific strengths and weakness should be imparted in PLA. Similarly there is tendency to blow out of proportion the problems related to menstruation while at the same time under-reporting the problem of hydro-sill faced by men in combat activities.

It would be appropriate to say that the concept of women as weaker sex is as much notional as the concept of accepting men as the stronger sex. Such simple categorization harms both men and women. Hence this all the more proves that men and women are more complimentary in their association than competitive.

The challenges that lay ahead of women combatants in PLA need to be taken seriously because of all the three instruments of revolution, the people's army is one arena where there is fast rate of transformation. The rate of changes in tactics, mobility and flexibility makes it the centre of contradiction, possibilities and transformation. Infact most of the contradictions related to gender-relation and women's development gets quickly reflected in the PLA. Solving these contradictions will on a long run solve contradictions in other fields too. Hence the recent decision by the CPN (Maoist) to open women's department in PLA is a welcome step to solve gender-related problems and women's specific problems.

## **Political Line and its Effect on Women's Participation in PLA**

*Correctness or otherwise of the ideological and political line decides everything. If it is correct, everything is gained, but if it wrong, everything is lost.*

-Mao Tse-tung

War is the highest form of struggle for resolving contradictions between all contending classes, nations. (Tse-Tung). Hence which class the armed forces stands for, is both vital for not only making revolution but also counter-revolution. In order to make revolution and to check counter-revolution it is very important to make the army politicized. However correct political line itself is not enough to guarantee the success, it should be reflected in organization structure too. This is all the more true in PLA where the question of necessity outstands more prominently than the question of freedom, and hence military conservatism can easily come which is detrimental to the participation of women in PLA. At present there are three tendencies seen in People's Army: Right capitulationist, dogmato-revisionist and creative scientific application of MLM and Prachanda Path.

In the present day the main danger to the revolutionary movement is from the rightist capitulationist deviation

that overestimates the strength of the enemy and underestimates the strength of the people. In PLA underestimating the fighting power of the women combatants manifests this tendency. It is also seen by taking women's participation as a secondary force for the main force. Thus they use women's force as tactical force whenever their specific skill, body language, traditional division of labour are needed. This results in using women combatants as assistants in rear areas of war such as intelligent workers, as couriers, as medical assistants etc rather than in main war fronts. Even when they are given chance in combat zones, any initial hiccups, hesitations, or small medical problems is quickly taken as a proof of their inability to participate in war fronts. Their approach is very pragmatist, and this is most apparent when it comes to addressing women's sexuality. They do not make conscious efforts to postpone marriages and check pregnancies, which has direct bearing on their fighting capacity. And when pregnancies occur then they are looked upon as women specific problem. This then becomes an excuse to transfer them to other civil departments of the army or to frontal organizations of the Party. Thus by relying too much into objective reality of women's problem, which in essence is the product of feudal patriarchy of Nepal, it fails to put politics in command resulting into pragmatic solution to every problem that crops up amongst women in army. This ultimately results in negating women's strategic participation in People's army.

Since CPN (Maoist) is at present in war path, the rightist capitulationist tendency cannot dare to come out in open, hence it takes the mask of dogmatic revisionist tendency whereby it appears left in appearance but right in essence. This it does by advocating radical slogans, extreme positions, swearing by class and class alone. By swearing with what is literally written in classical books and by not relating to the specific situation, they undermine or underestimate women's specific problems, gender discriminations in combat zone. They tend to look at pregnancy and reproductive function of women combatants as an opportunity given to them to prove their metal at two fronts: at battle and at cradle fronts. It is similar to the super-mother concept the capitalists want to project: perfect in corporate office and perfect in kitchen. Thus it underestimates the practical difficulties women face in the name of romanticizing struggle. And when their expectation of women combatants don't match with the result they expect, then they are gradually transferred into non-combat departments of the army or in other fields in the name of necessity. Thus they too fall into the same trap of negating women's strategic role in People's Army as the rightists fall. By relying too much on the subjective efforts at the cost of objective reality they fail to transform their righteous ideology into physical force, thus inviting militarist outlook in PA.

The creative application of MLM-Prachanda Path lies in seeing the problem and challenge of women's participation in PLA dialectically. This they do by addressing women's specific problems, gender-related problems under the overall framework of MLM ideology. They look at women's pregnancy, reproductive functions as not women specific problem, but as a challenge for the whole revolution and hence the Party. They try to solve these problems dialectically by negating pregnancies or controlling them or spacing them depending upon the level of women's consciousness, their present work, the positions they hold in their work, and on the nature of the place where they are stationed. Thus they are able to demonstrate before this feudal society that biology cannot be women's destiny! The question of facing life and death at every moment with ideological mind makes PLA a very conscious, sharp flexible but also a resolute force. Thus they encourage new culture, new ideas in PLA since they can be easily accepted and practiced if they are scientific and rejected immediately if they are unscientific.

## Conclusion

*The aim of war is to eliminate war*

-Mao Tse-tung

People's War is a defensive war. The fact that Maoist People's War lays emphasis on disarming the reactionary state army (so as to arm itself against its attack) than entering into deadly arms-race competition with it (as

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currently seen amongst the ruling states, particularly amongst the imperialist countries) itself proves it's defensive nature. The defensive nature of People's War makes women participate in this war. It is true that war as a rule brutalizes both men and women. It in fact brutalizes whole human race. The concept of standing army, barricaded army for any healthy society, country or continent is on a long run harmful not only to the society, country or continent but to the combatants themselves. But, in an increasingly polarized and class divided world, war has become necessity for the proletarians: first of all to fight against war-mongering imperialist countries and secondly to protect their hard won democracy against the imperialist sharks who operate through internal reactionary stooges. This has all the more become necessary for the oppressed women who have been victim of imperialist, class and patriarchal violence. They understand more deeply the necessity for waging war in order to end all wars, so as to save productive and reproductive powers of human beings, most importantly, to save the whole community from killing each other, from orphanaging innocent children.

In war it is said that it is wise tactics to attack an enemy on his weakest point. In bourgeois, particularly in feudal state like Nepal, women's question is the weakest link. This can be directly seen in the question of recruiting women in the army. In reactionary army women are rarely recruited, even if they are recruited, then it is out of compulsion, for practical and temporary reasons. While in revolutionary army their participation is taken as strategic. Hence such army encourages women to be not just fighters, but also political organizers, and producers. In fact their participation has opened up many unexplored possibilities in women's liberation and gender relations enriching People's War experience.

Reactionary ideology which draws strength from patriarchy, private property and papal (or any religion) can never involve women's participation to the scale and quality that People's War can. In absence of scientific ideology it relies on religion, patriarchal values to boost reactionary army's morale thus encouraging them to punish rebellious women by raping, torturing and killing them. Such crimes have exposed not only class biasness of the state but also gender-biasness. On a long run it helps in forging class alliance between men and women. It has helped in demystifying ruling army as a protector of the country by drawing them to class war but it has also unmasked their guardian image of saving the honour of the country's women by exposing their heinous crime against women.

PLA has also challenged the myopic view of sectarian feminists who see women as just victims of war, not as agents of change. It has shattered the absolute peace image that these brand of feminists want to give to women. Revolutionary women are not for eternal peace that are to be found in graveyard, rather they want hard won peace by fighting against class and patriarchal enemies. By being silent spectator to the mass rape, torture and killings of women by the state and by shouting at roof tops against individual men in domestic violence, it has exposed their sham "all men hater" image or "all women, all sisters unite" image. What sectarian feminists should observe that such rape torture and killing of women by the reactionary state has in fact helped mitigate hair splitting gender divide that they want to create. At the other end PLA has offered scope for direct revenge against oppressors who molest, co-wives, rapes and tortures them by allowing them to join people's army. This is in sharp contrast to NGO's and reformist party's class alliance approach, which denies or at best delays justice making punishment ineffective even if justice is given at last Thus PLA has provided teeth to women's movement by making women's liberation physically possible!

It has been found that like revolutionary state, revolutionary People's Army too can get degenerated, bureaucratized and alienated from the masses once the revolution succeeds. Subjecting the state and the PLA under the constant vigilance, control and intervention of the people can fight such tendencies. Militarizing the masses can do this. This has become all the more important in today's uni-polar world, because any challenge to the so-called

stable government in any part of the world by any nationalist or revolutionary resistance groups, ultimately invites the wrath of American imperialist intervention. And everywhere they have intervened, they have made no distinction between rebellion forces and masses, killing them ruthlessly like in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is here that women's combatants' input becomes strategic. They being the largest oppressed, all encompassing, all permeating group and social engineer of all households can facilitate in militarizing the masses as they have better connectivity with the people. And they being the last oppressed group to be liberated, they will always actively fight in making continuous revolution till their own liberation is realized and guaranteed. Hence their input in PLA will not only hasten revolution but will also hasten the process of continuous revolution.

Also their input will help in checking bureaucratization in PLA as this tendency run counter to women's active participation in PLA. Thus it will discourage barricaded army concept at one end, and it will encourage bare footed army concept at the other. As a result their incorporation eventually helps in democratization the people's army. This helps in withering away of the army, which, in turn creates physical environment for withering away of the state. Thus People's Army should have strategic participation of women combatants!

*Out of the two guns only one was functioning and it was popularly called WT (whole timer).*

*"Com Shilu, the commander of the historic Gorkha jail break, who was already a commander of squad when she was imprisoned, told me personally how men comrades missed their chance of escape because they did not believe in women's jail break plan. They had infact left escape route for male comrades while making their own historic jail break in which 6 women escaped from highly fortified jail, Gorkha in 2001.*

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## Present Situation And Our Historical Task\*

Today the great Nepalese People's War (PW) is in a specific stage of strategic equilibrium and in preparation for strategic offensive. Theoretically this stage is very complex and sensitive step by itself. In imperialist era, whenever any country's people's revolution advances up to this stage of development then it becomes obvious that it starts clashing with the world imperialism. Development of this stage obviously brings about the possibility of realizing the new challenges and opportunities of the respective people's revolution. On top of this, particularly in today's world when there exists not one single genuine socialist country and American imperialism is trying to bring the whole world under its grip by openly bullying in the name of "globalization" and "liberalization", "expansion of civilization" and "war against terrorism", it is obvious, the Nepalese PW at this stage of development and its future course of advancement, will particularly become more complex and hence will become even more momentous.

Together with the ideological synthesis of the Party's 2<sup>nd</sup> National Conference and its application process, qualitative progress started showing up in the development of the PW. In the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, along with the expansion of quality and quantity of PW the interventionist activities of imperialism, particularly American imperialism, started intensifying. By pushing forward the fascist feudal forces through the palace massacre, imperialism is trying to dig its teeth and nails into Nepal by openly helping them socially, economically and politically against the great PW. Realizing the strategic importance of Nepal's geo-political position and the long-term effect of the victory of PW as a big challenge, the imperialists have declared their strategy of preventing the Nepalese Maoist movement from capturing the state-power. The fact that American imperialism which is imposing naked aggressive war on those oppressed countries and people who are opposing imperialism, in the name of so-called war against terrorism after the September 11 episode, is now looking at cease-fire and negotiation process in Nepal as part of its same strategy and propagating it as its victory and that it has included the Maoist movement in list of international terrorism, all these reveal the level of advancement of the PW and the challenges that lay ahead of it.

In spite of overwhelming opposition of the world public opinion, American imperialism is arrogantly declaring it as a warning to all those small and big forces of the world, which dare to talk of rebellion by citing example of its "success" in suppressing Iraq and Iraqi people through the strength of ultra-modern military technology. In this context it is paramount to develop the Party's strategy and tactics most seriously when the old state and the main parliamentary forces of the country are showing their national capitulationist character and imperialism is bullying as aforesaid.

### On World Situation

All the basic contradictions of the world have now sharpened proving the claims of 'end of history' and 'rise of new world order' by the imperialists as utter rubbish. Not only has the principal contradiction of the world between imperialism and oppressed nations and people become explosive but inter-imperialist contradictions, too, have sharpened. This situation has developed with the increasing plunder, intervention and terror of US imperialism under the strategy of establishing an unchallenged domination over the whole globe after the fall of the erstwhile Soviet Union.

Proclaiming the so-called US prosperity and civilization based on exploitation, capture and plunder of overwhelming human and natural resources of the earth as an ideal model of the world, the Bush clique of the imperialist moneybags has claimed and practiced its privilege of attacking any nation, organisation, movement

and people raising their voice against it. It has become the main trend of imperialism to impose war on the people in the name of this or that excuse in order to save its economy from collapse, which is based on war industry manufacturing weapons of mass-destruction that has the power of destroying the human race.

Since the last decade there has been deep recession occurring in the imperialist economy in general and American economy in particular. Financial capital has domination over industrial capital, and financial capital is in turn controlled mainly by the Americans through organizations like "World Bank", "International Monetary Fund". The monopoly of financial capital and its unlimited centralization has created unequal wage distribution, unequal development, and unemployment and has dangerously intensified the gap between the rich and the poor. The development of science and technology and the concentration of capital is unlimitedly increasing the productive capacity of imperialist economic units, but the demand and market is not only not expanding at the same pace but in fact becoming even more limited because of inequality in development and distribution. Because of this inherent logic of the imperialist economic system there is bound to be clash between the imperialist factions for the capture of market.

Today the background of the Iraq war, which is indicating a big turning point and change in the world situation, is proving that point. Because the dollar is the international medium of exchange the Americans are arbitrarily printing dollars in order to cover up more than five hundred billion dollars of trade deficit. And if the Europeans and other imperialist forces that control nearly half of the American currency start using other medium of exchange instead of dollar then it is certain it will ruin American domestic economy that is sustaining itself by obtaining cheap credit. It is this situation, which is actually behind the collapse of big companies and banks belonging to the Americans. At present the growing development of Euro is giving challenges to the future of the dollar. In this situation, Iraq was beginning to receive money for its oil through Euro from 2000 on wards. Venezuela had been doing this right from the beginning. Many imperialist countries were slowly converting their foreign exchange deposit into Euro from the dollar. Many countries closely affiliated to America started showing interest in reserving their limited foreign exchange deposit in Euro currency. On top of that for the last seven years, the oil producing countries started refraining to invite American companies to develop the oil resources. Under such a situation, if Euro captures the huge world market of oil and if dollar gets left behind (of which clear indication was beginning to show) then it would have ruined American economy and it would make sure that its hegemony in the world would end. Thus objectively even before the event of September 11 there had already arisen a great danger on American economic domination. In such a situation it is but natural to occur clashes among NATO country members themselves as a manifestation of the contradiction between excess production and limited market. Then the American imperialism saw no other alternative than to wage war with its huge military might which has given it its superpower status in order to safeguard its economic hegemony.

It is in this background that the incident of September 11 occurred. This incident, in fact became a very big excuse for the crisis ridden American imperialism to launch a war. The Bush clique of the oil business that was looking for a lame excuse to wage a war has now declared protracted war in the pretext of so-called war against terrorism on the basis of huge military built-up in order to establish unipolar economic and military hegemony.

Although the real strategic aim was to capture oil in order to ward off its competitions and to tighten its control over the world economy, tactically it gave the name of war against terrorism and started by attacking Afghanistan. When this trend lead to initiate war by the American and the British troops on the sovereign nation Iraq, which has second largest oil deposits in the world, in the pretext of destroying the so-called mass-destructive chemical and

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biological weapons in its possessions which was never proved, then big upheavals and changes started appearing in the world situation and is continuing to do so.

In the course of preparatory phase of war, mainly in Europe, America and including the whole world, unprecedented waves of people's movement started developing. The huge and mammoth anti-war people's rallies right at the heart of imperialist countries, alleging war as "crime against humanity" and comparing Bush and Blair as "Hitler of 21<sup>st</sup> Century", have created a revolutionary objective condition for the new wave of world revolution. Although the unified anti-war and such initiatives taken by the people all around the world, including Europe and America, could not stop the war against Iraq immediately, but it created strong base for alternative people's power and future resistance against imperialism. This war that was waged despite vehement protest by tens of millions of people around the world, has in fact exposed the mask of democracy worn by the imperialists. Their real military fascist character has once again become exposed before the whole world. This world situation, which developed in course of war on Iraq, is a very positive aspect.

Iraq war has not only brought to surface the contradictions between imperialist countries but it has also intensified it to a large extent. France, Germany and Russia were openly seen to oppose the war policy of America and Britain. The threat of France to veto against the war in United Nations and the declaration that American 'unipolar world hegemony is not tolerable', all these explain the level of contradictions existing between the imperialist countries. It is clear that this kind of resistance reached such a height, primarily because of one's economic self-interest and secondly because of the pressure exerted by the rallying people on the streets. But, these imperialist countries very well know America is the only force that can save today's imperialist world system, and hence in their opposition one can easily smell the tendency of aligning with America and to appease it. These countries while advocating UN and opposing war not only undertook no concrete steps to stop it but they helped the war indirectly and in their propaganda they made clear that America should not lose. Whatever may be, there is increase in competitions among the imperialist forces for the oil and the market and that the Iraq war has all the more intensified and deepened that contradiction. This development in the world situation is another important change.

Those Third World reactionary rulers who are competing with one other to gain American blessing by supporting America's monopolistic hold over the world after the end of cold war are now realizing that their position has weakened because of the experiences of the last decade. At present all the reactionary rulers of the Third World are at one end facing increasing fury and resistance of the people and at the other end are under the dual pressure and threat of world imperialism, thus being squeezed from both the sides. Despite the disapproval of the United Nations, massive opposition put up by the people and innumerable appeals, requests made by most of the Third World rulers, gruesome attack made on a sovereign country, Iraq, by the American and British imperialists has reminded and revived the almost forgotten non-alignment movement. It is through this movement that the Third World rulers have become compelled to oppose this war. But, because of their own reactionary nature, they are not able to take any strong stand against imperialism and there is no possibility for it, too. While many fascist rulers of the Third World are openly and nakedly hobnobbing with imperialism in order to prolong their life and existence, some others are looking for a middle road of compromise with a terrorized mentality. Whatever it may be, the very fact that inter-imperialist contradictions are sharpening and in the same proportion the non-alignment movement is getting revived; all these indicate a change in the world situation.

The so-called military success in Iraq war has increased even more the arrogance of American imperialism to maintain its hegemony over the world. They have haughtily declared the so-called "success" as a warning against those small and big forces of the world that dare to raise their voice against America. They are now



centralizing their threat on Syria, Iran and other countries under the strategy of controlling the whole world through their hold on oil by installing puppet governments all over Arab countries who are willing to kneel down before them.

American imperialism, which has been strengthening its military hold on Afghanistan and Pakistan, is now implementing the strategy of tightening its noose in South Asia. Because of the capitulationist nature of the present reactionary governments in this region, they are getting successful in this strategy. American imperialism, which has been playing the game of cat and mouse among the Indian and Pakistani rulers using the weapon of Kashmir conflict, is now concentrating its attention in containing the Nepalese people's great democratic movement that has been gaining success one after the other through the People's War. It is by realizing the consequences of 21<sup>st</sup> century's forward-looking movement from an ideological point of view and the geo-strategic position of Nepal (being in between the vast China and India), and by assessing the possible success of Maoist movement as a spark of new world revolution against world imperialism which could ignite a prairie fire on world imperialism, that they have been intensifying their interventionist activities in Nepal for the last past three years. In order to sustain the most reactionary feudal autocratic elements, they have been increasing strategic, economic and material aid against the People's War. The conclusion of a so-called agreement against terrorism for the period of five years between American imperialism and the old state of Nepal, while formal negotiation was going on after the cease-fire, and the recent listing of the Nepalese Maoist movement among the terrorists, all these indicate the seriousness of the present situation. Even this brief analysis of the present world situation makes it amply clear that, despite ups and downs in history, the basic features of imperialism and the compulsions for Bush to wage war remain the same and proves that comrade Lenin's analysis is scientific and relevant even today. For the masses of the world, there is no other alternative than resisting the war through revolution. The situation up to the Iraq war is preparing objective ground for bringing a wave of world revolution in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. An historical duty has been placed on the shoulders of the international proletariat to prepare itself boldly for undertaking leadership of world revolution based on the fundamental principles of MLM in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There can be no other military strategy than the People's War to smash imperialism.

### **World Situation and the Nepalese Revolution**

The unprecedented development in communication technology has made today's world unbelievably small. Because of the development of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, the favorable and unfavorable international situation will be playing strategic role in determining the success of any specific country's democratic revolution. On top of it the development of science and technology in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has qualitatively enhanced the importance of international situation for determining the success of revolution in any country. In today's condition, any ups and downs in the revolution of any country are related with the ups and downs that occur in the world situation. The development of revolution in the last seven years amply explains this reality.

Had world imperialism, particularly American imperialism in today's context, not helped the old state directly, the Nepalese revolution would have by today developed further ahead with relative ease and somewhat differently through the use of the thought, strategy and tactics synthesized in the Party's historic Second National Conference. The Nepalese revolution has been affected by the activities of American imperialism, like bringing the most brutal and fascist feudal elements through the infamous palace massacre to take on the Nepalese People's War to intensifying its interventionist activities in Nepal with the declaration of the so-called war against terrorism after the September 11 event. We can clearly and with experience say that had the old feudal state and its royal army not had direct involvement of American military advisors in planning, construction, training and direction in the post "emergency" period and that had it not received financial and military assistance from

foreign reactionary forces including America, the old rotten feudal state in Nepal had no chance of surviving in the face of People's War till today. The very fact that it was able to defeat the feudal state in various fronts despite unleashing fierce military atrocities and terror with direct imperialist assistance and direction and was able to develop People's War up to strategic equilibrium, proves the great victory of the Party's political and military line.

To advance by "giving birth to powerful counter-revolution" and "creating unusual complex situation" is the law of revolution according to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. The law of development of Nepalese revolution could not have been outside this law. There is no doubt that the imperialist forces are now in preparation for even more vicious assault as the Nepalese People's War is in preparation for strategic offensive from its current position of strategic equilibrium. The entire complexities, opportunities and challenges of Nepalese revolution are the manifestations of this objective condition. From the ideological and strategic point of view, Mao has correctly said that imperialism is actually paper tiger. But, from immediate and tactical point of view it is also real tiger that devours human beings. Till the Iraq war, imperialism is proving itself as both paper tiger and real tiger. From strategic point of view it proved itself to be paper tiger because imperialism generated hatred, resistance and anger against it in Iraq war. But, tactically it is drinking the blood of people of Afghanistan and Iraq and is roaring towards the masses of the world by baring its bloodstained fangs. Iraq war has indeed made revolutionary condition ripe all over the world. However, at present there is no revolutionary wave under the leadership of the proletariat. But, in Nepal, the development of revolution has reached a very sensitive stage of preparation for strategic offensive. It is essential to understand that the series of tactical steps undertaken by the Party such as cease-fire, negotiation, political way out etc. are based on this strategically favorable and tactically unfavorable world situation and the condition of strategic equilibrium inside the country.

In the present context, when along with the restoration of capitalism in China there is no other socialist state existing, when despite objective condition turning favorable currently there is no advancement in any strong revolutionary movement under the leadership of the proletariat, and when world imperialism is pouncing on people everywhere like an injured tiger, is it possible for a small country with a specific geo-political compulsion like Nepal to gain victory to the point of capturing central state through revolution? This is the most significant question being put before the Party today. The answer to this question can only be found in Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and on this depends the future of the Nepalese revolution.

It is the correct or wrong ideology and political line that determines everything. It is worth remembering that historic initiation of People's War was undertaken by the Party even when in the West imperialism was celebrating victory both ideologically and physically after the end of the cold war, and even the People's War in Peru's had met with a serious setback in a very unfavorable international situation. All reactionary and rightist revisionist forces, inside and outside the country, were forecasting that the initiation of People's War was an "extremist deviation" devoid of objective condition and that it would be smashed within a few months. But, the People's War has developed to the present challenging situation within 7 years, against such allegations and forecast. It is quite clear that behind this fast development are the correct thought, line, plan and program of the Party.

Today the challenge before us for leading the People's War to victory, while facing current imperialist intervention and national capitulationism, is in essence the challenge of developing the ideological and political line. If the Party based on concrete analysis of concrete condition fails to develop ideological and political line in order to face the new situation and falls victim to dogmatism or pragmatism, then it will become impossible for the revolution to attain victory. It is important here to discuss three kinds of deviations that may come from present world situation in the revolutionary movement.

It is imperative for the Party to be clear that in the present day revolutionary movement the first and the main

danger is the rightist capitulationist deviation that overestimates the strength of the enemy and underestimates the strength of the people. This kind of deviation can be manifested in different forms, such as seeing cease-fire as a form of absolute peace process, to see negotiation as a process of compromise at all cost instead of taking it as another front to fight against the enemy, to show disinterest in the essential and painful work of consolidating the people's army and mobilizing the masses and to be involved in diplomatic engagements with different sections of the enemy and be unduly hopeful from such interactions, to be ready to change the Party's strategic goal in the name of applying creative tactics in order to suit world situation and to face its pressure, to be content with repetitive cycle of status quo rather than developing the thought and the leadership, to consider breakdown of cease-fire so as to advance the revolution as a self-destructive act, etc.

Against the above deviation, another deviation can be seen in the form of "leftist" adventurism, which underestimates the strength of enemy and overestimates the strength of people. These are manifested in the form of seeing cease-fire and negotiation as unnecessary and irrelevant; it dismisses, in the name of conforming to the goal of strategy, the need of tactical maneuvering in order to face the complexities brought about by the development of revolution; it considers recognition and utilization of contradiction among the enemies as opportunism; it suffers from one-track-mindedness which considers that revolution can be concluded in a straight line; it understands thought, line, plan and program synthesized in the past as completed rather than taking pain to develop them continuously, etc.

Against the above two contradictory deviations, there can be seen another deviation in the form of vacillation and escapism. This kind of deviation prevents oneself from taking any firm stand on rightist, 'leftist' and revolutionary lines. Ultimately escapism becomes its destiny. Against these deviations the Party advocates continuous ideological struggle on the basis of MLM and Prachanda Path. It considers it necessary to raise to a further height the Party's established thought based on strategic firmness and tactical flexibility according to the requirements of the new situation. According to the demand of the new situation, it considers the necessity of developing to higher height, the Party's established thought based on strategic firmness and tactical flexibility. The victory of Nepalese People's War is neither impossible as thought by the rightist capitulationists nor will it be so straight and simple as thought by the leftist adventurists.

After the Afghanistan and mainly Iraq war, it is certain that the eyes of world imperialism together with that of anti-war world public opinion (including revolutionary communists) are getting focused intensely on Nepal, and in the coming days this will all the more get focused. After the Iraq war it has become all the more clear that neither the religious fundamentalist rulers or organizations nor the reactionary fascist rulers of the Third World countries are actually able to resist imperialist military interventions. We should be clear about the three reasons behind it. First, such reactionary rulers are alienated from their own people, and as a result they fail to organize the unlimited energy of people's active initiatives in the resistance war. Second, such rulers use same war-fare tactics as used by the imperialists, in which the super power imperialism is thousand times stronger; as a result these rulers or religious fundamentalist groups of the Third World countries cannot sustain the war for long. Third, even while resisting against the imperialist war it is impossible for the world public opinion to remain in full and continuous support of such reactionary rulers or religious fundamentalist groups.

It is obvious that in the context of the Nepalese People's War such a situation will be fundamentally different. War against imperialism can only be successful through the technique of People's War; this is an irrefutable fact based on fundamental ideology of MLM and historical experience. In today's context when the world opinion is going against imperialism, there is increasing probability of Nepalese revolution creating a new wave of world revolution and playing a role of global historical importance. If the Nepalese People's War undergoes a set-back

due to rightist liquidationism and leftist adventurism or due to some other reasons, then it will play a big negative role for the advancement of world revolution. Because of our impressive victory campaign for the last seven years and the present stage of strategic equilibrium, the imperialist enemies are compelled to invent new strategy one after another. Building upon the experiences of Indonesia, Chile, Vietnam, Nicaragua and in the later period, Peru, imperialism is trying to develop open and hidden strategies to smash the Nepalese People's War. Among these the best option is seen as to prepare for a massive military strike by establishing the charge of terrorism. Under such a situation the future development of People's War is certainly not going to be smooth and simple. However, if it advances on the basis of correct strategy and tactics by mobilizing world opinion and by tiring imperialism, there is full possibility of leading the revolution to victory. Certainly, for this the Party will have to go through many changes in tactics, and turnings and ups and downs. Here the main question is to remain firm in the strategic commitment of not letting the revolutionary flag of 21<sup>st</sup> century to fall down. It is imperative to establish the strategy of People's War as an opposite and alternative pole to American imperialism and to advance ahead by moving forward or backward, and right or left, based on the concrete analysis of concrete condition. In this context the Party needs to pay special attention to the following points.

It is important to emphasize no making the relation between world proletariat and the Party all the more concrete and broad. In today's world when it is impossible to achieve victory without collective effort of international proletariat on war against imperialism, it becomes all the more important to initiate live contact between different proletarian revolutionaries of the world and to make them more motivated for struggle through the RIM. The Party should give first priority to the work of organizing and mobilizing for the struggle under the collective effort of international proletariat.

The question of linking the Nepalese revolution with the increasing world opinion against imperialism is a question of great importance. The activities of the Party so far have certainly prepared a good ideological and political base for linking the Nepalese revolution with the anti-imperialist world opinion. With a collective and planned initiative the Party and international proletariat this relation should be made more lively, organized and struggle-oriented.

Along with the efforts of advancing the above two main relationships, it is important to make further efforts to utilize different imperialist and reactionary forces who have contradictions with American imperialism. It is important to note that Party's capacity of utilizing inter-imperialist and inter-reactionary contradictions will increase in proportion to the degree of consolidation of relationship between the proletariat and anti-imperialist world opinion.

It is only thus that we can fulfill our historical role of serving world revolution and continuing the Nepalese revolution.

### **The Present Domestic Situation**

The present political situation of the country is going through transitional crisis period. Our Party with utmost seriousness, responsibility and flexibility, has been trying to bring forth forward-looking solution through peaceful means by declaring cease-fire and going for negotiation based on the specific situation of strategic equilibrium in civil war, the aspiration for the peace by the people, and increasing foreign intervention. Although international power centers and their Nepali stooges formally welcomed cease-fire and negotiation, in reality they also started conspiring against it as soon as cease-fire was declared. Incidents such as repression, arrests and killing spree let loose by the old state and its army, the campaign for military consolidation and the deliberate propaganda made by various reactionary parliamentary cliques that there was a secret pact between the Maoists and the palace, all

indicate such conspiracies. Right from the very beginning, our Party has been exposing all these conspiracies and has been emphasizing to make cease-fire and negotiation a success in keeping with the aspirations of the people. In this context our sincerity, seriousness and responsible behavior was expressed not only in setting up of our negotiation team and the discussions and interactions we boldly and openly had with different political forces, intellectuals, journalists and people in general but also through our bold and open presentation of the agenda and our firm stand on it at the time of formal negotiations with the ruling side.

But the more it was found that not only the rural but also the urban middle class masses were getting clear and attracted towards our political actions and our commitment for the peaceful political solution, the more it became clear that conspiracies of foreign imperialists and their Nepali stooges started increasing in the same proportion. The incidents such as the conclusion of five-year agreement against so-called terrorism between American imperialism and the old state right at the threshold of formal negotiation, public declaration of the supply of war logistics worth Rs 300 crore by the Indian military chief in the name of "fighting against terrorism" to the old state, and in the later period, open announcement of the inclusion of the Maoist movement in the list of international terrorism by the State Department of America, open threats given by American ambassador in Nepal, the activities and open statements issued by the royal army and the misleading propaganda made by main parliamentary groups, etc all prove the above facts.

Right from ceasefire to present political developments have made it clear that our minimum and consensual agenda which seeks to provide a forward-looking political solution through round table conference, interim government and constituent assembly has been rejected by not only the palace clique that dreams of an autocratic monarchy but also the main parliamentary groups singing the tune of parliamentary democracy. Objectively, by this rejection they are proving that they are neither for peace in real sense nor they want real political solution in the country. In form it may appear as a triangular struggle involving monarchy, parliamentary forces and revolutionary forces, but in essence and if one looks from a class point of view, the struggle involving only two forces (reactionary and democratic forces) are seen. It has been practically proved that the differences between the autocratic monarchical and parliamentary groups are nothing other than that of share of power within the old state. It has been time and again proved in Nepal that monarchy in the name of nationalism (fake) and parliamentary forces in the name of democracy (fake) want to occupy the seat of power and betray the nation and the people on identical class basis. Despite the present crisis ridden state of the country and our serious initiative, their refusal to come to term with constituent assembly, which is a mere bourgeois democratic practice, has once again proved how hollow and hypocritical their slogan of nationalism and democracy is. From this the objectivity of our policy that nationalism and democracy cannot be separated from each other in bourgeois democratic revolution has become all the more clear.

What we have been saying from a class and theoretical point of view and what has become all the more exposed in the present cease-fire and negotiation process is that it is the clash of interests between different international reactionary centers which is behind the mutual recriminations and contradictions between different reactionary groups in Nepal. As the royal army and the palace elements are being manipulated and protected by western imperialism, particularly American imperialism, and the main parliamentary forces by the Indian rulers who seek special hegemony in South Asia, they are having a continuous tug of war between them. Hence the whole Party should be clear that, in the background of political development particularly after the palace massacre, the idea of seeing either the monarchical or the parliamentary forces of Nepal as more democratic or more nationalistic than the other, will be specially harmful and wrong. It has become all the more clear in the present day Nepal that we can never have any ideological and political relationship with either monarchical or parliamentary groups except to manage contradictions in a particular situation. The chain of events is proving that the monarchical elements are

moving ahead with the strategy of strengthening the state and smashing our movement with the backing of American imperialism by using us in the name of peace negotiation. Similarly, the main parliamentary forces are moving ahead with the strategy of using us, in the name struggling against regression, in order to reach the seat of the old state and destroying our movement with the help of foreign reaction. In such a situation, there can be no other strategy for the revolutionaries except to expose their strategic conspiracies and strive to raise people's revolution to a new height by mobilizing the masses and using contradictions among reactionary forces.

Will such conspiratorial methods adopted by international forces and reactionary elements of the country end the relevance of our serious, responsible initiative towards cease-fire, negotiation and peaceful political solution? To many people this may seem so. But, from factual and scientific point of view, these conspiracies of the enemy have all the more widely proved the relevance of our initiative. First of all, our initiative has not only established our movement's political superiority amongst rural populace, urban masses and people all over the country but also amongst quite a many people all around the world. It has also played an important role in exposing the military fascist misdeeds of imperialism and its Nepali stooges. To put it in concrete terms, the war mongering and unjust intervention resorted to by American imperialism even when serious initiative for arriving at political solution through negotiation was taking place, has led American imperialists and its Nepali stooges to at once fall down in the eyes of urban intellectuals to general masses and progressive people all over the world. We should deeply acknowledge that this would play a big national and international political role for the future counter-offensive. Secondly, initiative and naked intervention of American imperialism will increase our Party's chance of using inter-imperialist contradictions and the ones between reactionary rulers of different countries. Thirdly, our initiative and the naked conspiracy of the enemy has widely intensified the contradictions among different reactionary and revisionist groups of the country and brought them out on the surface. From this we have got good opportunity to make clear our position amongst those cadres and masses that have been under the illusion of reactionary and revisionist groups. According to the Party's principle theoretical understanding, negotiation is also one of the fronts of the struggle and hence we must stress on taking it to a logical conclusion. But, we must firmly grasp that this tactics is invariably inter-connected with the strategy of political preparation for counter-offensive. In the end, while firmly adhering to the aforesaid analysis of the monarchical and major parliamentary groups from a strategic and class perspective, we should strive from an immediate and tactical point of view to make necessary adjustments, understandings and tactical unity with other imperialists, foreign reactionaries and major parliamentary forces inside the country against American imperialism and its Nepali stooges as far as they are prepared to go. Only thus can we effectively carry forward our offensive against the main enemy.

## **On the Experiences of History and Development of Democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

*"Marxism is not lifeless dogma, not a completed, readymade immutable doctrine, but a living guide to action"*  
-Lenin

The main essence of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is to advance ahead through continuous revolution by scientifically synthesizing world proletarian movement enriched by the great experiences of revolution and counter-revolution. In giving leadership to the democratic revolution against feudalism and imperialism in Nepal, our Party has been from the very beginning laying emphasis on applying the teachings of MLM, not in the form of dogma but in the form of creative application and development as a "guide to action". In this great process of applying and developing the teachings of MLM based on the concrete condition of the Nepalese revolution, we have been waging continuous struggle against rightist revisionists as well as the dogmatorevisionists. The process of ideological struggle that is invariably linked with the necessity of class struggle has

brought the People's War to this level of development within the period of 7 years through one leap to another. The Party has already synthesized the discovery at "Prachanda-Path" as a special chain of ideas in the Nepalese revolution based on this development process of class struggle and ideological struggle.

Here what is important to note is that the starting point of the Party's ideological and practical struggle has been the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution that has developed Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the highest synthesis of the science of proletarian revolution. This means, to uphold continuous revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat as a theoretical basis to prevent counter-revolution and to carry forward ideological struggle based on the principle of "Three Dos and Three Don'ts" for the continuous proletarianization of the Party. Our Party has been firm that any deviations from this will mean deviation from the proletarian movement. But, if it is taken to mean readymade and complete answers for the requirement of revolution in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century then one should be clear that it is against the teachings of MLM and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

The synthesis up to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution definitely equipped the world proletariat with the ideological weapon of MLM. But, after the demise of Com. Mao, capitalism got restored in China and there is now not a single socialist state in the world. It would be a subjective deviation to deny the fact that this has given a big setback to the world proletarian movement and that it has brought big negative change in the world situation. Objectively there is no change that this is the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution and that revolution is the main trend of the world. This does not mean that we should underestimate the big loss proletarian class has faced through counter-revolution in China in the struggle for power and that we should not take seriously our effort to stop such counter-revolution in future by taking lessons from these defeats. In the present context of world revolution or in the context of revolution in any particular country, it has become very necessary for the political vanguard of the proletariat to give answer to this big question.

In the same way, with the entry into 21<sup>st</sup> century, there has been unprecedented development in science and technology, particularly in electronic communication technology, in the world. Just as this intense development has been affecting the world in different ways, similarly this makes necessary demands for improvement and development in the political and military strategy of the proletarian revolution. Any positive or negative incidents in any corner of the world has so rapid, intense and direct repercussion in the world that such phenomena has never occurred earlier in humankind's history.

This way, the experiences of counter-revolution give us inspiration to learn lessons from the limitations and weaknesses of past revolution, and the advancements made in science and technology inspire us to make creative development in the strategy and tactics of revolution. From the point of view of epochal development of human society it is still the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution; however, because of above important changes that have come in subjective and objective conditions it has necessitated today's proletariat to develop and refine their ideology and strategy based on concrete analysis of concrete situation.

On the basis of experience of history, analysis of present world situation and five years' enriched experiences of the Nepalese People's war, the Party's Second historic Conference has made many important political and military syntheses. The qualitative result brought in the development of People's War due to the application of that synthesized idea in the past two years, has not only proved its scientific basis but also it has prepared a strong base for higher ideological, political and military synthesis. On the basis of these developments in the world situation, including the development of Nepalese class struggle from the Second National Conference up to today, and from the September 11 event up to the Iraq war, it is necessary to develop and refine the strategy of the democratic revolution. In this context it is specially worth considering following points on relationship between

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the Party, Army, State and the People.

### **The Party**

The experiences of revolution and counter-revolution in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century have glaringly showed that the work of defending and developing the revolutionary proletarian character of the Party becomes all the more difficult in the period after the capture of the state power. Why is it that those victorious Parties in the world which have undergone intense ideological struggle against the rightist, leftist and centrist deviations inside and outside of the Party and which have created unprecedented example of earth-shaking bravery and sacrifice by fighting against the enemy in class war while identifying itself with the needs and interest of the people. after they capture state power become transformed into bureaucratic, revisionist, and counter-revolutionary Parties, alienated from the masses within a short period of time? Certainly, basic theoretical answers for this have been given by MLM by the time of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. But, these basic theories need to be developed into an organizational theory, methodology and system so that they can stop counter-revolution, and this is valid even today. This is the problem of application and development of the theory of two-line struggle within the Party and continuous revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Experience has proved that after assuming state power, when various leaders and cadres of the Party are involved in running the state affairs, then there is strong chance that physical environment may swiftly reduce the Party into a bureaucratic, careerist and luxurious class. With intensification of this danger the Party will become more formal and alienated from the masses, in the same proportion. This process when it reaches to certain level of its own development, it is bound to be transformed into counter-revolution. In order to prevent such danger as counter-revolution to happen, it is important to develop further organizational mechanism and system so that Party is constantly under the vigilance, control and service of the proletariat and working masses according to the theory of two-line struggle and continuous revolution. For this it is very important that there should be a mechanism to guarantee overall people's participation in two line struggle and that one section comprising of capable and established leaders and cadres should be constantly involved in mass work and another section should be involved in running the state machinery and that after certain interval of period there should be re-division of work thereby strengthening the relationship between the whole Party and the general masses. Right from the beginning it should be stressed that the Party and the state under its leadership should adopt a policy and methodology of keeping lively relations with the masses, working hard and living in privation and to be wholly devoted to the cause of communism. It should present Party, leaders and cadres as ideal and inspirational examples. It should emphasize to develop policy and structure which will help in waging intense ideological struggle and will expose before the masses those leaders and cadres who misuse their position, dictate over the masses and who are luxurious and careerists. In this context, it should be stressed to discourage the tendency of using coercive measure of state power in two-line struggle in the Party and to emphasize in establishing and encouraging scientific methodologies of judging between right and wrong through ideological struggle with the participation of the masses and the cadres. It is important to guarantee the system of reserving the right of judgment to the cadres and masses in deciding if certain rebellion inside or outside the Party is justified or not.

### **The Army**

The experience of revolution and counter-revolution in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century has clearly shown that if the proletarian class advances ahead with correct revolutionary ideology, policy and programme then the people can develop from almost zero to the level of an invincible people's army which can reduce to dust the ultramodern and powerful army of the enemy. But if wrong ideology prevails then the same army can become a weapon of counter-revolu-



tion. The experience has shown even in the context of the people's army that before the revolution, it has been in unison with the masses, full of devotion, bravery, sacrifice and ideological commitment, thus being invincible before the enemy; but after the capture of state power the same starts staying in barracks under special management and the material condition for turning into a bourgeois modern regular army gets intensified. If one is not able to guarantee the development of methodology and structure which will keep the army under the supervision, control and service of the masses and proletarian ideology then such tendencies will go on multiplying till it reaches a specific point when it will automatically get transformed into a weapon for serving counter-revolution. In order to stop repetition of above condition it is necessary right from the beginning to pursue ideological and political work amongst the people's army with great importance and to make conscious the whole people's army and the masses to rebel against counter-revolution. Together with this, it should be guaranteed that the people's army of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is not marked by modernization with special arms and training confined to a barrack after the capture of state power but remains a torch-bearer of revolution engaged in militarization of the masses and in the service of the masses. It is only by developing armed masses from both ideological and physical point of view that one can resist foreign intervention and counter-revolution; this fact must be made clear before the armed forces right from the beginning. The main thrust of work for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century people's army should be to complete the historical responsibility of developing conscious armed masses so that they may learn to use their right to rebel.

### **On the State**

The capture of state power through people's war under the leadership of the Party of the proletariat has been the central and difficult question of revolution yesterday and today. But the experience of 20<sup>th</sup> century has clearly proved that the question of continuous democratization of the state power, so that it starts withering away, is thousand times more difficult and complex than capturing state power. The importance and rigor of the subject can be judged from the fact that at one point of time within a century successful revolutions in Russia, China and other countries had shaken the whole earth, while at the other end the events of big counter-revolutions in those powerful socialist countries lead to a situation of no socialist state.

It is a fact that while capitalist imperialists are successful in camouflaging their military fascist essence by covering it with the so-called democratic mask, at the other end, the proletarians despite having a democratic essence are not able to consolidate their hold on the state. There may be many historical and theoretical reasons behind this, but today the problem of developing democracy has become very complex before us. What are the main obstacles in maintaining the balance between the need of resorting to dictatorship over the defeated class enemy and the necessity of exercising democracy amongst the people? Why is it that people's democracy or proletarian democracy under people's democratic dictatorship or dictatorship of the proletariat have in essence become formal, mechanical and conservative? Here our question has nothing to do with those revisionist and capitulationist renegades of the world who have fallen back to bourgeois formal democracy by condemning people's democratic dictatorship or dictatorship of the proletariat. Here our question is centred around the development of state power as an organisation to facilitate continuous revolution. In the end it is the broad and vigorous democratization process, which will in essence consolidate real people's dictatorship or proletarian dictatorship. There can be no other meaning than this of the great scientific theory of democratic centralism. Why is that these parties that were able to exercise democratic centralism correctly before the capture of state power have now fallen pray to formal democracy and bureaucratic centralism after they have succeeded in capturing the state power? That the party is dominated by revisionism cannot provide full answer to this question. In the end the responsibility lies with this or that weakness committed by Marxists in the application of dialectical materialism.

A Party, which may be proletarian revolutionary, and a state, that may be democratic or socialist, at a particular time, place and condition, may turn counter-revolutionary at another time, place and condition. It is obvious that the synthesis of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, namely the masses and the revolutionaries should rebel in such a situation, is fully correct in its place. However, as if a particular Communist Party remains proletarian for ever once a New Democratic or Socialist state is established under the leadership of that Party, there is either no opportunity, or it is not prepared, or it is prohibited, for the masses to have a free democratic or socialist competition against it. As a result, since the ruling Party is not required to have a political competition with others amidst the masses, it gradually turns into a mechanistic bureaucratic Party with special privileges and the state under its leadership, too, turns into mechanistic and bureaucratic machinery. Similarly, the masses become a victim of formal democracy and gradually their limitless energy of creativity and dynamism gets sapped. This danger has been clearly observed in history. To solve this problem, the process of control, supervision and intervention of the masses over the state should be stressed to be organized in a lively and scientific manner, according to the principle of continuous revolution. Once again the question here is to dialectically organize scientific reality that the efficacy of dictatorship against the enemy is dependent upon the efficacy of exercising democracy among the people.

For this, a situation must be created to ensure continuous proletarianization and revolutionization of the Communist Party by organizing political competition within the constitutional limits of the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist democratic state. Only by institutionalizing the rights of the masses to install an alternative revolutionary Party or leadership on the state if the Party fails to continuously revolutionize itself that counter-revolution can be effectively checked. Among different anti-feudal and anti-imperialist political parties, organizations and institutions, which accept the constitutional provisions, of the democratic state, their mutual relations should not be confined to that of a mechanistic relation of cooperation with the Communist Party but should be stressed to have dialectical relations of democratic political competition in the service of the people. It should be obvious that if anybody in this process transgresses the limits legally set by the democratic state, he would be subjected to democratic dictatorship. From the very beginning it should be stressed to end a situation of not having to prove the correctness of one's ideas, the need to get united with the interests of the masses, and dedication, devotion and sacrifice and loyalty to the masses to establish the leadership capacity of the Party once the state power is captured. Special care should be taken to ensure that centralization of thought and leadership in the state would not lead to a situation of curtailing the rights of self-determination of the masses.

In the context of democratic revolution in Nepal, we have been talking about the liberation of the masses from class, national, regional, and gender oppression. We have also pledged national and regional autonomy along with the rights to self-determination. Similarly we have been talking about Party freedom for anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces. In this situation it should be stressed on correctly organizing the masses' right to self-determination for the continuous democratization of the state.

Thus, only through the appropriate development of the Party, Army and State as stated above that democracy in the twenty-first century would enhance the process of continuous revolution and counter-revolution.

*\* Presented by Chairman Prachanda and adopted by the Central Committee Meeting of the Party in May 2003*

## Proverbial Blind Men's Portrayal of an Elephant

-Laldhoj

1. *The People's War in Nepal: Left Perspectives* edited by Arjun Karki and David Seddon; Adroit Publishers, Delhi, 2003; pages XXIV+494, IRs. 600 (hardbound).
2. *Understanding the Maoist Movement of Nepal* edited by Deepak Thapa; Martin Chautari, Kathmandu, 2003; pages XX+395, NRs. 475.
3. *A Kingdom Under Siege: Nepal's Maoist Insurgency, 1996 to 2003* by Deepak Thapa with Bandita Sijapati; The Printhouse, Kathmandu, 2003; pages XV+234, price not stated.
4. *Maoist Insurgency in Nepal: The Challenge and the Response* by S.D. Muni; Rupa & Co. in association with Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi, 2003; pages VIII+134, IRs.195.
5. *Insurgency in Nepal* by Thomas A. Marks; Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, December 2003; pages 46 (web. monograph).

The year 2003 marked a watershed in the publication of numerous books and research papers on the revolutionary movement in Nepal, both within the country and outside. This is definitely a sign of universal acknowledgement of the revolutionary movement as a serious political force by both friends and foes alike. The books and publications under review, however, can be taken as important samples representing the viewpoints of major power centers in Nepal and abroad, particularly India and the USA.

Despite their varying strategic and political interests, all the publications seem to have one thing in common: their empiricist method of enquiry and presentation. As a result, they miss the 'forest' and harp about individual 'trees' in their own narrow perspectives. This is not surprising given their bourgeois, or at the most revisionist or neo-Marxist, outlooks. Consequently most of the time their assessment of the epoch-making revolutionary movement in Nepal is a crude reminder of the proverbial blind men's description of an elephant. There are factual errors galore on crucial historical events, personalities and policy decisions; some of which may be condoned, however, for lack of access to authentic sources in an underground revolutionary movement. This has naturally led to lack of objectivity in the total assessment of the movement. How such off the mark assessment would help the concerned policy makers, only the sponsoring agencies should know.

Nevertheless, some authors seem to have made rigorous efforts to refer to official documents and authentic statements and works of responsible leaders of the movement, which have distinguished their works from the ordinary. Also, inclusion of important documents of the Party and statements/interviews of the senior leaders in some of the collections has added to the merit of the books. Perhaps the two recently published books, viz. *Some Important Documents of Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)*

(2004). and. *Problems and Prospects of Revolution on Nepal [A Collection of Articles by Com. Prachanda and Other Leaders of the CPN (Maoist)] (2004)*, if they had been made available in English a bit earlier, could have further aided these publications to be more objective.

*The People's War in Nepal: Left Perspectives*, edited by Karki and Seddon, is a collection of documents, articles and interviews from the revolutionary camp, as well as from other 'left' and revisionist groups. Relatively the book provides a fairly objective account of the movement, except for some nakedly motivated vituperation from such known opportunists like Mohan Bikram Singh and Pradip Nepal. The introductory piece by the editors is quite objective, except for some factual errors and limitations of their own social democratic outlooks. One of the factual errors, or willful distortion (?), repeated in this book as well is the claim that the then United People's Front, Nepal (UPFN) led by Com. Baburam Bhattarai was forced to boycott the parliamentary elections in 1994 because of the withdrawal of recognition to the Front by the Election Commission. But the well-known truth is that the UPFN had already decided to boycott the elections much before the conspiratorial decision of the Election Commission.

Among the other 'left' contributors to the volume, whereas Govind Neupane makes serious efforts to make a class analysis of the rebellion, Mohan Bikram Singh, Pradip Nepal and Sujata Sakya thoroughly expose their own Right revisionist bias against the revolutionary movement through lowly slanders and wild claims. Mohan Bikram Singh, father of dogmato-revisionism in Nepal, surpasses them all in pouring venom against the revolutionary movement with his ridiculous accusation that the movement is pro-king. When the events of last two and a half years have totally vindicated the then assessment of the CPN (Maoist) on the palace massacre that it was a part of grand national and international conspiracy against the revolutionary movement, Mohan Bikram shamelessly parrots the motivated vituperation against the Party and its leaders. It is, therefore, no surprise that even after he is totally marginalized from the revolutionary politics the reactionary media very conveniently utilizes Mohan Bikram to attack and slander the revolutionary movement.

*Understanding the Maoist Movement of Nepal*, edited by Deepak Thapa, also provides a collection of articles sub-grouped into 'Premonitions', 'Perspective of the People's War', 'The Maoists View': 'The Emergency and After', 'Profiles' and 'Appendix'. The articles, mostly from a non-left perspective, lack rigor and analytical coherence, except perhaps those by A. Andrew Nickson & Kanak Mani Dixit, and of course within their own ideological limitations. The inclusion of a fictitious piece by some imaginary "Maoist Activist" in 'The Maoist View' section has definitely reduced the credibility of the book. Moreover, malicious propaganda such as—"The one factor that is uncontested is that India is the staging ground for the Maoists of Nepal" (p.252)—that too from the pen of editor Deepak Thapa himself, do seriously challenge the objectivity of the entire exercise.

*A Kingdom Under Siege* seems to be a mere extension of *Understandings...*, though this one is a single composite project by Deepak Thapa with Bandita Sijapati. The presentation is too descriptive and lacks analytical depth. However, some poignant scenes like that of 11-year old Dilli Biswakarma feeding his two siblings, whose both parents were killed by the police, deeply touch the sensibilities of any reader. This volume, too, contains a lot of distortions of historical facts. For instance, it is claimed

that the then rebel 'Masal' group had broken away with Mohan Bikram in 1991 on the issue of participation in or boycott of the parliamentary elections. But any number of documentary evidences and bare historical truths prove that the main dispute was on the question of whether or not to shift the focus to rural peasant struggle and have unity or not with other revolutionary forces. The evidences of past one decade are there for all to see that Mohan Bikram has further sunk into parliamentary cretinism and has been marginalized as an inconsequential head of a small splinter group, whereas the leaders of rebel 'Masal' have blossomed into responsible leaders of the historic PW. The utilization of parliamentary elections in 1991 by the then UPFN was a correct tactical move governed by the objective conditions prevailing at that time, which has been vindicated by the later events.

*Maoist Insurgency in Nepal* by S. D. Muni, who is a known hand on Nepal and is believed to enjoy some access with the South Bock, provides a fairly accurate account of the events, except for some factual errors, and is surprisingly not very biased against the revolutionary movement. Originally prepared as a research paper for Observer Research Foundation (Delhi) the book should provide useful fodder for policy makers in India who seem to be pulling in different directions at the same time, and awaken the Hindutwa forces who have recently crowned fratricidal and regicidal Gyanendra as 'the emperor of one billion Hindus of the world'. More notable is Muni's this plainspeak:

"India's image in Nepal today is that it is an ally and supporter of monarchy. India needs to bring the Maoists and the political parties, together, which, in the process will also moderate the Maoists' extremist stance and use of violent methods. It is this combination of the main-stream political parties and the Maoists which can contain monarchy's powers, help India emerge as a people-friendly neighbour and reduce the excessive influence and strategic presence of the Western powers". (pp. 66-67)

Only time will tell whether it will have any impact in the corridors of power in Delhi.

It is, however, quite unbelievable that a research scholar of Muni's caliber should repeat such unsubstantiated claims about the so-called 'Compact Revolutionary Zone' (CRZ) supposedly planned by the CCOMPOSA to link Nepal with Bihar and Andhra Pradesh. This is just a figment of imagination by some journalists (or intelligence agencies?), who seem to have floated the idea to instigate the Indian state for a military intervention in Nepal. A similar insinuation was made by Deepak Thapa in his *Himal South Asia* (April, 2002) article (reproduced in *Understanding the Maoist Movement of Nepal*), which has since then spread like wild fire in the pro-establishment publications of Nepal and India. The real truth is that CCOMPOSA is a mere ideological-political platform of Maoist Parties and Organizations of South Asia and has never formulated any plan or resolution on the so-called 'CRZ'.

And lastly, *Insurgency in Nepal* by Thomas A. Marks, a former US government officer, well-known strategic expert and author of *Maoist Insurgency since Vietnam* (London, 1996), provides a glimpse of the current thinking of US ruling class on Nepal. Marks is unabashedly unapologetic about his militarist thinking and his public support to the hated monarchy and its mercenary Royal Army. On his latest visit to Nepal in January 2004 he is reported to have openly advocated a military solution to the

so-called 'Maoist problem' as against the near unanimous view of other foreign powers for a 'political solution'. It is, therefore, not at all surprising that he advocates for more military aid to the royal regime at the end of his monograph thus:

"Lest Nepal prove similar [i.e. Colombia and southern Philippines], it is imperative that Washington proceed with an adroit mixture of reasoned advice and adequate material aid and training. Given the nature of the foe, the existing U.S. military role seems destined to increase in prominence." (pp. 31-32).

One is just tempted to remind the learned author that further military involvement of the US in Nepal may be 'destined' to repeat the ignominy of Vietnam in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

While going to press a new book, **MAOISTS IN THE LAND OF BUDDHA: An Analytical Study of the Maoist Insurgency in Nepal** by Prakash A. Raj; Published by Nirala Publications, New Delhi, 2004; pages-212; Price: Indian Rs. 395, has been received, which does not seem to be much different from the books just reviewed. •

*"This second stage [i.e. of strategic equilibrium] will be the transitional stage of the entire war; it will be the most trying period but also the pivotal one."*

-Mao Tse-tung, "On Protracted War", May 1938

*"War, this monster of mutual slaughter among men, will be finally eliminated by the progress of human society, and in the not to distant future to. But there is only one way to eliminate it and that is to oppose war, to oppose counter revolutionary war with revolutionary war, to oppose national counter revolutionary war with national revolutionary war, and to oppose counter-revolutionary class war. History knows only two kinds of war, just and unjust. We support just wars and oppose unjust war. All counter revolutionary wars are unjust, all revolutionary wars are just"*

-Mao Tse-tung, "six essays on military", 1972

## Underdevelopment and Regional Structure of Nepal

-AM

This is a commentary on the book *The Nature of Underdevelopment and Regional Structure of Nepal: A Marxist Analysis* written by Baburam Bhattarai and published by Adroit Publishers, Delhi, in the well-known magazine *Economic and Political Weekly*, November 8-14, 2003, by AM as "Calcutta Diary". We may not necessarily agree with the views of the author.-Ed.

The Viswa Hindu Parishad cannot understand it. Nepal is the only Hindu Kingdom in the world; substantial sections of the people there are of north Indian ethnicity and bear names of Hindu gods and goddesses; the ruling family has long-time links with India and marries into the Rana clan dispersed along the higher and lower reaches of the Indo-Gangetic valley. And yet, Nepal is hardly benevolent land for Hindu chauvinism. Maoist communists, who are engaged in a relentless guerrilla war against the country's regime for the past seven years, control most of the countryside. Even in the national parliament, the second largest party happens to be the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist). So, irrespective of whether one applies the criterion of parliamentary or extra-parliamentary influence, Marxists, and not revanchists of the Togadia-Singhal brand, reflect the overwhelming *vox populi* in Nepal.

This clinches several points. Not rapid religious sentiments, but hard economic realities, mould the psyche of a nation. If the chemistry is different in Aryavarta, that is because of an unnatural hiatus between people existing under today's canopy and their consciousness lagging millennia behind. To argue that British colonialism was the albatross which prevented the Indian mind to swim away from the corrosive waters of obscurantism would be altogether banal. Hindu feudal ethos successfully resisted contamination from the spirit of enlightenment that was the major spin-off of British rule. The Mughals too had tried earlier to wear down this resistance and failed. India obviously is an exceptional case defying the dynamics of history. Part of the responsibility for continuation of the same stagnation in the post-independence period has to be shared by the orthodox proletariat-loving parties. They have exhibited a fetish for verbal calisthenics but failed to delve into the metabolism of either class realities or forces which could disturb such realities. The leaders of the parties belonging to the Left might well ponder over the fact that, at the dawn of independence, the Communist Party of India, though relatively small, was still the second largest party in the country: the situation is now qualitatively different both ordinally and cardinally.

Nepal did not suffer from the India malaise. A book recently published, *The Nature of Underdevelopment and Regional Structure of Nepal: A Marxist Analysis* (Adroit Publishers, Delhi), offers some clues as to why Nepal could escape India's fate. The author of the book, Baburam Bhattarai, happens to be one of the top leaders of the Maoist guerillas currently on the rampage across the length and breadth of the country. That does not diminish the book, it actually adds luster to it.

Some irony, Bhattarai's life story bears a strong parallel to that of Indian students who once traveled to Great Britain for higher studies. The worldwide depression was at its worst in the 1930s. Europe was seething in discontent. The British empire was still a non-negligible political entity. For Indians, Britain was the metropolitan center. It was easy for the bright generation of young Indians coming from affluent households to transit to radicalism, often to membership of the Communist Party of Great Britain, to join the global struggle against fascism, from there to comradesly solidarity with the Republicans in the Civil War in Spain. For the earnest young Nepalese in the second half of the 20th century, the metropolitan center was India. They would travel to Chandigarh, Delhi, Lucknow, Allahabad, Patna and Calcutta for higher studies. En route, they would pick up ideas and assorted tidbits of revolutionary praxis. Bhattarai found himself first in Chandigarh and then in New Delhi. He took a bachelor's degree, and subsequently a Ph D, in architecture in Indian universities. He lingered at Jawaharlal Nehru University honing the ideology of activism. These details however are a frivolity. Much more relevant is his success in organizing the Nepalese students in India into a radical political formation and his contribution towards giving Marxism-Leninism-Maoism a Nepalese face. Bhattarai of course has had comrades equally steeled in activism. He is nonetheless different: he leads a ferocious rebellion and at the same time writes a treatise on the facets of dialectical materialism, including its application to particular circumstances and events, such as the state of development, or, if you will, under-development, in Nepal.

Even the two-in-one role of scholar-politician bears a strong resemblance to the perambulations of the first batch of the CPI leadership. B T Ranadive actually started life as a proper academic in the Bombay School of Economics and Sociology. He and such others as EMS Namboodiripad and PC Joshi never discarded their thinking caps even in the most turbulent times; they set aside a certain time of each and every day for reading, thinking and writing - and producing books. The tradition has died out in India: a notion has struck roots that theorization is by and large a dated modality; one does not need to be literate - and learned - to understand sociopolitical realities. Nepal politics is in its early phase, the Baburam Bhattarais are therefore not yet deterred from reading, thinking and writing. Whether this trend will continue only the future can tell. Were the Marxist movement in Nepal too to lapse into relative illiteracy, that would be a tremulous prospect. If conformity claims radical groups, could the spread of Hindu fundamentalism be averted for long in that country either?

Nepal is therefore a land of both hope and apprehension, depending upon where one's allegiance lies. Feudalism has an ancient history in the country, strongly resembling the annals of northern India. In a still overwhelmingly primitive economy, feudalism, if left undisturbed, leads to smaller and still smaller-sized holdings and to increasing fragmentation of land. Poverty is endemic in such a system and as the decades roll by, the ancillary aspects of poverty-malnutrition, lack of literacy and high infant mortality-overwhelm the milieu. Surplus accumulated through ground-rent, usury and unfair terms of trade might have risen over time if land productivity had displayed a secular upward trend. That did not happen, since there was little feedback from the capital extracted from land, while progressive fragmentation militated against efficiency per labor unit. Till 1950 the situation was complicated by two exogenous



factors: (a) imperial presence, even if indirect, asserting itself through treaty arrangements with the British Crown, and (b) the intrusion of Indian capital, mostly in trade and services. The export of Gurkha contingents to the British army could have turned the face of Nepal's villages and lifted it from the quagmire of underdevelopment. The reality bites were different; what was directly transferred to the Nepalese royal family by the British far exceeded the sum of subsistence wages paid to the Gurkha recruits, very little of whose income could filter back into the Nepal countryside. On the contrary, the degree of monopoly power exercised by the royal family and its appendages, such as the Ranas, increased significantly, intensifying the rate of exploitation of Nepal's masses.

Bhattarai draws attention to yet another datum. Perhaps because of his background in architecture, he has a searching eye for spatial arrangements. He points his finger at a riveting home-truth: not only is the long, thin territorial strip consisting of the Kathmandu valley and the lower Terai in the grip of the landed gentry: this class has spread its tentacles across the whole country. That is to say, apart from the standard phenomenon of inter-clan income inequalities, Nepal has to bear the cross of spatial inequalities, what many others would choose to refer to as regional inequalities. Trade, transport and commerce are also concentrated in Kathmandu and the Terais, partly because the latter region ensures a natural linkage with India. Tourism, including casino culture, suffers from a similar bias. Little of capital goods industry was developed in any part of Nepal. The consumption goods industries too are concentrated in Kathmandu and the Terais and therefore emerge as a further instrument of spatial exploitation. Bhattarai articulates yet another lament: whatever cottage crafts were once located in the outlying provinces have tended to disappear due to intrusion of Indian imports and import substitution mostly centered around Kathmandu valley: de-industrialization with a vengeance.

Poverty in Nepal, it is hardly surprising, has grown exponentially. There are as yet no safety valves to take care of anger increasingly churning among the Nepalese peasantry and lower middle classes. Conceivably, this statement is only partly correct in the historical sense. In the early phase of post-1950 era, the Nepal Congress Party and the Koiralas provided some hope. However, as the decades succeeded one another, both got gradually assimilated into the ruling class. For a while, radical presence from the middle classes, exemplified by the Pushpa Lals and the Sahana Pradhans - who too had earlier taken shelter in India and were proximate to communist formations - offered a second layer of hope. Things are moving fast and the generation of the Prachandas and the Bhattarais is apparently outflanking the senior radicals. On paper the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) has larger membership roll than the Maoists have. The ground reality in the villages tells a different story though. At least this conclusion seems legitimate in the light of the extent of hold the Maoists have been able to exercise in the remote provinces.

Some quarters would love to look at the Nepal dilemma through the prism of a China-India face-off. It is hardly so. The Maoists have not as yet succeeded in attracting much sympathy from the Chinese Communist Party. As of now, China has other preoccupations. At the same time, part of the tilt of ordinary citizens towards the Maoists must be on account of the strong relationship, whether real or

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imaginary, between elements of the royal household and the Nepali Congress on the one hand and Indian ruling groups on the other. Metropolitan capital to the Nepalese is, for all practical purposes, Indian capital; the paradigm of British colonial hegemony has faded into oblivion. Bhattarai's book has many theorizations, some ingenious and some not so, concerning the penetration of north Indian capital into the land-locked country and the material and moral havoc it has rendered. One does not necessarily have to agree with each of these propositions, but India's anxiety to keep Nepal out of China's sphere of influence has had several deleterious consequences. Add to this the other indubitable fact that the ingress of north Indian finance has the marks of footloose predatory capital, with insidious impact on the terms of trade between the two countries.

The intrinsic merit of *The Nature of Underdevelopment and Regional Structure of Nepal* is somehow diminished by Bhattarai's fondness for ideologically tilted terminology. One wishes there was another, shorter version of the book with the hieroglyphics rendered into simple everyday language, so that it could have a wider reach amongst the struggling masses in Nepal. Others who should read this book are the mandarins in the Ministry of External Affairs at South Block, New Delhi - and, in addition, the cloak and dagger retinue in the Ministry of Home Affairs who love to flog the thesis that the Nepal Maoists too are a constituent of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence.

Read

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