

As we go to press end November, the class struggle in Nepal is becoming even more acute. Starting on 10 November 2002, a three-day nationwide bandh or general strike under the leadership of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) paralysed the capital Kathmandu and the increasingly few areas of the country still in the hands of the reactionaries. Right after the bandh was completed, at 10 pm on 13 November, simultaneous military offensives of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) took place in Khalanga, the headquarters of the Jumla district, and at a police post in Takukot in the Gorkha district simultaneously.

In Khalanga, the fighting went on for seven hours as the PLA kept 1,000 soldiers of the Royal Nepal Army pinned down in their barracks. 33 enemy were killed, including a number of officers. The Kathmandu press claims 55 PLA soldiers were killed by two night-vision-equipped helicopters.

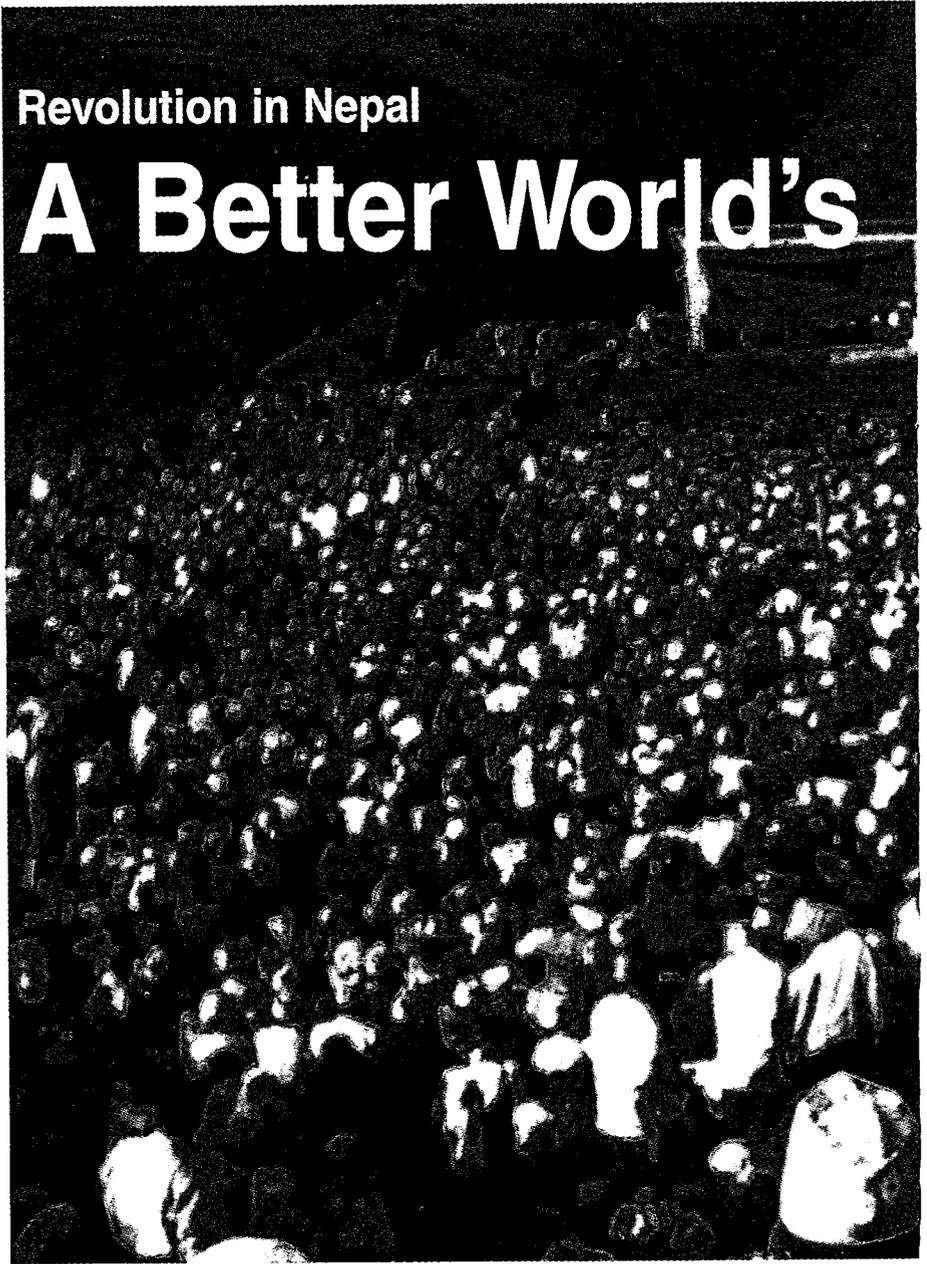
The Gorkha district in central Nepal is only 95 kilometres from Kathmandu and the birthplace of the monarchy. In the police post in Takukot, the security forces were defeated, of whom 26 were killed in a one and a half-hour battle.

Reports from the Kathmandu press in late November also expressed alarm at the advances of the PLA in Eastern Nepal, openly bemoaning the loss of the Nepal government's prestige if the approaches to Sagarmatha (Mount Everest) were to fall into Maoist hands.

The parliamentary parties and the royal palace are bitterly divided as the Nepalese state staggers under the blows of the PLA and the reactionary political system is thrown further into disarray by the silent coup by King Gyanendra, who in October dissolved Parliament and dismissed the government. - AWTW

Revolution in Nepal

A Better World's



Mass meeting in a main base area of the People's War in Western Nepal

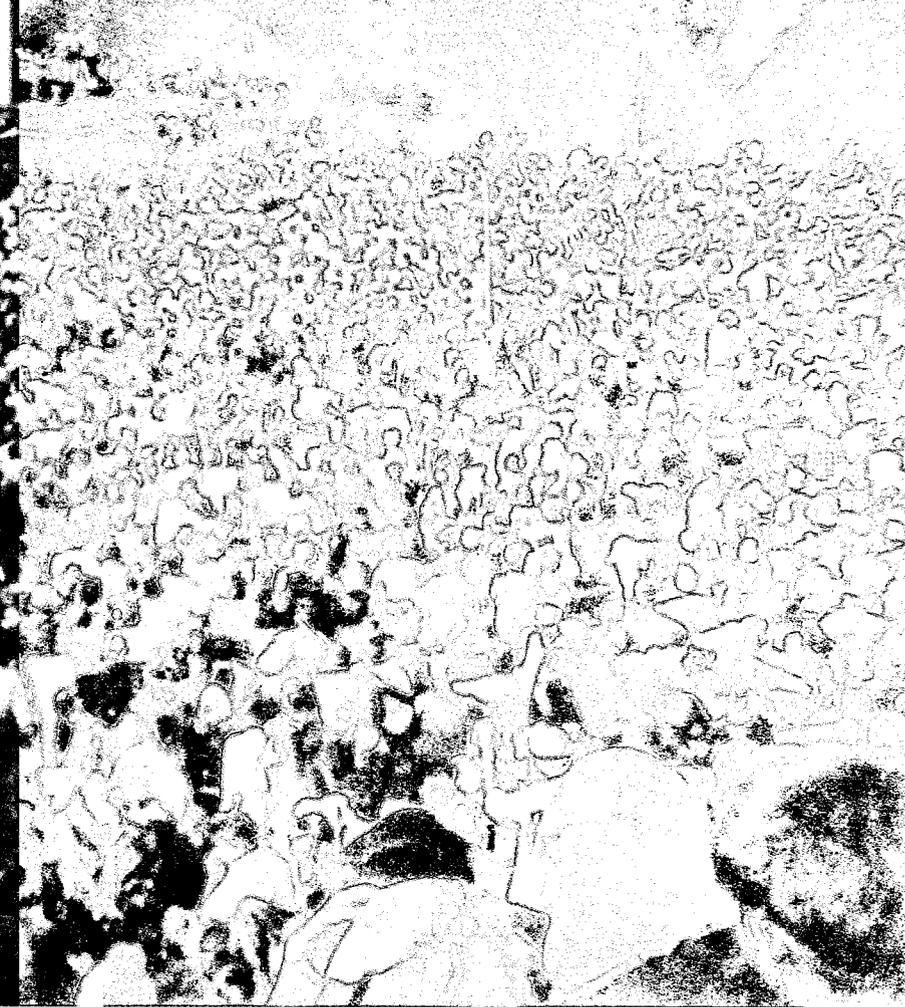
I. INTRODUCTION

The poor, the deprived and the downtrodden of Nepal, who have been waging a People's War for seven years to change the face of the country, are hoisting the red flag of revolution up onto the "roof of the world". This country, once known as a land for churning out mercenary soldiers for foreign armies, has now been transformed into a land giving birth to soldiers of the international proletariat. The women of Nepal,

fettered for centuries under feudal domination, have stood up and seized arms to take their destiny into their own hands, thus ushering in the twenty-first century. A country once simply known the world over as a haven for vacationers has now become a country of strategic importance for the imperialists as well as for the revolutionary people of the whole world.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (CPN[M]), an invaluable arm of the

in Birth!



Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM), an army of a new type, now called the People's Liberation Army, Nepal (PLA), has been developed and organised. In the course of fighting the enemy and uniting and mobilising the masses, it has now risen to the level of fighting in units of brigade strength (several hundred soldiers). In the face of this, the reactionary government has been forced to flee from large portions of the countryside where it could muster only small forces. Red

political power, where the masses are rupturing with centuries-old traditions, is blossoming throughout the width and breadth of Nepal, and the whole society is facing the fact that the revolution is advancing towards country-wide victory. All this in a world where the lack of a single country under the rule of the people is so desperately felt.

For centuries, life for the basic masses in Nepal had changed little. The economic and social relations of the country were shaped by Nepal's

dependence on India and the West. Its people serve as a reservoir of cheap labour for India, and its natural resources fuel the Indian economy. The country's natural beauty has made it an "unspoilt" panorama for Western tourists, who could gaze up at Mt Sagarmatha (Everest) and wonder at the lifestyle of a land seemingly bypassed by the chaos and turmoil of industrial life and all the money-grubbing, dog-eat-dog social relations so typical of modern capitalist societies. But this placid exterior harboured a life of wretchedness and misery for Nepal's people, whose labour was siphoned off into the coffers of feudal landlords, the Kathmandu elite and their Indian backers, and whose children were swept into a life of backbreaking toil, often as migrants to the lowest jobs in India.

The political system in Nepal was the appropriate shell for such a backward social reality. For several centuries a monarch had ruled over the feudal system. Decades of reform efforts since the 1950s had only made cosmetic changes and left the oppressive system intact. In short, Nepal stood in need of a democratic revolution to liberate its people and unchain its productive forces. As Mao Tsetung taught, in the era of imperialism it is up to the proletariat, represented by its vanguard communist party, to step to the fore of the people and lead in accomplishing this new-democratic revolution, which would not only clear away the medieval cob webs and dependence on foreign powers but would open the door for Nepal to advance toward socialism and communism as part of the world proletarian revolution.

On 13 February 1996, the CPN(M) dared to launch a People's War, a clarion call for a new future. It broke out in a carefully planned wave of attacks that swept the country, but that was belittled and scorned by the country's Westernised elite in Kathmandu. For several years, small units of scattered guerrilla forces agitated and organised in the countryside. Armed at first with primitive local weapons and an occasional modern rifle

seized from the class enemy, they fought skirmishes with the police forces and the bands of goons and thugs tied to feudal landlords who maintain the peasants in a state of submission. But the revolutionaries' programme of agrarian revolution and social, economic and political transformation won the hearts of increasing numbers of supporters and fired the minds of the youth, the women and the poor, and they steadily gained strength.

In the more than six years since, the revolution has made big leaps forward as it confronted and eventually defeated successive waves of counter-revolutionary repression and terror by reactionary goons and militarised police forces, and most recently by the government's Royal Nepal Army (RNA) itself.

The situation today, in Autumn 2002, is that the Kathmandu government has virtually no presence in the great bulk of the countryside. The armed forces of the old state have taken a series of major defeats, not only in the Western region, the stronghold of the revolution, but also in the Eastern and Central regions.

Outside the capital of Kathmandu, the RNA controls little but its barracks in district headquarters and some parts of the Terai region, a fertile plain lying along the southern border with India. Ten million people live in areas where red power dominates, out of a total population of 23 million. The ruling elite is torn between despair and vengeful fury.

Politically, the enemy is isolated and crisis-ridden. The strength of the revolution has prevented the Nepalese government from carrying out the elections planned for November 2002. As this article is being prepared, King Gyanendra has dismissed the prime minister and essentially taken power into his own hands, thus rolling back even the meagre reforms that had been granted to the people after the mass upsurge of 1990. Even in enemy-held areas, support for the revolution is manifested by massive participation in *bandhs* (general strikes) and other forms of struggle.

The future of Nepal is now poised

between the two headquarters: the capital city of Kathmandu, and the rural areas gathered around the revolutionary heartland, the western district of Rolpa. Nepal's traditional Indian and imperialist masters are stepping up their aid to the reactionary regime, in the hope that it can re-take the initiative. And, at the same time, the revolutionaries are mobilising the forces of the people for the coming decisive trials of strength. The outcome of these battles will have a profound impact not only on the country itself, but also on the destiny of the revolution in India and world-wide.

2. THE OBJECTIVE SITUATION

AN UNSPOILED PICTURESQUE LIFE — OR HARSH FEUDAL OPPRESSION?

Imperialism and feudalism have maintained the life of the Nepalese people in conditions that appear medieval in comparison with life in Europe. There are still tribes, the Raute and Kusunda, carrying out a nomadic existence in the forests and leading a life mainly dependent on hunting animals. The country's abundance of water stands in stark mockery of the people, who are forced to share drinking water with cattle in ponds where water collects from rainfall. In the countryside, women have to fetch water in jars or pots from the nearest river or spring, often up to three hours away, climbing up and down steep foot trails.

According to *The Worker*, the organ of the CPN(M), gross domestic product per capita in Nepal is 180 US dollars, the second lowest level in the world. About 70 percent of the population live below the absolute poverty line. The country is desperately poor as a whole, but it is further scarred by class polarisation and inequality. Ten percent of the population gobble up 46.5 per cent of the national income and own 65 per cent of the cultivable land.

The situation of Nepal's women is especially oppressive. Daughters are virtually marginalised from education, they are not the heir of the family property and are obliged to

handle household life. Some are married even before the age of thirteen. The general life expectancy of the Nepalese is only 56 years, but the life expectancy of women, who hold up "half the sky", is even lower. Nepal is one of the few countries in the world where a woman's life expectancy is less than a man's — a stark reflection of the weight of patriarchy. Huge numbers of women die in childbirth, and many children die of malnutrition, cholera and influenza; the infant mortality rate is more than 75 per thousand, about 10 times the rate of countries like Japan and Sweden.

Modern health care in the countryside is almost non-existent. Only a few villages have medical outpost facilities, let alone hospitals. In most of the villages a sick person has only two choices: either get better by themselves by using herbs and the methods of traditional healers, or face an untimely death. Malaria, typhoid, cholera and tuberculosis are prevalent. Because of the commercialisation of health care, health treatment is very expensive in the major cities, and even the Nepalese middle class find it very difficult to afford medication. Nepal has a very low literacy rate; according to government data, the rate is less than 50 percent, and an educated youth has to go to India or other countries for a job opportunity. (Data obtained from *The Worker* number 3, 1997; the Third UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Nepal Country paper, Brussels, 14-20 May 2001; *Encyclopaedia Britannica*)

The misery of the peasant lies in their daily life of simply gathering basic necessities and selling the herbals, ghee and fruits that they produce in the countryside. Some people in remote areas have to get necessities such as salt, black pepper, medicines and clothing from the market places, load them on their back, and carry them a distance of more than fifteen days of walking. Mules and horses are the basic means of transport in the hilly region. This kind of system makes the life of the people in these areas very expensive; for instance, the price of imported goods can be up

to fifteen to twenty times higher than in the market places.

The imperialists do not now and never have touted Nepal as an "Asian tiger". For decades they have looked indifferently on the suffering and impoverishment of the masses of Nepalese people and maintained the country in the conditions of an undeveloped "backwater" Third World country.

**A COUNTRY IN CHAINS
TO INDIA AND THE WEST**

These bitter conditions of life reflect Nepal's position within the global imperialist system. Most fundamentally, Nepal has been heavily dominated by India for generations. Several million Nepalese migrants work in the worst, lowest-paid jobs throughout India's cities. Most of them are young or middle-aged males, ordinarily a key source of growth for a country's economy, but their labour is now harnessed to serve the wealthy of India. This also partly explains the particularly harsh conditions faced by Nepal's women, for they are left on their own at home to tend small farms and raise the children.

Nepal is also a source of raw materials for India, such as timber, and in particular provides it with massive amounts of cheap hydroelectric power. Nepal has the third largest hydroelectric resources in the world, after Brazil and China, but these have not been developed for the masses of people, large numbers of whom live by the light of firewood and in some places paraffin lamps. Ironically, then, the country does not have the power it needs, and in the cities and villages where an electric supply does exist, powering radios and TVs is considered a luxury.

Nepal is also a captive market for Indian goods. Indeed, the so-called 1950 "peace and friendship treaty" between Nepal and India ties the hands of the Nepalese people and prevents them from establishing and developing national industry. According to the treaty, all industrial production needed by the Nepalese people should be supplied from

India, keeping Nepal a safe market for Indian goods.

Western tourism is one of the country's most important sources of foreign earnings, alongside the remittances from Nepal's other main export, the labour of its young people in India. Yet the vast majority of what is spent on the heart of its tourist attractions, namely mountain climbing in the Himalayas, goes into the pockets of Western middlemen (as much as 90 per cent of the cost of a climbing expedition), not into the economy of the country itself.

The Indian ruling class has made several secret treaties with the Nepalese ruling classes that make the country heavily dependent on India even for its national security. According to a treaty in 1965, India is to provide the weapons and munitions needed by the Nepalese army. If India fails to provide any arms, Nepal must purchase them only from third countries recommended by India.

All these treaties have strangled economic growth, and especially a self-reliant economy. Plainly, the intention of the Indian ruling class is to treat Nepal as part of India under the pretext of a treaty of equality and friendship, and to subjugate the Nepalese people by controlling arms and industry. In short, Nepal, under Indian domination in the imperialist global set-up, is designed to continue in abject poverty, with no development and no education, and wholly reliant simply on the tourism brought in by the country's beautiful landscapes and on the export of its youth.

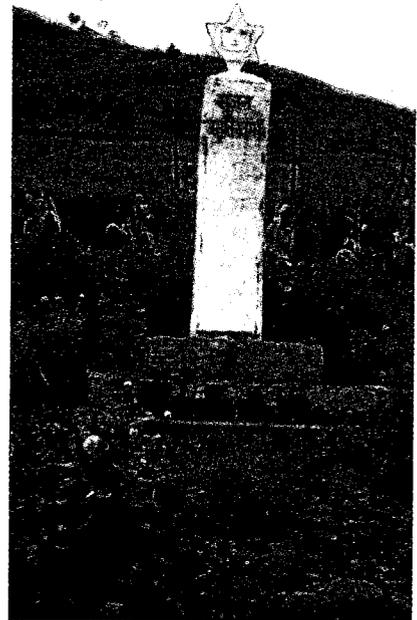
**THE INTERNAL CHAINS
SHACKLING THE PEOPLE**

Nepal is a multinational multilingual country, but it is dominated by the Brahmin and Chetries castes, whereas the national minorities known as *janajatis* (collectively the majority of the population) have been living under class and caste domination, plunder and humiliation. These upper castes have grabbed most of the fertile lands in the valleys and the more prosperous Terai regions, as well as most government posts

and most of the important trades and enterprises. The quality of the Nepalese land is divided into four kinds: the best (*abbal*), better (*doyem*), good (*sim*) and normal (*char*). Most land of *abbal* and *doyem* quality is controlled by the landlords. The peasants hold *sim* and *char* quality.

Nepalese rural society is divided essentially among landlords, rich peasants, middle and lower-middle peasants, poor peasants and landless peasants. Because of the semi-feudal relations of production, a lower-grade Nepali landlord may have barely as much wealth as a jobless European who simply enjoys reliable social security. A Nepali landlord generally is a person with more than enough land to survive, and his own house, cattle and fowl for fertilizer and food, and he does not himself work in his field or tend his cattle. A rich peasant is someone who has two yokes of oxen (4 oxen), cattle and fowl for milk and meat, as well as for fertiliser, and works in the field partly with hired labour and partly with shared labour (where people aid each other, particularly with seasonal work), and employs a servant in the house. Middle and lower-middle peasants are those who have one yoke of oxen, land enough to share labour, and production from the land is scarcely enough to eat for a year. The poor peasants are those who have a small plot of land with no cattle, and the production barely yields food for half the year or so. He does not share his labour but sells it. The landless peasants sell their labour all the time, and the life of the family amounts to a form of bonded slavery.

Because of the semi-colonial relations of production and Nepal's dependence on India, there is little industrial production. The handful of industries that have been established by the multinational companies and Indian bourgeoisie, with the collaboration of the Nepalese comprador capitalist class, mainly consist of alcohol spirits, wine and drug companies. These companies are often set up to make profit from cheap child labour. The bulk of the industrial goods that are stamped "made in Nepal", such as watches,



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radios and televisions, are not actually manufactured in Nepal itself, but are assembled from parts imported from India, Japan and other countries.

As a hybrid of feudalism and comprador capitalism, bureaucrat

capitalism has developed and put down deep roots in the society. This bureaucrat capital has brought the people under the yoke of many-sided exploitation. For example, if a peasant wants to start a poultry farm, he has to bribe the government official

concerned, as well as the industry concerned. Similarly, in many cases bureaucrats in the land registration offices can be bribed to transfer the title of a peasant's land to a landlord. In the particular situation of Nepal, where there is no full-time



TOP LEFT: On the eve of declaring people's government in Shankhuwa Shabha district, Eastern Nepal.

BOTTOM FAR LEFT: People's Liberation Army company carrying out military exercise before the masses. In District Tehrathum.

BOTTOM LEFT: Martyr's memorial Pillar at Thawang in Rolpa.

TOP RIGHT: Collective farming in mid-west Nepal.

BOTTOM LEFT: People's Liberation Army in the higher reaches of the Himalayas.



production work in any sector, a landlord simultaneously is an industrialist, a parliament member or minister, and a bureaucrat capitalist. Similarly, a peasant is a farm worker, an industrial labourer and a labour-seller.

This old rotten society, a prison house of different nationalities, is protected by the reactionary state power, by the force of the police and army and by the system of reaction ary rules and laws.

3. THE PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE (A BRIEF OVERVIEW)

CRISIS IN THE PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM: THE FALL OF THE ABSOLUTE MONARCHY

In 1990, a great mass uprising against these oppressive conditions arose in Nepal. This was the outcome of a long-standing struggle against the feudal monarchy, which grew

much sharper in the 1970s and 1980s. Before 1990 all political parties were outlawed under the feudal Panchayat system, in which the country was run by councils of notables known as panchayats, with the king as the ultimate authority. The upheaval of 1990 finally forced the ruling classes to accept changes to the ruling system, and a parliamentary system was re-established. The Nepalese people expected that after the re-establishment of the parliamentary system they would have a better life. Highways would reach to the niches and corners of the country, houses would be electrified, the sick would get medicine, and overall the country would be developed. The people's miseries would be eliminated. Their children would get an education and better jobs. Moreover, the livelihood and living conditions of the people would be guaranteed by the new government. People expected the abolition of the many forms of social injustice, such as the unequal position of women and their oppression, caste oppression, the subordination of national minorities and the discrimination against them in government services. With the new government, people hoped that corruption and nepotism would become things of the past.

Yet the many ills of Nepalese society became even worse, bitterly dashing people's hopes and expectations. Despite tremendous struggle and sacrifice, the establishment of the parliamentary system ended up being merely a change of regime. The downtrodden people found that these "changes" came to no more than "old wine in a new bottle". The social system and social relations were the same as those under the previous regime, and the many forms of exploitation, oppression and backwardness remained in place. Establishing a parliamentary system, even one in which there was one of the broadest ranges of political forces in the world, could not bring about the new-democratic revolution that Nepal so urgently needs. It failed to break with imperialism, it allowed the monarchy and Royal Army, the backbone of the state, to remain intact and it failed to bring about agrarian revolution, and thus preserved semi-feudalism. In other words, there was no change in the class character of the state or society.

Since the establishment of the parliamentary system in 1990 and the first elections in 1991, Parliament has failed to address the problems of the people. A political tug-of-war has ensued between the main rival parties to seize power for themselves. All the parties in Parliament are engaged in a marathon competition, with a view to ripping off the people. With this motive, they are all busy hatching conspiracies to outmanoeuvre and overthrow each other. Unbridled and extremely hideous forms of corruption and nepotism are rife in the government. Moreover, blatant and ruthless suppression of legitimate protest and opposition goes on unchecked. In the meantime, questions relating to nationality, democracy and livelihood are at stake.

Furthermore, on the southern border India has continued to interfere in Nepalese domestic affairs, and increasingly encroached in the economic, political and even geological spheres. Parliament, instead of addressing these questions, revealed

itself to be merely a rubber-stamp. Successive governments in Nepal were neither willing nor able to abrogate the one-sided treaties securing Indian domination. Moreover, they have been more and more inclined to serve as puppets of the Indian ruling class, thereby betraying the people. Amidst the strong protests of the people, the Mahakali Treaty was negotiated and signed with the Indian government in 1996, whereby the Mahakali water resources were handed over to India. In fact, the forces that went on to form the CPN(M) criticised the tripartite conspiracy of the King, the Congress Party and the so-called Left Front, but the people were presented a shimmering mirage by domestic and foreign propaganda. As events proceeded in the country, and a growing number of people have come to realise the facts, this mirage has evaporated. In the course of these developments, the Maoists have been constantly and consistently leading the masses of people through a series of political struggles to unveil these conspiracies.

Despite the new parliamentary façade, the government viciously suppressed its opponents. Hundreds of people who protested against the government's position were arrested, tortured and imprisoned. In 1993, three people were killed in Kathmandu protesting against the government. On the whole, the notion of the democratic process has become reduced to dropping ballot papers into ballot boxes. While the regime, from time to time, prepared data to show miraculous economic growth, the country became ever more impoverished, and the livelihood of the people deteriorated with each passing day.

Some people have asked why the parliamentary system failed in Nepal. They spontaneously come up with the answer that the young democracy has not sunk its roots deeply enough. But the more this so-called democracy sinks its roots, the more it carries out plunder, repression and country-selling, and the more it generates crisis. Nepalese revolutionaries witnessed how, just across the border, Maoist China

brought about major, undeniable improvement in the people's living conditions and, step-by-step, reduced the crying inequities that had marked that country. In the decades of existence of socialist China, it showed how millions of poor and oppressed could seize power and stand up to imperialism. And after the coup d'état that put Deng Xiaoping in power, people have also seen that socialist China is no more, and that under bourgeois revisionist rule the Chinese people are once again experiencing the misery of capitalist exploitation. Across the other border, the world's "largest democracy" exists in India. People have seen the misery of the people there, the plunder of the Indian bourgeoisie and great mass upheavals time and again. Where is parliamentary democracy successful? The reactionary ruling class relies on the method of holding elections to sink the roots of their "democracy", but all this amounts to is giving a licence to the reactionary bourgeoisie and feudal autocrats to sell the country, to allow them to plunder and suppress the people even more.

A NEW FUTURE DAWNS

In a situation that was thus marked by the growing discontent and disillusionment of broad numbers of people with the "peaceful road" of change so beloved of liberal theoreticians, and where the conditions of life of millions called out urgently for dramatic change, the Party carried out the preparations needed for the bold step of launching the highest form of revolutionary struggle: armed warfare.

The CPN(M) initiated the People's War in Nepal (1996) in a quite different way to those initiated by proletarian vanguard parties in other countries: it led many thousands of people in unleashing a wave of uprisings. The first targets of attack were the representatives of feudalism, comprador-bureaucrat capitalism and the organs of the state power. Around 5,500 large and small-scale actions were carried out against the enemy in this initial wave. This triggered a great political

debate amongst the different classes, and amongst intellectuals and political parties inside and outside Parliament. Immediately after these actions, the enemy resorted to increased police suppression of the people: country-wide arrests, mass murders and all sorts of atrocities. (For more on the developments leading to the launch of the People's War and the first year of warfare, see AWTW 1996/22 and 1998/23.)

With the initiation of the People's War the political landscape underwent a sea change. Initially the enemy became perplexed, not knowing how to deal with the new situation, but circumstances gave them no time to pause and think. The more the People's War developed, the Parliament fell more into crisis. The people's guerrillas constantly harassed the reactionary police forces. The enemy's agents and the rural gentry were being driven out of the villages, first in the hilly regions, and especially in the more backward Western portion of the country. As the police forces weakened, the government of the Nepali Congress Party let loose its vigilantes, and armed them to kill people. Some of these hoodlums set out to loot the people's property, rape the women and spy on the Maoist revolutionaries so as to set them up for ambushes. These armed thugs then tried to turn around and attribute their foul deeds to the revolutionaries. Yet when the Maoists punish these criminals, the ruling class propagates that the Maoists are killing "innocent civilians". The Maoist-led guerrillas seized the arms of these vigilantes, and first tried to force them to cease their activities by taking punitive actions against them, warning them against continuing to prey on the people. Some die-hard reactionaries who were involved with the police in arresting and killing people and who persisted in their actions despite warnings were annihilated.

As the People's War continued to advance, the activity of these vigilantes increased, and the government unleashed police commandos in order to carry out even greater suppression, broadly targeting revolutionary

supporters and sympathisers. The revolutionary forces conducted a campaign to "make the elephant blind". This means destroying the "eyes of the elephant", which in fact meant the Nepali Congress Party-run vigilantes who were the eyes of the police commando "elephants". Reducing the activity of these vigilantes gave the revolutionary armed forces greater freedom to fight the police commandos.

The people's armed forces intensified their military assaults on the weak links of the enemy, mainly the less fortified police posts. This was advantageous politically, as the enemy could be pushed into a tactical defensive position, and thence from the tactical defensive to the strategic defensive. This means, as Mao put it, tactically pitting "ten against one" and strategically "one against ten". While the people's forces were and remain outnumbered by the enemy on a nation-wide level and thus have to pit "one against ten" in an overall strategic sense, it is possible to concentrate an overwhelming superiority tactically to wipe out enemy concentrations ("ten against one"). To accomplish this, larger and larger units of the people's forces were developed, first by bringing together three platoons (about 30 soldiers) to make a company (100-strong) and later three companies to make a brigade. A battalion, made up of three brigades, or about 1,000 soldiers, was first seen in the fighting in 2002. Some of these larger formations are permanently constituted, while in other circumstances the larger groupings are maintained only for the period of a specific campaign. As a consequence of applying the strategy and tactics of revolutionary warfare, the enemy was compelled to reduce its police posts to a limited number of big stations. In Rolpa, for instance, a total of 39 police posts were reduced to eight. In the adjacent Rukum district twenty-nine police posts were merged into six. Similarly, in the Jajarkot district (also in the Western stronghold) 15 police posts were reduced to six. And so on throughout the country. At the same time, the

enemy was losing political power at local levels, as government in these areas ceased to perform any role at all. These successful military actions against the reactionary militarised police force also cracked the morale of the police and the government itself, and led to many desertions among the rank-and-file of the reactionary forces.

Because of the anti-monarchy psychology of the Nepalese people, as well as deep-rooted social problems, economic backwardness and the unbridled corruption prevalent in the reactionary government, many police personnel fled during their training period. True to the reactionary character of the state, 83 police personnel were punished for seeking leave in the year 2000, and eight police inspectors were fined for refusing to go to the war zone. Similarly, two inspectors, relatively high-level officers, tendered their resignations.

The CPN(M) time and again called on the government to respect the Geneva Convention in dealing with prisoners of war. At that time, those captured by the Maoists were either released or convinced to take part in the great process of revolution. The Maoists captured a deputy superintendent of police, Thule Rai, who was released after three months in healthy condition. But when he went to report for duty in Kathmandu, the reactionary state arrested him and put him in a mental hospital. Having seen the differences between the reactionary and revolutionary state, and having begun to realise that the Maoist war is a war to liberate the people, there is a growing trend among police and army personnel to desert the government forces and join the revolutionary guerrilla army. Comrade Ramesh (from Rolpa) is one such martyr who left the Royal Army. He emulated the heroic deeds of his comrades and in the course of one such action fell in combat against the reactionary state.

The Party provides political argumentation for the military actions, and the armed assaults in turn enhance the political offensive of the revolution. Also, as Mao observed, it

is a law of war that the reactionaries try to provoke the revolutionary side to try to fight to the finish at one fell swoop. The reactionary state in Nepal tried to take this approach several times, and the party of the proletariat responded to these provocations by the Maoist way of fighting: luring the enemy deep into the red areas, encircling it and delivering deathblows at its weakest links.

In April 2000, the Maoist-led guerrillas successfully raided the Rukumkot police station. This police station was located in what the police believed was a very safe area strategically. It had a high-level military standard of fortification, and was a decisive outpost of the paramilitary, a commando force. The successful raid at this outpost was not simply a military victory, but also a crucial political victory for the revolutionaries. The enemy had been sure that this strong, well-fortified force, with its sophisticated weapons, would bring success in keeping up the morale of the reactionary police force. This successful raid by the guerrillas boosted the people's morale and dealt the enemy a serious blow, both militarily and politically.

The Congress government launched several operations against the people, but each time met with humiliating defeat. The development of the People's War was rocking the old state repeatedly, as the Party dealt the enemy ever-mightier blows, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The qualitatively higher level of actions, such as the destruction of the Rukumkot police post and the capture in September 2000 of Dunai, the Dolpa district headquarters, not only pushed the enemy into an extremely defensive position, but also drew the attention of the imperialist powers, the overlords of the Nepalese reactionary state.

The Party leadership analysed that a situation of stalemate between the two sides was emerging. But much greater challenges lay ahead. In particular, even though the militarised police had been mainly defeated and were being forced to stay holed up in their barracks, the revolution had not yet directly confronted the main



forces of the reactionary state: the Royal Nepal Army.

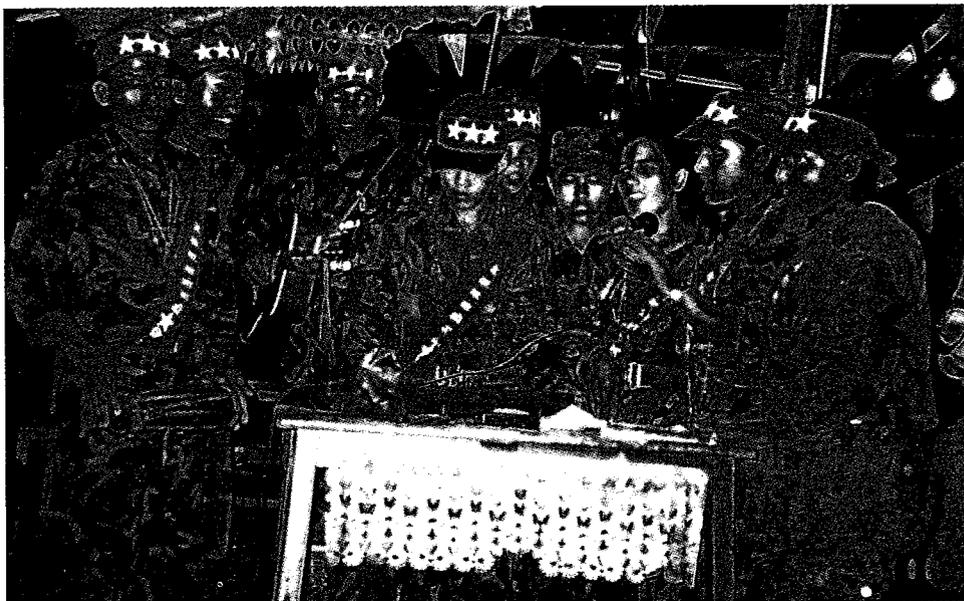
**RULING REGIME: BLOODY
INFIGHTING, MOUNTING ATTACKS**

US imperialism and Indian expansionism, as well as the domestic reactionary classes, were exerting pressure on the royal palace to mobilise the Royal Nepal Army against the people. But thanks to the internal contradictions within the palace and the power struggle between the palace and Parliament, the king at that time, King Birendra, did not unleash the army. King Birendra also held back from carrying out the genocidal policies advocated by many within the ruling class. There was an emphatic demand by the government and enormous pressure from the imperialists to deploy the army against the revolution. The palace permitted the army chief to put out a statement that the army would not be mobilised to quell the internal violence, but rather that it was the responsibility of the government to

deal with this using its police force. The army would act, but not to save its opponents in parliament. The ultimate motive of the palace was undoubtedly to regain the constitutional powers that it had lost in 1990.

The blows of the revolution, coupled with the intensification of the internal conflict among the reactionaries, led to yet another governmental crisis and the resignation of Prime Minister Girija Koirala. Amidst this internal turmoil and with a secretive conspiracy to crush the People's War brewing, the King, Queen and most of the royal family were massacred on 1 June 2001. The die-hard reactionary Gyanendra, Birendra's brother, took over a throne now devoid of all legitimacy in the eyes of the people.

With the palace massacre, the century-old feudal system of monarchy in Nepal virtually imploded. A class of comprador-capitalist businessmen, headed by the former drug-dealer, idle brigand and notorious bureaucrat-capitalist Gyanendra Shah, has emerged as the



FAR LEFT: People's Liberation Army perform at a cultural event. District Shankhuwa Shabha, Eastern Nepal.

LEFT: People's Liberation Army perform at cultural programme.

Bottom: Sherpas, a minority nationality, performing cultural programme at a mass meeting. They reside in high altitudes, including around the edge of Mount Everest.



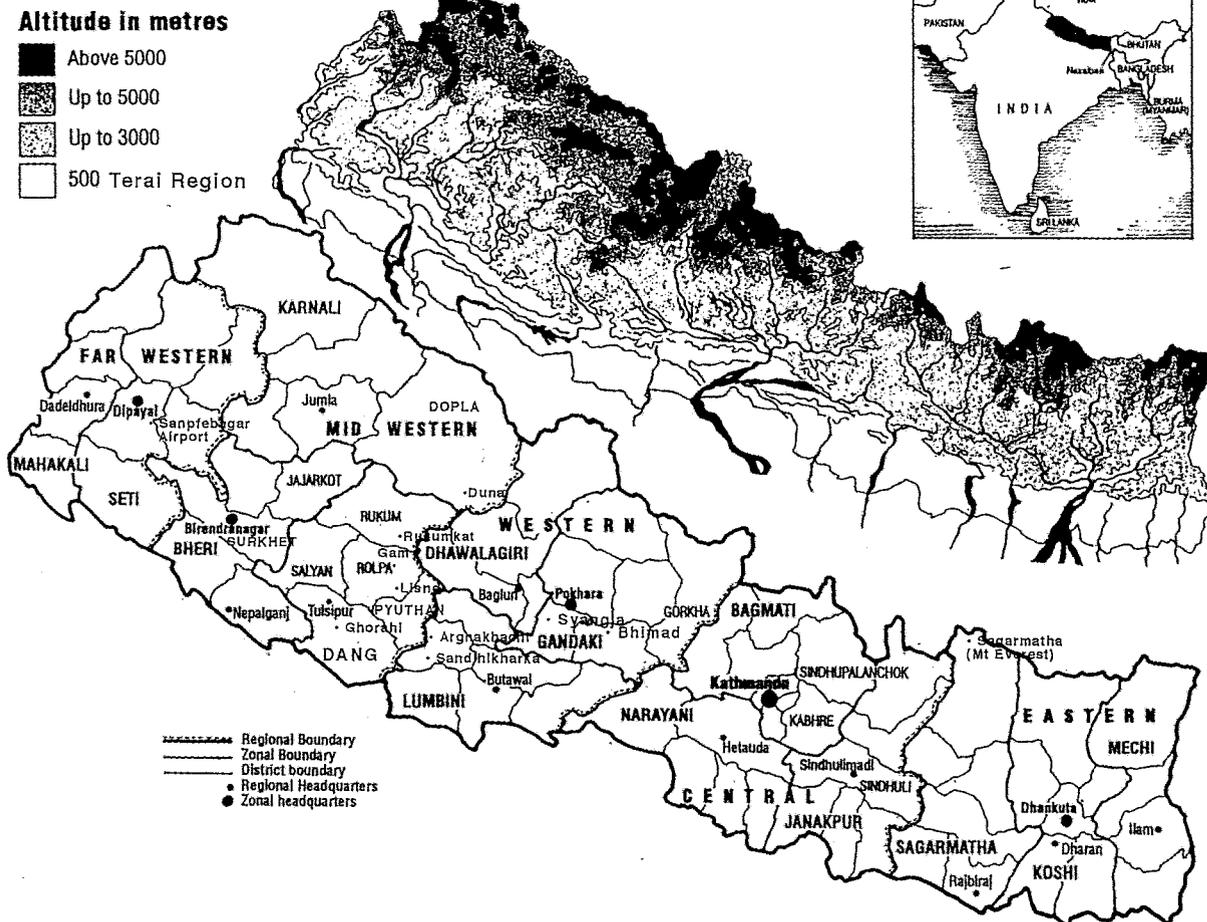
new rulers. Gyanendra Shah, who, for good reason, is believed to be the designer of the palace carnage, with the help of US imperialism and Indian expansionism, declared himself King of Nepal overnight. A large number of people took to the streets all over the country and denounced this suspected murderer, but the parliamentary political parties, including the so-called communists, haplessly stamped

their support for him. Indeed, one important source of support for the monarchy has been the revisionists of the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist), popularly known as the "UML", the largest of the revisionist "communist" parties in Nepal.

The great philosopher of the proletariat Karl Marx remarked that a forceful revolution engenders a forceful counter-revolution. And

indeed, shortly after the palace massacre, the capture of 62 armed-police personnel from the Holleri police post in July 2001 by the people's armed forces forced the Royal Nepalese Army to come out of its barracks. For the first time, the king's army was pitted directly against the guerrilla forces in a test of

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Nepal

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strength. The RNA was initially given a threefold mission: to rescue the 62 captured armed police personnel, to recapture the arms seized by the Maoist guerrillas and to disarm the revolutionary fighting force. The RNA not only totally failed in its mission, but also suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Maoists. However, none of the RNA personnel were killed in the fighting, though several were injured, and finally the Royal Army retreated with a promise that its troops would never attack the people on the orders of the regime. This battle indeed became symbolic of the struggle that was looming between the real contending rivals in Nepal: the RNA, the essence of the state power of the feudal

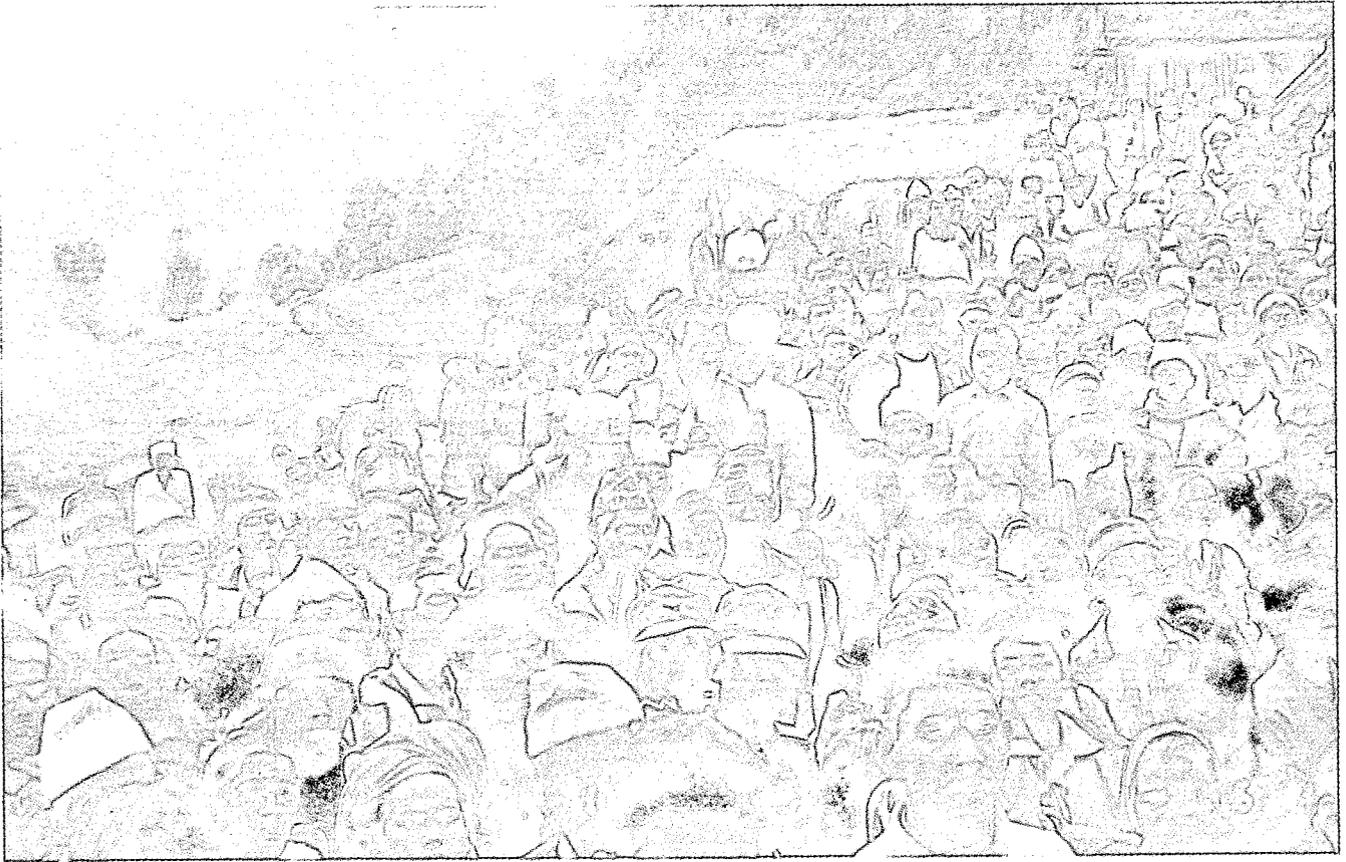
autocracy, with the king as its head on the one hand, and the revolutionary army, the backbone of the emerging red power, with the CPN(M) at its head, on the other.

NEGOTIATIONS INTERLUDE

The royal family massacre came at a crossroads in the revolutionary process in Nepal. The militarised police forces had been routed by the revolutionary armed forces and, as we have seen, the first engagement of the Royal Nepal Army had ended in fiasco. With the reactionaries in disarray, Gyanendra chose a new prime minister, Deuba, who ordered the government armed forces back to their barracks and called for negotiations with the CPN(M). The Party accepted this call and entered into several rounds of negotiations with

the government, while maintaining a ceasefire during this period.

The period of negotiations saw both of the contending camps carry out intense preparations for the resumption of hostilities. For the reactionaries it was necessary to try to install some order into their armed forces, which had been badly battered by the revolution and demoralised by the palace massacre. They also stepped up their efforts to procure modern weapons and foreign aid. The revolutionaries, too, used the ceasefire to accelerate their work and mobilise the masses in favour of the People's War throughout the country and step up their military preparations for carrying the war to a higher level. It was during this time that the armed forces under the leadership of the CPN(M) were organised on a higher level at a national convention in



September 2001, where the People's Liberation Army was formally founded. The revolutionary united front was also upgraded and consolidated by forming a central organising committee, the United People's Revolutionary Council.

The Party felt that participating in the negotiations was necessary to win the battle of public opinion with the enemy. The CPN(M) believes that this front of struggle is one that any successful revolutionary force is likely to face. Indeed, historically few reactionary forces have been able to win war against rebel fighters by military means alone. Yet when insurgents are brought to the table for talks they have almost always lost there. The great proletarian thinkers Lenin and Mao analysed when negotiating—or refusing to negotiate—would serve the overall advance of the revolution.

The CPN(M) believes that two wrong tendencies can emerge in relation to negotiations: one is the absolute rejection of all negotiations

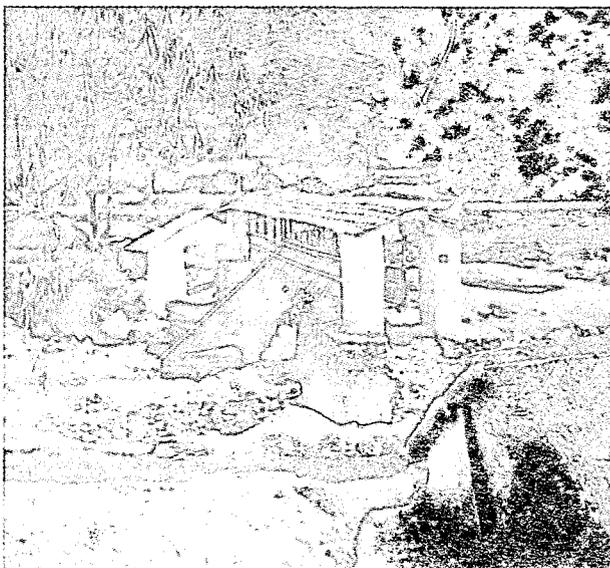
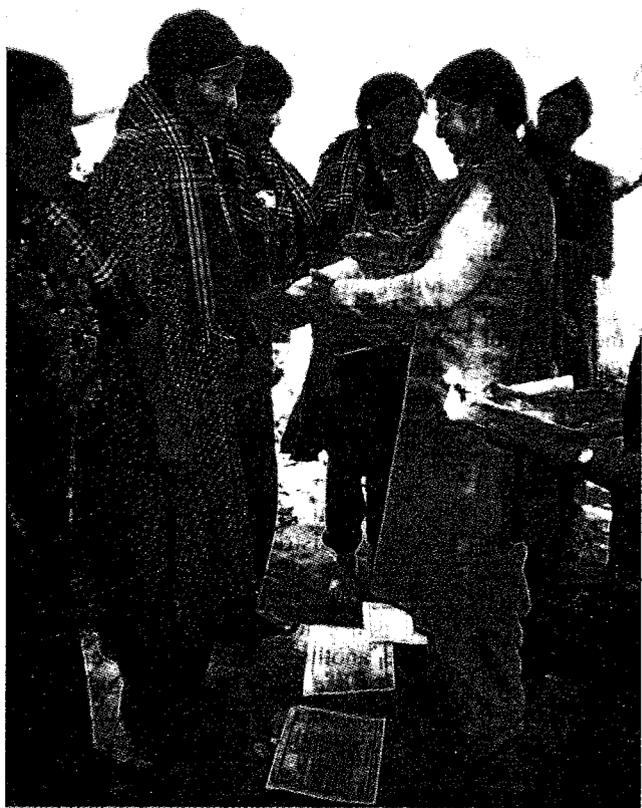
and the other is a capitulationist line. No revolutionary party can afford to compromise on party line, the people's army, the base areas or the political power the people have gained from the struggle. Mao Tsetung summarised that, "How to give 'tit-for-tat' depends on the situation. Sometimes, not going to negotiations is tit-for-tat; and sometimes, going to negotiations is also tit-for-tat. We were right not to go before, and also right to go this time; in both cases we have given tit-for-tat. We did well to go this time, for we exploded the rumour spread by the Kuomintang that the Communist Party did not want peace and unity." (Mao Tsetung, "On the Chungking Negotiations", *Selected Works*, Vol. IV). Also see AWTW 1995/21 for an elaboration of the thinking of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement on this subject.)

In Nepal, the enemy's aim has always been to liquidate the revolutionary movement. To this

end, it time and again calculates how it could attain the upper hand, the means of taking the initiative to destroy the Maoists; whereas the tactic of the Maoists is to isolate the enemy to the maximum degree, keep the initiative in the hands of the people and fight the enemy tit-for-tat. People in the revolutionary movement the world over are closely following and struggling over this experience.

A NEW INITIATION

In late 2001-early 2002, the situation changed dramatically. Having concluded that the enemy had been exposed and isolated and that prolonging the negotiations would serve no further purpose, the revolutionary forces struck hard at three district headquarters. One of them, in the Dang district, was not only the location of an important army barracks, but also where the Royal Nepal Army stored the armaments required to carry out operations



FAR LEFT: The masses gathered for a people's court.

LEFT: Five women who made a daring escape from prison by tunneling underground.

ABOVE: Bridge built to connect Rolpa and Rukum.

Below: Mass meeting on the day of declaring people's government. Shankhuwa Shabha district, Eastern Nepal.

throughout the Western region (where the revolution has been the strongest). Three district headquarters were attacked after the CPN(M) notified the reactionary government of their withdrawal from the negotiations. The headquarters of the Syangja district of the Central region came under attack at 10:00 hours. In Ghorahi, the Dang district headquarters, the attack began one hour later, so the enemy was already on alert. The Dang action was a complete success and electrified the whole country. The following is an account received from comrades in the CPN(M):

"There were 175 enemy soldiers and 30 additional well-trained commandos (205 in total, including officers). The forces led by the CPN(M) included one battalion, two additional companies and some platoons—a total of 1,335 from the PLA and 700 militia (more than 2,000 in all). The Dang headquarters included the RNA barracks, the office of the District Superintendent of Police



(DSP), a police station (*thana*), the Chief District Office (CDO, the main administrative office) and one armed police training camp, as well as a bank, a district court, a land registration office and all the other district-level offices. In the DSP office there were 150 armed forces; in the thana, 45; and in the CDO there were 35 armed personnel. We captured the whole thing. The enemy was alerted. In the Central region the attack began at a given time. The attack was one hour later in Dang, and the army headquarters had ordered them to be ready to fight, envisaging the possible attack by the Maoists. We attacked at 23:00 hours. The fighting took two hours. The major was killed. Sixteen others were killed. Seven comrades were martyred. The rest of the soldiers surrendered and were left alone—some fled.

“We captured enormous amounts. Previously, we had in mind to mobilise thousands of people to carry out the captured material. But it became apparent that this was not adequate. We used buses, jeeps, tractors and captured army trucks. There were a total of thirty vehicles to remove the material.

“Ninety-two self-loading rifles, 12 light machine guns, two heavy machine guns, five 81mm artillery pieces, three rocket launchers, three two-inch mortars, 48 sub-machine guns, 40,000 rounds of ammunition and nine 9mm pistols. A hundred and fifty bolt-action .306 rifles were also seized. And some weapons that we have not mastered yet. The vehicles could be driven some distance, after which it was necessary to carry out all the material either by people or by mules. All the captured vehicles and the material too heavy to carry were destroyed, although the enemy claimed with great fanfare to have recovered it.”

These unprecedented actions represented not only a clap of “spring thunder” for the people but also the opening of a new chapter in the country’s revolutionary history. Party comrades, looking back to the wrenching process the Party had gone through in 1996 when it took determination, daring and sacrifice to

initiate the People’s War, referred to this as “a new initiation”.

This new wave of struggle was also in keeping with the Party’s understanding that the revolution cannot stand still, that it will periodically be confronted with the need to accomplish new leaps or face the possibility of suffering a setback. The successful wave of attacks and the success in confronting the full fury of the Royal Nepalese Army represented another breakthrough and a great leap forward in the history of the Nepalese communist movement.

THE DEATH THROES OF A MORIBUND MONARCHY

After the collapse of the negotiations and the spectacular attacks by the revolutionary forces, the Gyanendra clique suspended many clauses of the so-called constitution and imposed a state of emergency. In the capital, progressive personalities were arrested, gatherings of more than two persons forbidden and people’s newspapers suppressed. Once the country-wide emergency was imposed, the new US-sponsored reactionary clique boasted that the Maoists would be finished off within three months. But the PLA, through several successful country-wide military operations, succeeded in putting the lie to this propaganda. In the last eight months of the state of emergency, and particularly in 2002, there have been bigger and bigger engagements between the PLA and the RNA. Through these encounters, the PLA has attained qualitatively higher achievements.

In the course of the seven-year-long war, development has been uneven in the different regions, and the state of advance is still uneven between the mountainous and the Terai regions. But overall, the People’s Liberation Army has been seizing the initiative both militarily and politically.

From the very inception of Gyanendra’s state of emergency, the enemy tried to encircle the main area of the insurgency in Western Nepal from three directions. It tried to invade from Baglung in the east and

from Dang and Salyan in the south. Likewise, it moved in from Surkhet in the west. The aim of this encirclement campaign was mainly to destroy the three revolutionary districts of Rukum, Rolpa and Jajarkot.

The RNA’s policy was to go into villages where the Maoist forces had been reported to be absent. It adopted the cruel and barbaric policy of killing people at random, that is, “one for ten”, and labelling the victims Maoists. This means that in order to kill one Maoist, the army kills ten people. Their reactionary logic is that if there are ten people, there must be at least one Maoist among them.

The People’s Liberation Army carried out a historic attack on Achham district headquarters and Sanfebagar airport on 16 February 2002 and destroyed the entire army and police force there. Similarly, it made another heroic attack on the Lamahi and Satbaria base camps of the reactionary army. These historic attacks pushed the reactionary regime further into crisis. The reactionary forces then retreated and turned to killing civilians again.

In May 2002, two other key battles took place. The comrades of the CPN(M) report:

“In Lisme our forces were concentrated according to the plan of capturing the district headquarters of Pyuthan. The enemy was alerted (when there are 2,500 people amassing it is very difficult to keep them from getting wind of it). They sent three companies, one from Pyuthan, one from Rolpa and a third from the base camp. They encircled us from three directions. So when we heard this we changed the plan; instead of attacking the district headquarters, comrades decided to confront the approaching enemy forces right at the battleground. We decided to divide our forces and take on each of the three attacking RNA companies. So we used the principle of fighting on interior lines to encircle them.

“Our forces discerned, by using communications sets, that the enemy was marching towards Lisme to encircle and smash us. One section of our forces chased the company that

came from Pyuthan. They fled and never tried to return. The remaining two RNA companies captured a nearby village. They ruthlessly cut a 10-year-old boy into pieces and raped the women. They forced one woman to show the route. When they were very close, the woman came running to us. The rapists were captured and punished with death according to the demand of the victim. So we encircled them in a U-shaped formation – it was 9:00 hours. The enemy fled and we chased them. They abandoned their uniforms and threw down their arms. The masses killed five escapees by throwing rocks. It also appears that, unknown to the PLA, there was one American advisor present among the RNA forces. It appears that he was among those who escaped by abandoning their uniforms and fleeing.

“The other attacking company also tried to flee, abandoning arms and uniforms and jumping into the streams. They were crying in the road about their failure. The masses were applauding and celebrating. Even we ourselves were not so clear at first about the magnitude of their defeat, because it is a remote area. Later on we found out the real situation. The RNA fled after only one-half hour of fighting.

“Right after the two days of the Lise battle, the PLA captured Gam, one of the best-fortified camps of the RNA. It seems that the fortification was prepared according to the plan of US military advisors. Most of the RNA forces were smashed and all their arms and ammunition captured. The RNA was badly demoralised after these two big defeats.

“The defeat of three companies of the RNA in broad daylight and the big defeat at Gam were considered by the Party as an example of a whole new stage of fighting in which, while guerrilla war remains a constant factor, the PLA has carried out mobile and also even positional warfare. This confirms the formulation of the Party regarding the present stage of the People’s War.”

Towards the end of August 2002, another important encounter took place between the RNA and PLA at

Chalabang Rolpa. In this battle, the Royal Army was completely defeated. Out of 500 RNA and 450 PLA troops, 13 army men were killed and seven guerrillas were martyred. In the first week of September, the CPN(M) launched a series of attacks. In the first, Sandhikharka, the district headquarter of Arghakhanchi, was totally destroyed, around 69 army and police were killed and hundreds were arrested. On the day before, a police station in Bhiman of the Sindhuli district of the Eastern region was raided and 59 police killed. All the arms and ammunition, including 60.1 million rupees, were captured by the PLA in these daring raids.

In the face of these developments, and in desperation, the regime has been carrying out campaigns, both politically and militarily, against the people. Politically, it enacted the Prevention and Punitive Ordinance against terrorism and labelled the Maoists “terrorists”. It suspended even the nominal rights of the people. Dozens of journalists and revolutionary, progressive and even non-progressive people were arrested or harassed. Krishna Sen, the revolutionary poet, artist and the editor of the well-known weekly *Janadesh* and the news daily *Janaahwan*, both closely connected with the CPN(M), was tortured to death in a government army camp. The aim of this blatant dastardly act was to prevent the Maoist message from reaching the people, to send out the regime’s message of “no mercy” for revolutionary supporters and to stop the people’s protests against the RNA’s brutality.

One of the reactionaries’ aims is to cut off relations between the Party and the people and “decapitate” the revolution. They hope to separate the people from the Party, capture activists, isolate the leadership and arrest and eliminate the leaders. For this purpose they have even placed a bounty on the heads of several dozen Party leaders, in the same “Wild West Wanted Dead or Alive” style as their model, US President George Bush.

At the same time, through their innumerable crimes against the people, they are trying to provoke the

People’s Liberation Army to engage in fight-to-the-finish confrontations. Under the sinister design of this war against the people, the RNA committed the heinous crime of chopping off the heads of a number of people and burying them in mass graves. Just as in Peru, they killed several political prisoners, who had been brought to Lamahi from different jails in the country, and also Maoist sympathisers from nearby villages. After killing them, the Army propagated that the Maoists had been killed in encounters. Having decapitated the prisoners, the RNA stuffed their heads into jute sacks and attributed these deeds to the Maoists, and fabricated that the Maoists had mutilated their comrades and friends in order to hide their identities.

In the countryside, the RNA avoids patrolling openly wherever it believes the PLA forces to be present. One high-ranking RNA officer, Dipak Gurung, admitted that the war against the Maoists would be protracted. This is because, according to him, if the 50,000-strong revolutionary militia converts into an army it will be very difficult for the RNA to achieve a quick victory. Nevertheless, the enemy keeps dreaming of victory against the people, till its final demise.

CRISIS REACHES NEW HEIGHTS

The resounding successes of the PLA on the battlefield have sent shockwaves not only throughout the Nepalese ruling classes but among their imperialist masters as well. The US and especially the UK, which has taken a front-line role in opposing the People’s War, stepped up their support for the embattled Gyanendra clique.

On 4 October 2002, Gyanendra invoked the Nepalese constitution and, clasping all executive power, dismissed the Deuba government and indefinitely postponed the national elections that were originally scheduled for November. This represents a rapid qualitative change in Nepalese politics. It puts a complete end to the nominal achievements of the Nepalese people during the course of the 1990 uprising. It has also unveiled

the mask of the UML revisionist clique, which is still working overtime to prop up the monarchy in Nepal.

Yet the more the enemy tries to clamp down on the revolutionaries, the more it provokes outbursts of resistance. This is a law of dialectics. After the enemy conducted Operation Romio, the Party succeeded in initiating the People's War. After they launched their Kilo Sera 2 operation, the revolution established guerrilla zones and afterwards base areas. And after they imposed a state of emergency, the strength of the Maoist forces reached the stage of strategic equilibrium. The enemy is bound to lift another rock only to drop it on its own feet – that is, the defeat of the state's intensified suppression could well lead the revolutionaries to declare a new-democratic revolutionary government of Nepal.

**ON THE STRATEGY BEING
APPLIED IN NEPAL**

One of the important characteristics of the People's War being waged under the leadership of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) is that it has been advancing by leaps and bounds successively, in a rapid motion. Yet the People's War is a protracted one, of the type propounded by Chairman Mao, which is applicable in countries with semi-feudal and semi-colonial characteristics like Nepal. Eighty percent of the population live in the countryside, and the production relations of the country are semi-feudal. Most of the people are dependent on agriculture. Because of semi-colonial relations, industrial development is lopsided and is integrated not with Nepal's native economy, but with the Indian and global imperialist economy. Another feature of Nepal is that the bureaucrat-capitalist class is the "hybrid" of the feudal landlords and the comprador-capitalist class.

The strategy of protracted people's war is to surround the cities from the countryside by establishing rural base areas, seizing power from the oppressor classes bit by bit, and finally seizing country-wide political

power. This process develops through three stages. The first is the strategic defensive, the second strategic equilibrium, and the third the strategic offensive. In the first stage it is necessary to go through guerrilla warfare, and, in the course of fighting, the people's army develops mobile and positional warfare. Similarly, along with the development of the strength of the new political power in the hands of the people, the development of the people's army advances to higher levels of formation, from the initial squads and platoons of the early years to the companies, brigades and battalions of today organised in the People's Liberation Army, which are concentrated so as to be able to fight large and well-armed enemy forces as the strategic stages of the war develop.

In the historic Third Plenum document of the CPN(M) Central Committee, which outlined the military strategy and tactics of the Nepalese revolution, it is stated that Nepal has its own particularities, which means that the development of the People's War also has to go through its own particular course. Many people had argued that in a small landlocked country like Nepal protracted people's war could not proceed and advance, nor could base areas be established. The CPN(M) outlined the characteristics of the country that are specific to Nepal, and, precisely because of these particularities, the revolution has advanced successfully. These specificities include a centralised feudal state power; favourable terrain, where large parts of the population live in remote areas with a weak government presence; the people's abject poverty; the widespread influence of communism and the revolutionary spirit among the people; and the fact that large numbers of Nepalese are employed in India, and have been exposed to revolutionary ideas and can act as a kind of rear support area. (This historic CPN(M) document is reprinted in *AWTW* 1998/23 and *The Worker* number 3, 1997.) The Party has determined that the principal contradiction in Nepal is that between

the people and the reactionary state, made up of feudalism and comprador-bureaucrat capitalism buttressed by imperialism. It was the representatives of these reactionary institutions that were the first to be targeted at the launch of the People's War, which gave rise to a nation-wide political debate.

From the very beginning of the People's War, the Party has stressed the interrelation between the political and military struggle, that is, when there is a military attack by the enemy, the Party not only must deal with the attack militarily but also may respond with political attacks, and when there is a political attack by the enemy, the Party may also respond with military attacks. In synthesis, military attacks are justified by the political, and vice versa. Indeed, "political intervention at the centre", by which the Party refers to its political initiatives at a country-wide level, is based on military attacks from below.

There are two basic strategies for carrying out the proletarian revolution in the era of imperialism, developed respectively by Lenin and Mao: the strategy of insurrection and the strategy of protracted people's war. Lenin applied the strategy of insurrection in Russia, which had developed capitalist production relations and a working class and where the main contradiction was between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The characteristic of insurrection is that the working-class leadership plans the strategy and tactics for insurrection, the working class and other sections of the masses take up arms and seize political power in certain centres, or seize power at the political centre, and then launch a civil war against the enemy throughout the rest of the country so that, by seizing territory bit by bit, the proletariat finally conquers country-wide political power. In the semi-feudal, semi-colonial countries, the characteristic of protracted people's war is that the proletariat seizes political power starting from the countryside by carrying out civil war from the very beginning.

The CPN(M) argues that in the present context of world

development, that is, the maximum polarisation of property through the International Monetary Fund, globalisation and structural adjustment programmes, the unhealable gap between rich and poor, the development of electronics and communications, and, along with the internationalisation of capital and the capitalist class, the internationalisation of the working class and the poor people, and in essence at a time when the whole world is squeezed into a small village, the application of a single strategy is not sufficient to make revolution in today's world. While the fundamental differences between the two basic kinds of countries remain, the CPN(M) stresses that it is necessary to incorporate aspects of the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary road in the imperialist countries into the overall strategy of protracted people's war applied in Nepal and similar countries, and vice versa. Thus, the Party has formulated this as the "fusion of insurrection and people's war".

The CPN(M) comrades are very aware that Nepal is a small country on the map of the world. Yet in the past seven years, since 1996, it has been a powerful attraction, rousing the hopes of the world proletariat, hoisting the red flag on the roof of the world and advancing as a base area for world proletarian revolution. In the age of imperialism and proletarian revolution, and in the twenty-first century, whether in a large country or small, no truly revolutionary force can be considered weak. As Mao put it, if we are fighting a just war, no matter how much bigger the enemy is, a small country or a small force can defeat a much larger enemy fighting an unjust war. The war in Nepal is an internationalist war, a war of the international proletariat.

**THE SITUATION TODAY:
STRATEGIC EQUILIBRIUM**

The defeat being inflicted by the revolutionary fighting force, the PLA, on the old state epitomised by the RNA, symbolises the victory of the people over the enemy. The

defeat of the government troops is simply the reflection of the defeat of the morale of the old state, caused by several "debacles" inflicted on the police and commando forces in their well-fortified, military-type camps. This situation has created a stalemate between the reactionary state and the revolution. This means that the People's War has leaped to a higher stage, to the balance of power between the Party and the enemy, from the stage of the strategic defensive to strategic equilibrium.

In June 2002, following an important meeting of the CPN(M) Central Committee, the Party released an important document that stated, "in spite of the uneven development in the People's War in accordance with the uneven state of development of the country, it has reached the stage of strategic equilibrium through the viewpoint of development of the People's War, and it is necessary to understand that it is making preparations for the strategic offensive through tactical offensives." This state of stalemate cannot remain static for long; the enemy will desperately try to regain its lost positions and the Party has to go on the tactical offensive to move over to the strategic offensive. This is a situation of equilibrium, a decisive turning point, in which the revolutionary and reactionary forces both try to shift the situation in their own favour and push the other side onto the defensive.

How have the Maoist revolutionaries arrived at an evaluation of the strength of the people and the enemy? And how have the Party and revolutionary forces reached the level of strategic equilibrium? Does it mean that the numbers of soldiers and amounts of armaments are equal between the Party and the enemy? No. The reactionary army still possesses greater strength in armed forces, and it still has a larger amount of arms. And as the People's War has advanced, the enemy has been receiving greater military support and financial aid from the imperialist forces from around the world. But the Maoist revolutionaries, despite fewer soldiers and armaments, are

exploiting their political and military supremacy on the ground. What is important to note here is the political power the Maoist revolutionaries have been able to create and sustain with the People's Liberation Army and the mobilisation of the masses of people. This power stands head-to-head with the power of the reactionary system. This is a crucial juncture in the revolutionary movement.

The fact that there is a strategic equilibrium in the war does not mean that the situation is the same everywhere in the country. The Party analyses that while the country as a whole is in an overall situation of strategic equilibrium, the reactionary army in the Western region is on the defensive and the revolutionary army is on the offensive both politically and militarily. In the Central region of the country it is still the reactionary army that is on the offensive, whereas in the Eastern region a kind of equilibrium prevails.

It is also important to note that the country is divided into three fighting zones, namely, the main zones, guerrilla zones and propaganda zones. The main zones are areas that have developed an embryo of red political power; the guerrilla zones are areas where the enemy concentrates its forces and where fighting, blocking operations and armed resistance take place; and the propaganda zones are areas where political propaganda, open, mass activities, and the mobilisation of the middle classes are the main forms of struggle in support of the People's War. The dialectics of successful actions in both spheres, armed attacks in the guerrilla zones and successful mass strikes in the propaganda zones, are enmeshing the enemy in a series of very difficult political crises. In the recent period guerrilla actions have become one of the main forms of struggle in the former propaganda zones. Urban guerrilla war is being carried out in the capital, Kathmandu, as a dress rehearsal for the future insurrection to seize country-wide power.

The CPN(M) is striving hard to break the stalemate by taking the war to a qualitatively higher level. The Party had long been weighted down

by the mechanical understanding prevalent in the communist movement that quantitative development automatically leaps over to qualitative development. "In the course of struggle against the reformist and evolutionary concept of development prevalent in the Nepalese Communist movement," Chairman Prachanda writes, "the Party did its bit specially to sharpen the science of development of Marxist dialectics regarding collision, rupture, leap and catastrophe". (*The Worker*, no. 6, page 10.) Experience has shown that further advances to new stages have required new leaps and new ruptures. The need for making these ruptures in the first place, and continuing to take qualitative leaps as the revolution progresses, is an important experience for a party in RIM, and the entire Movement is eagerly learning from the experience of the Nepalese comrades.

EXERCISING RED POLITICAL POWER

The growth of the people's power means the growth of red base areas. These represent the "bone marrow of the revolution", as Chairman Gonzalo of the Communist Party of Peru explained with regard to the People's War in Peru. As no enemy of the people could, or would, allow red base areas to flourish, likewise the Nepalese reactionary state tried to nip the People's War in the bud. But despite the enemy's wishes, the revolution has sunk roots ever more deeply among the masses of the people.

The concept of political power and base areas has been carried in the knapsack of Party cadres from the very beginning. As the police and armed forces were driven out of the countryside, people faced a new situation, where even the rudimentary functions of government had ceased to operate. Yet people need power to function, to organise the conditions of life and obtain their daily necessities. Hence, under the leadership of the Party, they set themselves the task of setting up new political bodies, which have become the embryo of red political power in

the countryside.

People's power means empowerment of the people, a combination of social, political and military capabilities to lead the day-to-day administration of life in the liberated areas, especially in the areas of administration, legislation and judiciary. The major tasks that the new political power has to meet include social security, development projects, and setting the framework for economic transactions among the villagers and their educational and cultural development, as well as politicising and militarising the people to carry on the revolutionary struggle. The CPN(M) takes a dialectical approach to the relationship between destruction and construction. The principal aspect during the current phase is indeed the destruction of the old state, and the construction of the new political power is secondary, but the latter too must be undertaken and is, in fact, essential to the advance of the principal aspect.

At the point of completing the fifth year of the People's War in 2001, the expansion and consolidation of the primary form of the base areas in different parts of the country gathered pace. Rukum, Rolpa, Jajarkot and Salyan are districts in the western region of Nepal where United Revolutionary People's Committees now openly exercise red political power and function as the main organs of administration. The major newspapers published in Kathmandu regularly cover news from these areas. Some of the People's Committees, which are popularly called the people's government, invited journalists from around the country to participate and report on mammoth open rallies. On 26 August 2000, the Korchawang village committee held a big open rally just three hours walking distance from Liwang, the district headquarters of Rolpa, where the Committee held a press conference the following day. The aim of the press conference was to make it known throughout the country that the People's Committees have been functioning as the embryo of the new-democratic government at local levels. These committees at local

levels carry out political, economic, social, cultural and educational activities and exercise coercive powers through organs like the people's armed forces, people's courts and people's jails. Advances in political power go hand in hand with advances in the war. Without developing military power, which is the core of the people's power, to qualitatively and quantitatively higher levels, consolidating these base areas and expanding them to relatively stable bases of the revolution would be impossible.

The People's Committees, which usually contain 11 members, are elected in general elections called by the Party on the basis of the three-in-one combination system. This is a form of organisation developed under Mao's leadership in China's Cultural Revolution, which brings together representatives of different sections of society. In Nepal this means a combination of representatives of the Party, the People's Liberation Army and other forces like democratic and nationalist personages and elements from the petite bourgeoisie who take part as representatives of various parties, such as local rebel cadres from Nepali Congress or the UML. In these elections, candidates, including independent persons, but also elements who supported and worked previously for such parties as the Rashtriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) and who go against the reactionary policies of their Party, as well as other forces, take part, and are eligible to be elected.

These committees run different departments. Some of the main ones are the administrative, economic, social, cultural, education and development departments. Administrative development, in general, takes care of legal activities, such as matters concerning land issues, business and financial transactions and issues relating to the people's court. Minimum rates for all types of goods are fixed for transactions.

One important aspect of exercising red political power in the base areas is providing for the people's security. Now that base areas have come into existence, the People's Committees run their own mobile

prisons and labour camps, where captured police personnel, corrupt administrative officials and arrested hooligans, vandals and vigilantes are held. While right now protecting the new society from these oppressors is the principal aspect of these camps, they are run on principles that stand in direct opposition to the torture chambers of the old society, and instead genuinely seek to transform the thinking of those held and teach them to become useful members of the new society.

**SELF-RELIANCE AND LAND
TO THE TILLER**

One of the key challenges the revolutionary forces face is that, while confronting the enemy on the battlefield, they must also restructure economic relations in order not only to provide for the needs of the People's War, but also to lay the foundations for a self-reliant economy that serves the people's interests. Doing this means rupturing with the economic relations that have shackled the Nepali economy and shaped it to the needs of the Indian market and the global imperialist system. This will prove impossible unless the Nepalese people are unleashed in this sphere to create new forms of economic organisation that not only support the further advance of the People's War today, but also ensure that a revolutionary Nepal could withstand a counter-revolutionary economic embargo or even outright invasion on the morrow.

At the heart of Nepal's economy is the land question. Most of the fertile land, the flat lowlands, is known as the Terai. These are the plains found in southern Nepal running east to west along the border with India. These and the valleys, including the inner Terai, have long been held by the royal family and its numerous relatives (the Ranas). Most of the rest of the land cultivated by the people has been grabbed by high-ranking bureaucrats. The Party's policy is to expropriate the land from these landlords and distribute it to the peasants based on the principle of "land to the tiller". In the course of advancing the People's War and

developing the base areas, most of the local feudal landlords have abandoned their land and fled to the cities. Some land is also captured directly from the enemy. All these parcels of land and other properties are turned over to the peasants, principally to the landless peasants, who have priority over others, and to the poor peasants, while the rest of the expropriated land is earmarked for co-operative production. This means that the production systems on these lands are established on a co-operative basis.

Along with the application of the co-operative farming method, the People's Committees have also begun to institute collective production. Villagers have settled for the collective farming system, and the "Juni Commune" has been established as a model of collective farming.

In the Western Terai region, most of the land is cultivated by the Tharus, a Nepalese community dwelling in the southern plains. The reactionary feudal landlords grabbed their land and made them bonded slaves, *kamaiyas*, on their very own property. Now these *kamaiyas* have stood up under the leadership of the CPN(M) and are struggling to overthrow landlordism and retake their land.

Just as this Terai movement was underway and reaching a high point, Parliament declared the "eradication of the Kamaiya Pratha slave system". But real change does not come from the banquet halls of the rich and powerful, nor did these gentlemen produce some magical plan. Without solving the problems rooted in the production relations of society, the problem of the Tharus cannot be solved. Merely abolishing the *kamaiya* system on paper without creating a viable alternative simply added new problems for the landless and homeless peasants. This reactionary attempt to sow confusion among the large majority of the Tharu people and divert them from the path of Maoist revolution completely failed, as the contradictions between the landlords and landless peasants continued to intensify. Currently, almost the

whole of this community is fervently rallying to the Maoist call of "land to the tiller", thanks to the correct handling of the land question, as well as the mass line of persistently politicising and arming these peasants.

Since the present task of the Party is to overturn the reactionary relations of production, the main thrust of production policy has been to develop a self-reliant economic system by mobilising all local resources. It is from this perspective that in the base areas small industries are being set up and supplied with the raw materials available in the countryside. Production is geared to meeting the immediate and basic needs of the people. In particular, these types of enterprise are mainly based on producing the materials needed for the people's army, as well as personal and household goods, such as caps, socks, gloves, sweaters, shawls, bed sheets, bags and paper.

Many problems are being looked at from new perspectives, in ways that were never considered before. The production of alcohol has now generally been banned, not only because it is associated with drunkenness and the abuse of women, but also because it consumes especially large quantities of grain. The first priority for grain is now feeding the people and the soldiers of the liberation army.

**"NO MORE TRADITION'S CHAINS
SHALL BIND US"**

The culture of the people is a very important factor in transforming and revolutionising society. Unless cultural revolution is carried out from the very beginning, it would be impossible to raise the consciousness of the masses and change their world outlook to a relatively equal wavelength with those of revolutionary activists. For this, the Maoist revolutionaries need to teach and mobilise the masses ideologically, politically and culturally from the very beginning of the movement, and most importantly right from when the revolutionary society has begun to be established. In this field, great changes are taking

place in the base areas. Revolutionary masses are breaking with the old, rotten and oppressive customs and traditions (such as arranged marriages and sexual harassment) and establishing new emancipatory practices. The long-prevalent taboos on widow remarriage, inter-caste marriage and love marriage are today being challenged and combated in the base areas of Nepal.

In the red areas, revolutionary festivals are superseding the old, reactionary festivals based on different religions. In Hindu tradition, there are innumerable religious rites and rituals. *Dasain* and the *Tij* were the major festivals that people celebrated before red political power was established. With the growing prestige of the revolutionary festivals, the celebrations of old festivals have sharply declined. People are abandoning these now and creating a new culture. The First of May, the day of the international proletariat, as well as the birth anniversaries of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao have become very important celebrations in the base areas. Similarly, the Historic Initiation Day of the People's War (13 February), Martyrs' Day and International Women's Day have also become very important days there. Having lost their old backward-looking cultures, the reactionaries have been ranting and raving that "women are being raised to the rooftops", that "the cordial relations of brothers and sisters are being shattered because the parents' property is being divided amongst them" and that "untouchable elements are being brought into the kitchen". Angered by these reactionary rants, the masses are hammering more and more upon the old social relations and practices until they are completely done away with.

More and more people are coming to understand that religion is the "opium of the people", as Marx observed, and moreover that Hindu beliefs ideologically and politically support the feudal monarchy. They are also beginning to see that all sorts of religious fundamentalist practices, especially those with inhuman char-

acteristics such as the breaking up of society into caste divisions, are reproduced and reinforced through religion. The Hindu religion is particularly cruel and cunning on this point. It holds that the misery and oppression of the downtrodden is punishment for sins committed in past lives, whereas the luxury and privileges of the upper castes is a reward for their past goodness. By nurturing such divisions, the exploiting classes have been perpetuating the downtrodden condition of the basic masses. Since the beginning of the People's War, and through the development of the base areas, the people have begun to cast away religion and rediscover the human race in themselves.

In the course of mobilising the masses, the fighters of the People's Liberation Army take part in production and politics, as well as in military activities. Whilst carrying out these activities, illiteracy is an enemy that needs to be eradicated in the course of the revolution. There have been adult literacy campaigns among the masses, as well as campaigns concerning health and hygiene awareness.

From the very emergence of this embryo of red political power in the countryside, the CPN(M) has paid serious attention to the rights of the national minorities. Hence, the principle of the right of nations to self-determination is applied. Wherever the national minorities (*janajatis*) have been living and the old state has been driven out, they now exercise power. So for the first time since power was snatched from them, that is, since the unification of the country into a single nation-state in the late eighteenth century, the people themselves are involved in building their own future. Indeed, *janajati* comrades play leading roles in Party affairs. From this practice, the domination of the Khash nation (the dominant caste group in Nepal, originally the inhabitants of the Khashan region of western Nepal) over the national minorities is beginning to be ended. The "three-in-one" combination, referred to above, is being applied in the People's Committees to build red political

power. The People's Committees are built on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance. Here, representatives from nationalist and democratic forces are active, as well as representatives from the Party and the people's army.

The CPN(M) has led in establishing people's courts in the areas of red political power. In the old society, people suffered at the hands of government officers and the feudal lords and their usury capital. Land belonging to poor peasants was seized by landlords, and many people were forced into indebtedness and misery. Even though the people have always known the truth – that the exploiters have been ripping them off – they were unable to utter a word against them, since the landlords used to enjoy complete state protection. Now, wherever power is in the hands of the people, injustices imposed by the reactionaries are being overturned through people's courts. In areas under people's control, peasants have been able to retake their land previously seized by the landlords, including by raiding and capturing the banks in which landlords had deposited their mortgage papers which had put them into lifelong servitude, and destroying those papers.

WOMEN THROW OFF THE FOUR MOUNTAINS

While Nepalese society has been dominated by three mountains of oppression – feudalism, bureaucrat-capitalism and imperialism – Nepalese women carry an additional burden, that is, patriarchy, or male domination. Furthermore, Hindu women of the so-called lower castes experience untold brutalities and immense social suffering.

Women in feudal society are absolutely denied property rights. Even in well-to-do or wealthy families among the bourgeoisie, holding property in the name of a woman is only occasional.

Women have to accept as their husband any man arranged by their parents. Child-marriage and the marriage of young women to much older

men is commonplace, both because Hindu custom allows this and because of poverty. Women are not allowed to divorce, but men can marry more than one wife. Widows are not allowed to re-marry, and they are obliged to serve their husband's family as slaves for their entire lives. But a man can re-marry if his wife dies.

In the base areas of the revolution, such unjust and unreasonable social practices have become things of the past. Since the establishment of people's political power, land entitlement is granted to women as well as men. This has shattered one of the major fetters on women, which has forced them to lead lives of absolute subordination and servitude to their men and hence to society at large. As this process is initiated, many women have gained enthusiasm and the strength to demand and attain social respect. This is one of their biggest social achievements, along with actively taking part on the political and military front. This is an accomplishment borne out of Nepalese women's active participation in exercising red political power and through their passionate involvement in the People's War.

The participation of women in the Party, the People's Liberation Army and the new political power has increased with each passing day, and to ever-higher levels. Growing numbers of women have begun to organise themselves into the Maoist-led armed forces. Armed with Maoist ideology and guns in hand, they have unleashed their fury against the hated exploiters and the reactionary state that safeguards the notorious enemies of the people. Nepalese women, who are born as virtual slaves of men in this patriarchal system, who have endured countless reactionary feudal rites and who have been treated as no more than ornaments and objects of men's sexual gratification, have now begun to challenge such outlooks and violently shake these social relations. These changes are taking place very many times faster in the few years of People's War than in decades of reform.

Women fighters, on several

occasions, have expressed their own surprise at the extent of their newfound daring and power to overturn their conditions and punish their enemies in society. Indeed, they are guided by the bright red proletarian ideology, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and are applying this science of revolution to the harsh realities of Nepal today. They have become conscious of their own interests and those of the enemy in the class and caste-ridden society, and this is the source of their courage and power, their love for the people and their hatred of the enemy.

The courage of women in the revolutionary movement is truly inspiring, if not awesome. When some of them were captured by the enemy, they did not beg for their lives, even though the enemy troops brutally tortured and gang-raped them and even gouged their eyes out before pouring petrol on their bodies and setting them alight.

The commitment of many women to the great process of revolution has truly awakened the whole of Nepal. A case in point is the story of a 50-year-old woman in the Western region who sought to avenge the death of her husband, who had been martyred by the notorious army during the state of emergency after having been compelled to lead an underground life for many years. This news of her cold determination to join the Party and the people's army struck fear among the enemy troops, just as it inspired many people to join the revolution. This reaction was so great that voices arose, even from a section of the middle classes, arguing that military suppression of the People's War alone could not lead to a lasting solution of the social-political conflict. The country was also electrified by the daring escape of five women Maoist political prisoners who bit by bit painstakingly dug an underground tunnel from inside the prison where they were being held.

The rise of women means the rise of half the population. Reactionaries of all types never consider women to be a force capable of epoch-making events. They cannot but treat them as simple powerless beings. But like

revolutionary women the world over, women rebels in Nepal have shown that they can make history by conquering political power and remaking social relations on new foundations.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NEPALESE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

The rumble of people's power throughout the Mahabharat and the Chure Hill ranges of Nepal reflects not only an upsurge of the people but also a long battle on the ideological and political front within the communist party, that is to say, a fierce line struggle that went on until a correct ideological and political line was established. Once the kernel of the genuine Maoist leadership was developed, through both line struggle within the Party and class struggle in society, the cause of the people has progressed uninterruptedly against the enemy, albeit through twists and turns.

From the very beginning the Nepalese communist movement was greatly influenced by the revolutionary process in neighbouring countries. The CPN(M) stresses that the Maoist line that has been developed in Nepal by this contingent of the international proletariat is a synthesis of the most advanced wars that our class has launched, historically in China and Russia, and also more recently in Peru. It is also the synthesis of the deep study and fierce struggle of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) within the international communist movement. A brief history of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) has been published in a past issue of our journal (See AWTW 22/1996).

In its historic Second Conference in 2001 (see AWTW 27/2001), the CPN(M) devoted serious attention to the history of proletarian ideology and its development in Nepal. The development of the People's War in Nepal flows from the Party's ideological development, and, as Lenin put it, ideology is the decisive factor in the revolution. Mao further clarified that if a party has a correct line it can

build a people's army, base areas and finally win political power, and if it has an incorrect line it will lose everything that it has. Every revolution is the product of a correct line; this line develops along with the application of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to the concrete conditions of a country. This has been proved yet again in Nepal, where the forging of a correct line by the CPN(M) has been the key to the advances of the revolution.

Of particular importance in the struggle to initiate the People's War in Nepal was the long struggle against the opportunist group led by Mohan Bikram Singh. Singh had fallen into an eclectic variation of Hoxhaite dogmatism (a revisionist trend that arose immediately following the death of Mao in 1976, which sought to reverse correct verdicts within the international communist movement on Mao's contributions to revolutionary theory). In particular, Singh argued that it was wrong to use the term Maoism or consider it a third stage in the development of proletarian ideology, using the pretext that we remained in the era of imperialism. Further, Singh clung to the errors of Stalin and the previous communist movement to deny and fight against Mao's further developments of proletarian ideology. He concluded that people's war could not be carried out successfully in Nepal. The Maoist revolutionary line developed in Nepal through fighting against the dogmato-revisionism of the "Singh School of Thought".

Of course, there have been many other important two-line struggles in the course of developing the communist movement in Nepal. As mentioned earlier, the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist), known as UML, has played a particularly despicable role in trying to prop up the faltering reactionary regime. In 1998, the UML was a leading partner in government for nine months and held, amongst other posts, the ministry directly responsible for the repression of revolutionaries. In the recent past, as the monarchy has become an empty and discredited institution, the UML has tried to

breathe new life into it by swearing allegiance to the king. The UML has even received the US Ambassador in its offices, where the photos of Lenin, Stalin and Mao were conveniently put away so as not to offend the "honoured guest". The Maoists have also been compelled to fight other reformist lines, such as the "insurrectionism" of Nirmal Lama. One important lesson of the fight against all these tendencies was the understanding that without bringing into being a revolutionary alternative, no revolutionary organisation can truly prevail over revisionism.

In the course of these line struggles, the CPN(M) has tried not only to uphold revolutionary principles but also to apply them in practice. It has further developed the Maoist understanding that "a party is a unity of opposites" and emphasised that the path of revolution goes through collision, rupture, leap and catastrophe. Guided by these Marxist-Leninist-Maoist principles, the CPN(M) went for unity with different trends that were found mainly within the revolutionary arena, and thus further polarised the revolutionary and reformist camps. Similarly, in order to initiate the People's War, the CPN(M) itself had to rupture with prevailing traditions and thinking in the Nepal communist movement, including parliamentarism. (The forerunner of the CPN(M) had had thirteen representatives in parliament.) Having safeguarded the basic revolutionary principles, that is, the party, the revolutionary line and the revolutionary forces, four preparations were simultaneously carried out. These were ideological-political preparation, organisational preparation, logistical preparation and preparation for war. The Party believes that these preparations are still valid for further developing the war, and the Party carries out these preparations to achieve a certain level of war qualitatively and quantitatively and to make breakthroughs and further leaps.

The CPN(M) calls its synthesis of the revolutionary process in Nepal, which developed through twists and turns and great challenges, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and Prachanda

Path. According to this understanding, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the basic ideology and political theory, the science of revolution, and Prachanda Path is the set of ideas relating to the specificities of the Nepalese revolution, which serve as guiding principles. In this process of correctly applying Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and making further advances militarily and politically, the Party's understanding is that there have been ever more contributions to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism in the course of advancing the People's War in Nepal.

**IMPERIALIST AND EXPANSIONIST
INTERVENTION IN NEPAL**

As a result of the advances of the People's War and the all-out, deepening crisis of the reactionary ruling class, and especially as the feudal monarchical system is being effaced from Nepal, US imperialism and Indian expansionism have been actively stepping up their role against the Nepalese people. Because the reactionary regime is desperate and increasingly unable to face the challenges posed by the people's power, the US is making serious preparations for more direct intervention. The situation has become even more unstable in the wake of the recent changes in the political scene, including the dismissal of the prime minister, the usurpation of executive power by the monarchy and the installation of a government that consists of people who either do not belong to any political party or have not been recommended by any party, including some faces infamous for their loyalty to the Panchayat system, which is the form of monarchy that prevailed in Nepal before 1990.

In February 2002, US Secretary of State Colin Powell visited Nepal. Sometime later, in May 2002, Prime Minister Deuba visited the US and European Union. The UK and US have provided, respectively, \$40 million and \$22 million in aid. The US also sent a dozen military experts who surveyed all three parts of the country in order to map out general operational plans. Two US army

personnel were witnessed in the Lishne cordon action. It is evident that imperialist forces are already moving into Nepal.

US aggression world-wide is now climaxing, threatening the security and stability of countries everywhere. The US is lashing out in the Middle East, and its emissaries are roaming the Asian region and baring their teeth like mad dogs. In this regard, the US rulers are wielding the 11 September incident as "a magic weapon" to intervene anywhere and anytime they like. The general strategy of US imperialism today is to suppress every kind of struggle against its interests, such as anti-feudal anti-imperialist struggles, national liberation movements and democratic and socialist movements. It puts a "terrorist" label on them all in order to justify its own counter-revolutionary efforts to crush all opposition and intensify its exploitation of the billions of people the world over.

But the US imperialists' fantasy of using their military might to establish the US as a perpetual unipolar superpower is calling forth increasing resistance all over the world. Because of the enormous misery caused by the imperialists' plunder of Asia, Africa and Latin America, these countries have been the epicentre of this uprising, what Mao called the "storm centre of world revolution". The emerging red political power in the Himalayas, set amidst such a turbulent global backdrop, has profound implications for South Asia as a whole, and beyond.

To counter the potential for wider regional upheaval, the US has already taken the unprecedented step of setting up an FBI spy agency right in Delhi, the capital of India. When the CPN(M) led the historic raid on the Achham district headquarters, the US administration disclosed its intention of putting a military outpost in Nepal itself, asserting that, "Nepal is a country of strategic importance". Even though the US imperialists' actions seem to be coming from a position of strength, in essence they are the manifestation of the compulsions of the contradictions of the world imperialist system.

However hard US imperialism tries to clampdown on the revolutionary movements, it will only succeed in further intensifying and sharpening the principal contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed nations and people, whilst also intensifying inter-imperialist contradictions.

Alongside this US aggression, India has been taking increasingly fascist action against the people of South Asia. The Indian rulers have been suppressing the revolutionary movements and national liberation movements throughout the region. They have enacted several draconian laws, including the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), to maintain their heaven of plundering the Indian masses. Under this law, they have arrested Nepalese journalists and social workers and extradited them to Nepal without even a trial or other democratic "niceties". They have also arrested wounded Maoists from Nepal who were being treated at private hospitals in India and handed them over to the Nepalese police. This reflects India's determination to maintain its long-standing domination over Nepal.

The Indian hegemonic state will never accept seeing the Nepalese people win liberation and determine their own fate. India's rulers are haunted by the spectre that the Nepalese government could be overthrown by new-democratic revolution and the country converted into a base area for world revolution. They are also seriously concerned that the revolutionary advances in Nepal could further stir up the discontent already boiling up in India itself. At a time when India's rulers have been forced to tie down a million troops along the borders with Pakistan, and when Maoist insurgency is rife in a number of states in India itself, the prospect of having to turn their attention to Nepal is not one that they relish.

Moreover, war with the Maoist revolutionaries could be several times more costly than the war India has already been fighting against the Kashmir and Bodo national liberation movements. L. K. Advani, the home minister of India, expressed alarm over the

vision of a South Asian Soviet Federation proposed by the CPN(M), in which the liberated peoples of South Asia would join together in a voluntary union. Following the formation of the Co-ordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organisation in South Asia (CCOMPOSA), the Indian ruling class has been putting its bully eyes on Nepal and preparing a juggernaut campaign to repress the Maoist movement.

There is a possibility that the Indian government may intervene in Nepal at any time. In response to a Nepalese government request, it immediately supplied weapons and ammunition. It has also sent a number of helicopters to help the Royal Nepalese Army fight the Maoists. The arrest and extradition of a CPN(M) Central Committee member, who was handed over to the government of Nepal, is the latest effort in this regard.

From the other side of the border, revisionist China is closely monitoring events in Nepal. The Chinese bourgeoisie, still horrified by the memory of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, would be most unwilling to see a Maoist Nepal rise on their own southern borders. Yet they would also be extremely concerned at any outright attempt by India to occupy Nepal, as this would upset the long-standing and fragile balance of power on the China-India border, where serious warfare has broken out before. The Chinese rulers would look with great unease on any attempt by the Indian government to send its troops into Nepal in collaboration with the US-British combine.

It is not possible to conclude a discussion of the role of the imperialists without mentioning one other force that has unfortunately been only too willing to do some of the dirty work of their propaganda machine. Here we are speaking of the domestic and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that have received enormous amounts of money to help thwart the revolutionaries. These forces have emerged like seasonal mushrooms

and propagated hundreds of lies, such as "the revolutionaries are violating human rights" and "recruiting children into the PLA". If they were to witness events with their own eyes, they would definitely see who the actual terrorists are and who is violating human rights.

Were these people in deep slumber while their masters were killing thousands of people these past seven years?! Wasn't it "terror" when the government killed peasants working their farms in western Nepal? Wasn't it "terror" when the reactionary army killed political prisoners in different parts of the country, and when it brought dozens of political prisoners from different prisons and massacred them in cold blood in Lamahi? Wasn't it "terror" when the government killed the school children Dil Bahadur Ramtel, Subhadra Sapkota, Jamuna Chaudhary and others who were simply protesting the arrest of their teachers? Whilst these forces have been shouting themselves hoarse about "human rights violations" by the revolutionaries, they were silent as lambs when the fascist Gyanendra-Paras clique put huge cash bounties on the heads of the Maoist leaders and cadres who have been fighting for dramatic change to bring Nepalese society into the twenty-first century, and they see "human rights violations" whenever the people rise up to resist the genocidal army. They have simply been playing the role of a fig leaf for the reactionary state and the imperialist powers by attributing legitimacy to the state while it murders the people.

As the people's power develops in the country, the imperialists and reactionaries will work overtime to smash it. In this situation, it is crucial that the Maoist revolutionaries develop world-wide solidarity with the People's War. As the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement has put it, we must weave support for the Nepalese revolution into all of the activity aimed against US aggression in Iraq, and elsewhere. The recent tour of Europe sponsored by the World People's Resistance Movement to promote solidarity with the People's War in Nepal succeeded in

reaching thousands of people, and showed the potential for greater actions in the future.

The time has most urgently come for the Maoist revolutionaries to carry out their internationalist duty, which Lenin defined as, "...working wholeheartedly for the development of the revolutionary movement and the revolutionary struggle in one's own country, and supporting (by propaganda, sympathy and material aid) this struggle, this, and only this, line, in every country without exception." ("The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution")

RED POLITICAL POWER
SHINING ON THE HORIZON

Nepalese society is passing through a merciless test of fire. Unprecedented violent encounters are taking place between the forward-going and backward-going forces. Under the leadership of the CPN(M), the most advanced, forward-going forces have united throughout the country and launched their offensive against the rotten old feudal state. The most backward-going and reactionary elements have united under the medieval barbaric Gyanendra-Paras clique, which is surviving on the blessings of US imperialism and Indian expansionism. The forward-going current of the People's War, being waged by the great heroes of the Nepalese people for their complete liberation from all kinds of exploitation of man by man, has developed into the People's Liberation Army and founded base areas and red political power, and it is posing an historic challenge to the autocratic feudal regime. In contrast, the feudal regime, in order to safeguard the interests of the reactionary system, has degenerated into the Gyanendra fascist clique, and further declined into Royal Nepalese Army fascism to suppress the movement of the great Nepalese people.

No one today can deny that the country has divided into two poles, that it is split between the Royal Palace and the Rolpa headquarters. These two poles stand in opposition to each other as the manifestations of

two ideologies, two epochs and two armies on the battlefield. Millions of the country's people, from all sections of the community, whether peasants or labourers, proletariat or middle class or national bourgeoisie, have already risen to the side of the new society, rejecting the old reactionary rotten society. Now is the historic time for people of all sections of the country urgently to choose between the nascent forward-going scientific Maoist revolutionary power and the imperialist backed medieval feudal autocratic system.

In the history of the Nepalese revolutionary movement, there have been many times when a correct understanding was lacking, when the weaknesses of the revolutionary forces gave the reactionaries room to inflict their interests on the masses. But under the leadership of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), the Nepalese people now have a People's Liberation Army, base areas and country-wide mass bases. In contrast, the reactionary system has become totally isolated from the people, has a rotten base and superstructure and is held up only by the reactionary army and imperialist aid and support. And even though the reactionary regime is getting support from the imperialists, this does not reflect the will of the people of these countries either. The proletariat the world over naturally has a class obligation to smash the reactionary states and build red bases of the world proletarian revolution, and in general the people of the imperialist countries have every interest in standing with the revolutionaries and the people of Nepal. The resignation of the Vice Prime Minister of Belgium, Mrs Magda of the Green Party, in protest at the delivery of arms to Nepal, is an expression of the contradictions amongst the governing circles in the imperialist countries, and it also reflects sentiment amongst the masses of those countries against intervening on behalf of reactionary regimes like the monarchy in Nepal.

Some people still argue that the revolution in Nepal will not be successful. They hold that neither the

objective nor subjective conditions are ripe for revolution. According to them, even if the revolution is successful, there would be no other revolutionary states to support the new Nepalese state. In these circumstances, unless revolution takes place in India or other big countries, they believe, the revolution in Nepal will simply prove premature. But their logic does not conform with objective reality.

First of all, if one has nothing to do with revolution and revolutionary war, the subjective and objective conditions will never be ready for them. For Maoist revolutionaries, the maturity of the subjective and objective conditions is relative. It was Mao who argued that the objective conditions in the world as a whole are ripe for revolution, and that what the revolutionaries have to develop is the subjective conditions. Since then, a great many political developments have taken place. Imperialism has been tightening its grip on the masses of the world, and the contradictions between imperialism and the oppressed nations and peoples have further intensified. This situation has further prepared the conditions for revolution the world over.

Secondly, no revolution can advance from banquet halls; it requires practice based on the scientific ideology and politics of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. If the subjective conditions were really lacking, the People's War would never have developed to the level it has. But the fact is that the subjective conditions are being developed *through the process of war* led by the Maoist revolutionary party. In Nepal, the people had neither base areas nor political power before the initiation of the People's War, and neither the people's militia nor the People's Liberation Army were formed at that time. As Mao said, we learn warfare through warfare.

Thirdly, even if there are currently no revolutionary states in the world, the process of revolution throughout the world is on the rise. In the neighbouring country of India, the revolutionary struggle being led by the Maoist parties – the

Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (People's War) and the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) – is advancing in important parts of the country, and the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (Naxalbari) and other Maoist forces are preparing to open new fronts of struggle. Furthermore, the whole of South Asia is simmering with national liberation movements. Likewise, the growing number of mass movements developing qualitatively and quantitatively in revolutionary character against imperialism in Europe and America, and the forceful resistance against imperialism in the Middle East, indicate that the rage smouldering under the surface of society has reached an explosive point. The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) has been linking the Maoist movements, providing ideological leadership to the international communist movement, and is developing as an embryo of the communist international of a new type. In South Asia, CCOMPOSA is serving to help co-ordinate the struggles of the Maoist parties and organisations in the region. All this provides powerful backing to the struggle of Nepal's people.

Imagine, too, the impact a victorious Maoist-led revolution in Nepal would have on the downtrodden peasants of neighbouring India, and the clarity such a victory would introduce into the line struggles raging in the Indian revolutionary movement. Discontent and rebellion are already seething across large parts of the country, and there are millions of Nepalese scattered across India's urban centres. Nepal borders some of India's most inflammatory regions, which have been centres of revolutionary discontent in the past and present – Bihar, West Bengal and nearby Jarkhand. The historic village of Naxalbari, from which the armed struggle began in India in the 1960s, is located right alongside India's border with Nepal.

The importance of the battle being fought out in Nepal is not lost on the imperialists, and it should not be lost on the proletarian revolutionaries

either. At stake is the possibility of a much-needed and long-awaited breakthrough for the proletariat, at a time when the imperialists are stepping up their intervention and aggression the world over. This is a struggle being waged clearly under the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist party determined to liberate Nepal in the service of the world proletarian revolution. The revolution in Nepal requires and deserves the support of all those who are fighting against the current masters of the old world and struggling to bring about a new one.

The destiny of the 23 million people of Nepal will be decided in the times ahead. On the one hand lies a future that is shackled to the past, a world of oppression and misery only too familiar to anyone who has lived or seen life at the bottom of the imperialist global order. On the other lies a vision that could not be more different: one where the Himalayan Mountains are beaming red and Mount Sagarmatha is smiling with the advance of new days, with the dawning of a new-democratic Nepal. The day is indeed coming when a section of the planet's most downtrodden people stand up, hoisting the red flag once again on the earth, and continue along the path of history hewed by the Paris Commune, the great October Revolution and the great Chinese Revolution. It will be the day the international proletariat advances one more step in making socialist revolution and advancing toward transforming the world to classless society, communism. ■