

Two-Line Struggle Within RIM

(In Context of the Maoist 'Revolution' in Nepal)

**Edited by
- Mohan Bikram Singh**

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Yug-Jyoti Publication
Kathmandu

Preface

Rim (The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement) was founded in 1984. The International Conference of the Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organization held secretly some where in Europe founded the RIM and adopted its Declaration. The Conference was represented by the delegates and observers of the nineteen Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations (alphabetically) from Bangladesh, Britain, Ceylon, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Haiti, India, Italy, Nepal, New Zealand, Peru, Sarbedaran, Turkey and USA.

In the Conference there were sharp ideological differences among the delegates. RCP, USA had made many allegations against Stalin from Trotskyite line even before the Conference on it's organ, Revolution. Many Parties and Organizations attending the Conference, mainly organizations from, Ceylon, India, Nepal and Turkey differed with such condemnation against Stalin. There were sharp differences in the Conference on the question of the principal contradiction of the world too. The RCP had put forth the view that out of the fundamental contradictions of the world, the principal one was among the imperialist powers, mainly between two super powers, the USSR and the USA. Such a situation, as RCP emphasized, was certain to lead Third World War and that was to cause a world-wide revolutionary situation. So, as at the time of 1st and 2nd World Wars, the Marxist-Leninists of the whole world had to fix their policies and programmes to fulfill the great responsibility of world revolution as an immediate task. But delegates from the many Parties and Organizations, mainly from Asia, Africa and Latin America, differed fundamentally with such a view maintaining that such an analysis was purely subjective and did not conform with the objective conditions of the world. They held the view that the principal contradiction of the world was between the oppressed nations and imperialism as before.

The differences on these questions mentioned above were so sharp that at times it seemed the Conference would break without forming the RIM. However, delegates of the Conference, making some adjustment and compromise, agreed to form the RIM. But the ideological differences were far from being resolved. Soon after the Conference CRC, CPI (ML), India and CPT/M-L, Turkey left the RIM. Unlike that the NCP (Mashal), on the one side, firmly stood against making any compromise on the question of principle, and, on the other side, took the policy of tough two line struggle within the RIM for a whole period of more than one decade from 1984 to 1996.

A few years after RIM was founded, CORIM circulated a proposal to replace Mao Tse-Tung Thought by Maoism. In 1993 the Extended Meeting of the CORIM finally decided to adopt Maoism. We opposed such a move on the ground that an Extended Meeting of the CORIM had no right to

revise the basic principles, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung thought, adopted by the International Conference. But our objection was "rejected". However, we continued our struggle against Maoism. In 1996 CORIM sent a letter to the Central Committee of our Party warning either to accept Maoism or voluntarily resign from that (RIM). We declined to agree with both of the conditions. We replied the letter with our "Resolution on the Letter of CORIM", which was later published with the title "Mashal's Struggle against Trotskyism within RIM". In 1996 CORIM decided to "expel" NCP (Mashal) from the RIM and published a long article "On the Expulsion of the Nepal Communist Party (Mashal) from RIM" on the A World to Win in the winter of 1996.

The CPN (Unity-Centre) together with the Mashal was in the RIM for some years. After a split in the UC, a fraction of it became the NCP (Maoist) and together with Mashal was member of the RIM. On the controversy of our Party with the RIM, CPN (Maoist) was fully with in CORM, About nine years after they (The Maoist) started armed struggle in Nepal, differences on the question of line and tactics emerged between the Maoists and RCP. It will be evident from the correspondence between both of those organizations from Oct. 2005 to January 2009. But the RCP, being the leading Party of the CORIM, it's view represent the view of the RIM itself. So, the differences between both of the organizations should be understood as the two line struggle between the Maoists with the RIM in totality.

Hereby we have tried to throw some light on the background of the two line struggle between the NCP (Mashal) and the RIM, on the one side, and that between CPN (Maoists) and the RCP or the RIM, on the other side. However, here we have refrained from making any comment, criticism or analysis of the divergent views concerning two-line struggle within the RIM. We have confined ourselves to presenting the documents concerned with that (Two Line struggle within RIM) leaving it open to the readers themselves to evaluate the divergent trends seen in the course of the two-line struggle and to make their views themselves.

The book is divided into two parts: The first parts contain five letters sent by the CPN (Maoists) and RCP, USA to each other. The second part of the book includes the materials or documents related with the Two-Line Struggle between the Mashal and the RIM. The appendix contains full text of the Declaration of Rim adopted in 1984 and experts from the interview of Prachand, the chairman of the CPN (Maoist), published on the Hindu and the Interview of Azad, the spokesman of the CPI (Maoist), published on the People's March We hope, all these materials published in the book will help much to understand Two-Line Struggle within the RIM in correct and historical perspectives.

In the last we extend our gratitude to all persons, organizations or websites from whom we have got or taken the materials published in the book and to the Yug-Jyoti Publication for the publication of this book.

— Mohan Bikram Singh

2009-06-10

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Part -1

- 1 -

Letter of RCP, USA

(January 29, 2009)

Dear Comrades,

As you know we have been following the developments in your country and within your party with great concern and interest. During the long years of the People's War we consistently upheld and propagated your struggle within the revolutionary movement and among the masses of people in our country, and participated in doing so on an international level. We did so wholeheartedly, convinced that the struggle in Nepal was a blow not only against the reactionary ruling classes of Nepal itself, but could become an advanced outpost of struggle against the world imperialist system and that, under the leadership of a genuine communist vanguard party, this revolution had the basis not only for liberating Nepal but to contribute to the spread of revolutionary communism in the region and the world.

We are writing this letter to inform you that we have come to the conclusion that it is now necessary to open up to the public the struggle that we have been waging with you for several years now over key questions of communist principle and the differences that have now sharply emerged.

Ever since October 2005 we have been increasingly alarmed at the developments of line that your party has taken. Proceeding from what is our understanding of proletarian internationalism, we have made many efforts to carry out struggle over the crucial questions of ideological and political line involved. In particular we have written three major letters at key junctures presenting in a frank manner our understanding of the matters of principle that have emerged in relation to the development of the revolution in your country; we have not addressed these on the level of specific tactical measures that you have taken at different junctures, but with regard to the overall ideological and political line that has been guiding the practice of your party—and which are now pushing the revolution into the abyss.

[7]

We wrote one letter in October 2005, a second one on March 19, 2008 and a third on November 4, 2008. Of these three letters, you chose to respond only to the first; we are very disappointed and dismayed that you did not consider that the later two letters of 2008 even merited a response. The questions that we and others have raised clearly focus on questions that need to be discussed within RIM and the international communist movement and are of concern to all who want to do away with imperialism and reaction, and work toward a communist future.

It should be obvious why the change in the leading political and ideological orientation of your party and the policies adopted have caused a great deal of questioning and confusion among friends of the Nepal revolution in our country and elsewhere. Despite the concerns of sections of the masses and repeated requests to know our opinion, we have been very careful to avoid open criticism of your party in our press and in other public forums up until now. We have felt that this was the correct approach for us to take because you had made clear to us your preference that this struggle not take place in the public arena and because it was our sincere hope that keeping this struggle internal to the ranks of our respective parties and the parties and organizations of our movement would create the most favorable conditions for your party, and especially its leadership, to engage in serious study, debate and struggle over the questions that we and other comrades in the international movement have been raising.

We are forced to conclude that this policy of keeping our struggle internal is no longer appropriate under the present circumstances. When the party leadership has shown no interest in pursuing struggle over cardinal questions of ideological and political line and where the leading line and policies of the party itself are accelerating in the wrong direction, to keep silent would objectively represent acquiescence in this very path. On the contrary, the circumstances require a vigorous public discussion of the central ideological and political questions involved.

We do not take this decision with joy of heart but rather out of the deepest concern for the future of the revolution in Nepal and its implications for the proletarian revolutionary struggle internationally.

Just as we had decided that it is now correct to take this course of action, an article written by Roshan Kisson appeared in your English language journal Red Star (#21) in which there is an open repudiation of the whole of Marxism, beginning with Marx himself, an open rejection of the whole experience of the proletarian revolution up to this point, and an open proclamation that the revolution in Nepal can do no more than

build a modern capitalist state, leaving the question of the struggle for socialism and communism to future generations.

As part of the anti communist diatribe in Red Star #21, Kisson launches a vicious and unprincipled attack and personal slander on the leader of our party, Chairman Bob Avakian, which is reprehensible and unacceptable. We strongly protest the completely anticommunist content of this article. To publish such an article in a journal that is seen all over the world as a vehicle for dissemination of your line and views constitutes promoting views that are completely in opposition to the goals and methods of communists that should be upheld by the international communist movement.

We will proceed with publishing the three major letters mentioned above along with the only response we have received from you, unless we hear from you by February 15, 2009 with a compelling reason for not doing so.

Our proletarian internationalist
greetings,
Central Committee
Revolutionary Communist Party, USA



Letter of RCP, USA

(November 2008)

Letter from the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

To the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and all Parties and Organizations of RIM (November 2008)

Dear Comrades,

On March 19, 2008, our Party sent a circular letter to the comrades of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) as well as to the other parties and organizations of RIM expressing our deepest concern over the political and ideological orientation of the CPN(M) and the basic path it has been following for the last three years. The central point in that letter was our belief that despite the great struggle and sacrifices of the ten years of People's War and its tremendous achievements, the state system being established and consolidated in Nepal is not New Democracy, the particular form of the dictatorship of the proletariat appropriate in countries like Nepal, but rather a bourgeois state, a "federal democratic republic" which will preserve and enforce the existing capitalist and semi feudal relations of production prevalent in Nepal.

The People's Liberation Army is to be destroyed through "integration" into the reactionary state army and/or dissolved by other means, land distributed by the revolution to the peasantry is to be returned to previous owners, Western imperialist powers and reactionary states such as China and India are being hailed as great friends of the Nepalese people, and astounding theoretical propositions are being put forward such as the "joint dictatorship of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie".¹ Instead of arguing for a program of carrying forward the revolution, CPN(M) leaders and government officials have loudly advocated positions and policies that so flagrantly go against the principles of proletarian revolution and the interests of the masses in Nepal and around the world that any genuine communist is shocked, saddened and angry to hear them on the lips of comrades of our Movement.

Yes, we have heard that the assurances from some that all of this is but a "transitional state" that can be transformed into a genuine people's

state – or, sometimes we are told, it is but a clever ploy to "deceive the enemy" while preparations continue to bring the revolution to a victorious conclusion. But in fact each step taken down this road is making it more difficult ideologically, politically, organizationally and militarily to get back on the revolutionary path. Today many more communists, in Nepal and elsewhere, are coming to recognize that the formation of the "federal democratic republic" is not a "stepping stone" toward achieving the communist objectives but a giant step backwards, away from revolution and away from the achievements of the People's War, and a giant step toward firmly reconsolidating Nepal's position in the reactionary world imperialist system.

The Problem Is The Line Of The Party

It is excellent that many comrades are now recoiling when they stare into the abyss into which the revolution in Nepal is falling.. The question is to understand how things reached this point and, most importantly, what is necessary to fundamentally reverse this course and save the fruits of the revolution in Nepal that are being so rapidly destroyed. The current situation is no accident, no mere excess in carrying out an otherwise correct policy. It is not just one more "maneuver to the right" that can be easily corrected by a following "maneuver to the left". The current display of class collaboration is a direct result of the ideological and political line that has been leading the Party over the last period, particularly since the immediate goal of the Party was defined as the establishment of the "transitional state", that is, a bourgeois democratic republic.²

The immediate task facing all communists who hold the revolution in Nepal dear is to repudiate and fight against the wrong line in the CPN(M). Once again we will quote the words of Mao Tsetung: "If one's line is incorrect, one's downfall is inevitable, even with the control of the central, local and army leadership. If one's line is correct, even if one has not a single soldier at first, there will be soldiers, and even if there is no political power, political power will be gained. This is borne out by the historical experience of our Party and by that of the international communist movement since the time of Marx.... The crux of the matter is line. This is an irrefutable truth."³

Today the question of the future direction of Nepal is being battled out in the domain of political line and ideology. If a correct revolutionary communist line can triumph within the party, the energy and aspirations of people that have been unleashed by the People's War can be harnessed and led, and there is a real possibility that nationwide victory can be won

and the pathway opened to socialism. On the contrary, if the present line of the CPN(M) leadership is not repudiated, this great opportunity for the people in Nepal and for the communist movement more generally will be lost. We are not in a position to speculate or propose specific tactical steps, and we do not see that as the role that comrades in the international movement can or should be playing. We must all focus our attention on major matters of ideological and political line and not on secondary matters of tactics or so called "maneuvering". Most fundamentally this means reaffirming, ideologically and in its political line and specific policies, that the revolution in Nepal is seeking to establish socialist relations in the country as part of the whole world process by which the capitalist imperialist world order will be overthrown and supplanted by socialism and ultimately communism. Yes, the revolution in Nepal must pass through the transition of New Democracy, but the purpose of the New Democratic Revolution is line for the practice of the party as a "tactic", which opened the way to the series of agreements with the parliamentary parties and effectively made the immediate goal of the revolution the formation of a bourgeois republic. exactly a transition toward socialism, and not toward an acceleration of capitalism in Nepal and its further integration into the world imperialist system.⁴

This essential point – the need to maintain the goal and orientation of fighting for New Democracy and not substituting the goal of classless, "pure" democracy (which can only mean bourgeois democracy, whether federal and proportional or not) – was a major theme of our October 2005 letter to the Party, which the CPN(M) leadership dismissed as merely being the "ABCs of Marxism" with no importance for analyzing the specific questions of tactics and policy facing the Party. But these "ABCs", or more correctly put, these basic truths of Marxism, confirmed in the course of generations of revolutionary struggle all over the world, remain crucial to the success or failure of the revolution, and the rejection of these basic truths by the CPN(M) leadership is what is leading the revolution over the cliff.

New Democracy & Socialism Are Stepping Stones On The Road To Communism

New Democracy requires a joint dictatorship of the revolutionary classes under the leadership of the proletariat and its vanguard, that is to say, a specific form of the dictatorship of the proletariat appropriate to the stage of the democratic revolution. While the system of New Democracy recognizes and protects the interests of the national bourgeoisie, it targets as an enemy the comprador and bureaucrat

capitalist sector which is, after all, the dominant form of capitalism in Nepal. In its international policy, New Democracy aligns itself with the masses of people struggling against Imperialism and reaction and opposes the world imperialist system. Economically, as Mao put it, New Democracy "opens the door to capitalism", but "it opens the door to socialism even wider" by quickly establishing state ownership over those sectors controlled by the imperialists, allied reactionary states and the bureaucrat comprador bourgeoisie and feudal elements. In the countryside New Democracy means the thorough and revolutionary implementation of "land to the tiller" by mobilizing and relying on the oppressed masses of the peasantry. Culturally, New Democracy means mobilizing the masses and unleashing them to thoroughly uproot backward institutions such as caste discrimination, child marriage, the oppression of women, the oppression of nationalities and so forth. Indeed, to a large extent New Democracy means completing on a nationwide level the revolutionary democratic transformations that the Party had begun in the base areas.

In all of these aspects the New Democratic system represents something quite different from bourgeois democracy. Bourgeois democracy accepts the capitalist system in a given country and internationally. It offers "equal rights" (especially the right to vote) to everyone within the framework of the existing ownership system and the existing relations of production. Bourgeois democracy will always seek to demobilize the masses and oppose and repress the efforts of the masses to assert their own interests.. And we know that in a country like Nepal, bourgeois rule, however "democratic", inevitably involves a great degree of compromise with semi feudal relations, as is seen so clearly in neighboring India. The "rule of (bourgeois) law" so central to bourgeois democracy means that government officials become the agents and enforcers of bourgeois law. Isn't this an important lesson of the "Yadov affair", when comrade Matrika Yadov, the CPN(M) Minister of Land Reform and Management in the new government, resigned over his refusal to accept the use of state violence to evict the peasantry off of land that had been redistributed to them by the revolution?⁵ This shows quite clearly how the government cannot help but function as an agent of the reactionary production and social relations, and it is a good illustration of Marx's point that "the proletariat cannot simply lay hold of the ready made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes" but must "smash it" and establish its own state.⁶

Today when the choice before the Party and the masses is sharpening up as one between a "people's republic" and a bourgeois republic (in the form of the "federal democratic republic"), it is essential

for the communists themselves to be clear on the fundamental meaning of these two, opposite, kinds of states. It is important to be vigilant as well that the very conception of "people's republic" (or New Democratic republic) is not gutted and reduced to just a different label on the bourgeois democratic republic. It is important to firmly grasp that the New Democratic republic must be part of the world proletarian revolution and that it must serve as a transition to socialism and communism.

This goal must not be left at the level of an empty declaration of faith. We should not forget that even the most brazen capitalists in China still hide behind the banner of the "Communist" Party. Taking the socialist road requires understanding clearly what socialism and communism actually mean. It is not about the "perfection of democracy" in a way detached from the class struggle.⁷ It is about achieving a society without class distinctions through the overcoming of the "four ills" Marx spoke about and which became popularized in the GPCR of China. Marx wrote that the communist revolution must aim at the elimination of: all classes and class distinctions generally, all the relations of production on which they rest, all the social relations corresponding to them, and all the ideas that result from these social relations.

The vehicle for assuring this transition from one social epoch to another is the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only if state power is firmly in the hands of the proletariat at the leadership of an alliance with the other revolutionary classes will it be possible to protect the interests of the masses, as we have seen in the entire course of the People's War. If state power is in the hands of the masses countrywide led by a vanguard party clear on its goal, the initial transformations carried out in the base areas can be consolidated throughout the country and, most importantly, this state power can be used to begin the long and difficult but truly liberating process of transforming the economic and social relations between people in the direction of socialism and communism.

The fundamental issue at stake in the debate over the form of the state and the role of "multiparty democracy" in Nepal today is actually about whether the dictatorship of the proletariat (at the stage of New Democracy) will be established. Indeed, as the Chinese comrades pointed out during the epoch of Mao, all of the great struggles between Marxism and revisionism have been focused on the question of establishing and persevering in the proletarian dictatorship, and this is the case in Nepal today.

There are important and difficult questions concerning the form of people's rule: What role should be allowed for competing political parties?

How can the rights of the masses be guaranteed in deeds and not only in words? How can the revolution mobilize all positive factors in society to advance? And yes, there have been serious errors in the history of the communist movement in this regard, although our party does not accept the one sided negation of the previous experience of the communist movement that is trumpeted by the international bourgeoisie and, unfortunately, echoed by the leadership of the CPN(M). But one thing is quite certain: it will be impossible to address the genuine questions correctly unless comrades understand the desirability and the possibility of achieving a wholly different type of society (socialism and communism) and therefore the need for the state to serve as a vehicle for carrying out this transformation, step by step and in conjunction with the masses the world over.

If the essence of the state is the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, if it is understood to be a vehicle for thoroughly uprooting class society and all of the evils that flow from it, then and only then will it be possible to answer the question of what type of democracy is required and what forms it might take. Again, the Yadov affair is instructive – what about the rights of the peasants to own the land they till? These rights count for nothing in the kingdom of "pure democracy". And where is the state power to back up the rights of the peasantry, even if they were formally recognized? But it is not only a question of which classes enjoy democracy under the proletarian dictatorship and which classes are the object of this dictatorship. The proletarian dictatorship can and must also guarantee the democratic rights of those intellectuals and other middle class strata whose class position between the masses and the exploiting classes tends to reinforce illusions of "pure" democracy.

More importantly, in a society that is truly advancing on the socialist road, it is possible and necessary to unleash the critical spirit among intellectuals and others and welcome the criticism that such forces will have of the socialist society and proletarian rule, in the spirit of applying the dynamic Bob Avakian has called "solid core with a lot of elasticity". In fact, the stifling of dissent, the absence of rights, and bureaucratic stultification is a feature of revisionist rule (even a quick look at contemporary China shows this easily). The socialist society that revolutionary communists must construct will be a far livelier and more invigorating place for the masses and for the intellectuals than any of the reactionary societies in the world today, whether they be "liberal democracies" like India or the US or revisionist prisons like China or North Korea.

Every state consists of a dictatorship led by a specific class (in alliance with others) and every state requires a specific kind of democracy

that corresponds to the interests of the ruling class and the kind of society it is building. This is why Lenin correctly stressed that the proletarian dictatorship is a million times more democratic than the most liberal of bourgeois democracies.. The crucial question is democracy for whom and for what aim? What is needed is democracy among the broad ranks of the masses and dictatorship over the small number of *exploiters*, a democracy that energizes society and mobilizes all of the *diverse* and contradictory features that can help propel the society forward along the socialist road toward communism. The kind of dictatorship and the kind of democracy needed are those that reflect the truth Lenin was getting at when he said communism springs forth from "every pore". We do not need the empty shell of bourgeois democracy where the exploiting classes and their socio economic system set the terms and the limits of political life and discourse and that reduces the masses' participation in politics to an occasional vote or demonstration.⁸

The Election Miracle?

The most significant event that took place since we sent our letter of March 19, 2008 has been the Constituent Assembly elections, the emergence of the CPN(M) as the largest party in the country and the subsequent formation of a government with Comrade Prachanda at its head.

One leading comrade of the CPN(M) described this as "the election miracle". And indeed, we ourselves, like many other observers, were surprised by the result.

We had written in our March 19 letter: "The most likely result is that the CPN(M) will be defeated 'fairly' at the elections... If in the extremely unlikely event that the Party did come to occupy the key positions of government through this electoral process the very alliance required, the entanglement in bourgeois political institutions and with the 'international community' will ensure that there is no transfer of power to the proletariat and the oppressed classes and no basis for the state to carry out the revolutionary transformation of society."

What our party had predicted as "extremely unlikely", that is the emergence of a CPN(M) led government, has come into being.

We were wrong to introduce a specific prediction of the election result in our previous letter. Not only did this prediction turn out to be wrong, it weakens the essential and correct point we were making in that letter including in the paragraph cited above – that the Constituent Assembly (CA) process could not lead to the peaceful transfer of power

to the proletariat and masses of Nepal and would instead legitimize the reactionary bourgeois state. Advancing an election prediction, whether or not it turned out to be correct, feeds into the very pragmatism that is such a problem in the Party – judging tactics and policy by whether they "work" (or seem to work) rather than by whether they correspond to fundamental objectives.

The "mandate" that the Party obtained through the CA vehicle is not a mandate for completing the New Democratic revolution. While it is true that the revolutionary masses of Nepal voted for the CPN(M) out of the love and respect won in the course of the People's War, the deferential treatment of the CPN(M) by the bourgeoisie, imperialists and India came not from having waged a People's War but from having stopped one. Any support from the middle classes and others for the Party on this basis (having stopped the war) will not further propel the Party toward completing the revolution but act as a brake on it.

"Without A People's Army The People Have Nothing"

The form of the state has been changed from monarchy to republic, but this does not represent the fulfilling of the New Democratic revolution. Far from it. The current state represents the perfecting of the old reactionary state, shorn of its monarchical costume, and this is true regardless of what political party sits at the top this state – this is a theme which we developed at length in our letter of March 19, 2008. This new state system is objectively the continuation and perfecting of the old state, and as such it has no choice except to enforce the old reactionary economic and social relations, and it can never be a vehicle for their destruction. Meanwhile the very structures of power that had been established during the People's War to enforce the class interests of the masses of the people have been dismantled. Without a new state power in the hands of the masses it is impossible for society to be revolutionized: as Lenin put it, without political power all is illusion.

Nowhere is this clearer than when examining the pillar on which this state stands – the (formerly Royal now republican) Nepal Army. All of Marxism as well as contemporary social experience teaches again and again that it is the armed forces that are the central and decisive element of any state. The People's Liberation Army, which had been the pillar of the new state that was being forged in the base areas, has been confined to cantonments and is now threatened with liquidation through the process of "integration" into the old reactionary army. Without the PLA it will be impossible to protect the transformations that have already taken place in the base areas, to say nothing of extending them throughout

the whole country. We should never forget Mao's words that, "without a People's Army, the people have nothing", nor the great sacrifices that were required to build up a powerful PLA in Nepal.

Any idea that the Nepal Army, even if it swallows up and digests part of the PLA, can be transformed into a People's Army, that it will become, in essence, anything other than what it always has been, is worse than ridiculous, it is extremely dangerous. As noted earlier, the role of the Nepal Army will be to continue to enforce the dominant social and production relations that keep the masses enslaved.

Nor can we accept the argument concerning the "two sides" of the Nepal Army – that it has always been undemocratic in its defense of feudal oppression (true) but that it has defended the interests of the nation (untrue).⁹ The fact is that the (Royal) Nepal Army has been the pillar of defending the decrepit reactionary social system, which, at least in the modern period, has been entirely dominated by the world imperialist system. To talk of "preserving the independence" of a comprador, bureaucrat capitalist state has a very restricted meaning. No fundamental national independence can come about unless and until this old system is uprooted and the whole network that keeps Nepal ensnared in the world imperialist system is broken. Doesn't the role of the (Royal) Nepal Army in providing soldiers for UN "peacekeeping missions", which the new government has most unfortunately pledged to maintain, show the real relationship between the reactionary army and the world imperialist system?

Time and again we have seen the inseparable link in the oppressed countries between achieving the social emancipation of the masses and waging the struggle against imperialism – and quite often communists have fallen into the error of supporting this or that reactionary state because of its alleged anti imperialist character. We should not forget the tragic experience of the comrades of Iran giving support to the Khomeini regime because of a mistaken view of Khomeini's "antiimperialist aspect".¹⁰ Exactly because imperialism is a world system that is ever more deeply penetrating all aspects of the social and economic structure, it is impossible for meaningful social transformation to take place without a radical rupture with imperialism, and, conversely, reactionary so called "anti imperialist" states have a strong tendency to compromise, capitulate or collapse in the face of imperialist aggression and bullying. The achievement of genuine national independence is inseparable from the liberation of the masses and can never be obtained by a reactionary army.

No, the task of "smashing" the old state apparatus, the seizure of political power by force, has been and remains the crucial first great task

of the revolution in Nepal, as in all other countries. We have not been convinced that the line of fighting for a "transitional state" has in any way hastened or facilitated the fulfillment of this task. On the contrary, the "transition" that we have seen is a transition to a more fully consolidated bourgeois order and, unfortunately, raises the danger of the transformation of the CPN(M) itself from a force that led the masses in fighting against the old order into a force for the preservation of this old order in its present Republican skin.

Part Of The Rebirth Of Revolutionary Communism Or Part Of Its Burial?

The current conjuncture of the revolution in Nepal must be seen in this context of the crossroads now facing the entire international communist movement. It is coming at a time when, thirty years after the defeat of proletarian rule in Mao's China and after decades of relentless anti communist assault by the imperialists and their apologists the world over, the whole international communist movement has reached a low point in the effectiveness of its struggle and, most importantly, in its ideological clarity and its resolve to fulfill its revolutionary objectives.

As it was put in a recent Manifesto from our Party,

"The temporary defeat of socialism and the end of the first stage of the communist revolution has ...among other things... led to lowered sights and low dreams. Even among many people who once would have known better and would have striven higher, it has led, in the short run, to acceptance of the idea that – in reality and at least for the foreseeable future – there can be no alternative to the world as it is, under the domination of imperialism and other exploiters. That the most one can hope for and work for are some secondary adjustments within the framework of accommodation to this system. That anything else – and especially the attempt to bring about a revolutionary rupture out of the confines of this system, aiming toward a radically different, communist world – is unrealistic and is bound to bring disaster."¹¹

The necessity and desirability of completely sweeping away capitalist exploitation and radically transforming the whole planet is greater than ever before but the possibility of such a revolutionary transformation is not seen or is denied. Complex new problems in making revolution have emerged – for example the massive trend toward urbanization in the oppressed countries – while the very conditions of capitalism and imperialism's breakneck "triumphal" development of the last several decades has actually further prepared the ground for the victory of the

proletarian revolution by furthering the great class cleavages, by tying the destinies of the masses of people in different countries even more tightly together, and by ever more clearly revealing the world capitalist system as an obstacle to the further advance of human society.

We must prepare and lead a whole wave of proletarian revolution that can show both in its vision and in its practice how it will be possible to take society to a completely different place. It is in this light that the revolution in Nepal must be seen. If it can clarify its objectives and overcome its current predicament, the revolution in Nepal will rekindle hopes in the ranks of the genuine communists and conscious revolutionary masses the world over. The People's War fuelled the hope that, after several decades in which the imperialists and the reactionary ruling classes have controlled every country on the earth, a new state was being born where the masses of the people led by the proletariat and its vanguard communist party would hold power. The People's War cracked open the door to see how political power in the hands of the masses could be used to thoroughly uproot the old semi feudal and capitalist social relations and build a radically different society opposed to the world imperialist system, a beacon for the revolutionary masses in the volatile South Asian region. But the revisionism and eclecticism from the leadership of the CPN(M) is snuffing out this very hope and instead is reinforcing the message of the international bourgeoisie that there is no real alternative to the imperialist system, that the only real possibility is to improve the position of the country (or really that of its ruling class) within this imperialist system.

In this letter we will only briefly protest against the present international line of the CPN(M) leadership. It has been shown over and over again that the international orientation of a political party is not a minor matter somehow unconnected to its overall ideological and political line. Today we see the CPN(M) leadership presenting imperialist and reactionary enemies as friends and even treating some of them as "strategic allies" of the revolution. How are we to understand the many speeches and articles justifying the suppression of the masses in Tibet¹² or worse, those extolling the "wonders" that China has accomplished under revisionist rule? And not a word¹³ about the tens of thousands of Chinese children poisoned by the milk adulterated by the capitalists or those buried under the rubble of schools built by unscrupulous contractors.

We often hear comrades of the CPN(M) justify this or that tactic on a national or international scale in order to "make use of contradictions among the enemies". Certainly this is a necessary and correct part of revolutionary tactics, but only if those tactics flow from the fundamental

strategic interests of the proletarian revolution and if those tactics do not violate revolutionary communist principles.

New Synthesis Or Tired Old Bourgeois Democracy?

One of the great tragedies of the great right turn in the CPN(M) has been that instead of helping the revival of the communist movement internationally by showing the viability of a revolutionary communist orientation, which the People's War objectively did in large measure, the Party's present line and practice is only strengthening the "anti communist verdict" that the imperialists and reactionaries have tried to impose throughout the world, especially following the defeat in China and the collapse of the USSR.¹⁴

Now, when the first wave of proletarian revolution that began with the Paris Commune and continued through the Cultural Revolution in China has ended and a new wave of proletarian revolution has yet to break forth, questions of ideology have taken on a particular importance. Bob Avakian has stepped forward to the challenge of summing up the tremendous experience of the first wave of proletarian revolution, its grievous shortcomings as well as its heroic accomplishments, and has brought forward a New Synthesis. To quote from our party's Manifesto, "there is an analogy to what was done by Marx at the beginning of the communist movement – establishing in the new conditions that exist, after the end of the first stage of the communist revolution, a theoretical framework for the renewed advance of that revolution. But today, and with this new synthesis, it is most emphatically not a matter of 'back to the drawing board', as if what is called for is throwing out both the historical experience of the communist movement and the socialist societies it brought into being and 'the rich body of revolutionary scientific theory' that developed through this first wave. That would represent an unscientific, and in fact a reactionary, approach. Rather, what is required – and what Avakian has undertaken – is building on all that has gone before, theoretically and practically, drawing the positive and the negative lessons from this, and raising this to a new, higher level of synthesis."

But unfortunately, the leadership of the CPN(M) has adopted an opposite approach that accepts the unscientific anti communist verdicts of the international bourgeoisie and renounces the dictatorship of the proletariat as the necessary transition toward socialism and communism. Instead, the very old ideology of bourgeois democracy is being presented as "Communism of the twenty first Century" and the actual communism of the twenty first century as it is concretely emerging is being ignored, belittled or opposed.

"Emancipators Of Humanity" Or Builders Of A New Switzerland?

One of the central points that Bob Avakian has been emphasizing as part of the New Synthesis that he has been bringing forward is the crucial importance of communists seeing themselves and training the proletariat to be "emancipators of humanity". This is far different from seeing the role of the revolution as simply improving the lot of the specific section of the masses who have supported it. Yes, the revolution must and will dramatically improve the lives of the masses of people and, in fact, capitalist development will not bring about a better life for the majority. In desperately poor Nepal the question of lifting the heavy burden of poverty is a crucial part of any revolutionary transformation.

A basic question is whether development must come by being more integrated into the capitalist and imperialist system – that is by welcoming and organizing more capitalist exploitation – or whether the socialist road is actually possible: building a viable and emancipatory social and economic system that in a fundamental sense is opposed to the world capitalist system.

This is one of the reasons we find it so strange to see the CPN(M) promising the "ten, twenty, forty" to the masses (doubling the gross national product in ten years, doubling it again in the following ten years and "reaching the level of Switzerland" within forty years). Not only would this imply a growth rate far greater than has ever been achieved before, such as in China under Mao, but it implies that the imperialists will actually help bring these developments about. In fact, repeated experience in the real world shows that wherever the imperialist system reaches, backwardness and poverty are far from eradicated, even if "bubbles" of development grow and benefit a minority of urban dwellers.

Now, bit by bit, it is being revealed that this transformation will be possible by becoming the "dynamic link" between India and China. So what is this really saying? It is saying that by making Nepal a functioning, "dynamic" part of the world imperialist system, somehow the country will benefit from the capitalist development of India and China and their interrelation. This dream is both impossible and reactionary. Even if the reactionary states and the imperialists were persuaded to accept this model, it would certainly be a relative handful of the wealthy in Kathmandu Valley who would be part of this "dynamic link", while the great majority of the population would be left to rot in the countryside or in the slums. With China and India both hellholes for the masses of people in the countryside and the slums, why would the "dynamic link" between them

be any different? Is this really what is in the interests of the masses in Nepal? How does this model fit with the task of promoting revolution in India, China and elsewhere?

Not only is this vision based completely on a model of vigorous uninterrupted capitalism, this goal of becoming a Switzerland is itself quite revealing. After all, what is Switzerland? It is a small highly parasitic and reactionary imperialist state that has grown very wealthy due to its particular position as a major center of banking and finance of the world imperialist system, located in the heart of imperialist Europe. Does such a goal and vision have anything to do with achieving communism? In other words, a country can only become a "Switzerland" based on achieving a privileged position in the imperialist world and sharing in the plunder of the majority of mankind. Is this really what the masses in Nepal have fought for? How does this goal help emancipate humanity?

It is ironic that at the very moment the CPN(M) leadership is seeking a development model based on the continued and uninterrupted development of imperialism, the crisis of world capitalism is exploding all around them. Capitalist China and India will also suffer as the contradictions of world capitalism catch up with it, and even the dream of a Nepalese "dynamic hub" between these two reactionary states could well explode in a puff of smoke.

It is impossible to overestimate the role a genuine proletarian revolutionary state could make in transforming the still mainly unfavorable international situation. Such a regime may not be able to set growth records for capitalist development, but it could take giant steps forward, and quickly, to solve many of the most basic problems of the masses, such as food security, employment within the country, sanitation, basic health services in the rural areas, and much more. The existence of such a state, even a small one like Nepal, would rekindle hope among the oppressed masses, especially in the region, and demonstrate that a revolutionary path is possible.

So the choice is between pursuing a path of integration into the capitalist system, which might benefit relatively small strata, or pursuing a development path based on the interests and needs of the great majority of the people in opposition to the world capitalist system. Yes, this latter, socialist, road is difficult, and there is no guarantee of how events will unfold. But we are guaranteed that a capitalist Nepal can only mean misery for the majority, and a state based on this economic system cannot help but be one more link in the web of relations that keep the world enslaved to the world imperialist system.

When we say that the dominant line of the CPN(M) leadership represents a "bourgeois" orientation, we are not hurling insults or impugning the character of the comrades. We are simply stressing what we consider to be a scientific evaluation of the incorrect line they are leading: the conception of "pure democracy" standing apart from and "above" the cleavage of society into classes corresponds to the capitalist mode of production and not to the communist outlook based on the goal of surpassing class divisions. And so we are not at all surprised that the Party leadership is now loudly proclaiming the benefits of capitalism and proposing concrete programs for the acceleration of capitalism in the country. What we have seen in the recent months is nothing other than the first "fruits" of the tree of capitalism under this line and leadership, and you can be sure that other, ever more sour fruits will be sure to follow.

Despite the claims of the CPN(M) leaders that they are aiming eventually to achieve a communist society, in truth they completely confound democracy and communism. They are themselves prisoners of their own world outlook. Furthermore, the CPN(M) leadership is falling into the age old revisionist error that the achievement of communism depends primarily on the further advance of the productive forces, to be achieved by capitalist ends. This is precisely the line that Mao and the revolutionaries in China fought out in the course of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution against Liu Shao chi and later Deng Xiao ping.

Earlier in the history of the Chinese revolution, the question was clearly posed as to whether it would be possible to build socialism in a backward country. Indeed, Mao's whole thesis of New Democracy was based very much on showing how it was possible to do so and, of course, he then went about doing so in practice. In the course of the Cultural Revolution Mao raised the slogan "grasp revolution, promote production", thus correctly showing that the productive forces of society could be unleashed by further revolutionary transformation – the exact opposite of the argument that many are making in Nepal now that development must come by capitalist means.

Two Line Struggle Or "Three Lines"?

One of the particularities of centrism and eclecticism is its refusal to make a clear cut demarcation between Marxism and revisionism, but instead to try to carve out a position "half way" between a revolutionary communist ideology and politics and outright capitulation and opportunism. In Nepal it is this form of centrist revisionism that has become the greater danger, not those who unabashedly proclaim their adherence to the ideology of multiparty democracy and the glories of

capitalism. The tired refrain is that there is the danger of revisionism or rightism "on the one hand", but there is also the danger of "dogmatism" on the other, and that by skillfully maneuvering between these two obstacles the Party has gone from victory to victory. Or, there is the recognition in words of fundamental principles, the "ABCs of Marxism", such as the need to smash the existing state apparatus, while the Party's actual policy goes completely contrary to this goal.

This brings us back to the argument we and other comrades have raised regarding the CPN(M)'s repudiation of the Maoist principle of "one divides into two". The belief in the possibility and even necessity of reconciling or "fusing" together antagonist opposites has become a deeply engrained part of the CPN(M) leadership's approach.¹⁵ The fusion of Marxism and reformism is really not a brilliant new contribution to the communist movement. It is just one more unfortunate and tragic case where the communist leadership has lost its bearings.

We should remind comrades that every revisionist party always has a "left" whose role objectively is to provide an outlet for the discontent of the masses and sections of the rank and file, while keeping these same sections bound to the political program of the party leadership. The point is not the lack of sincerity of those who still try to combine justification and support of the CPN(M)'s objectively capitulationist line with language upholding proletarian revolution. The problem is that such language in support of revolution becomes meaningless, a mere deception of oneself and others, unless it is combined with an all out struggle against the very revisionism that is threatening the advance of the revolution.

Eclecticism and centrism, especially when raised to the level of philosophical approach and principle as is the case with the CPN(M) leadership, do not represent a position that is "half correct" or somehow more correct than an openly revisionist position. On the contrary, it is a form of revisionism in which an anti Marxist ideology and political line are allowed to flourish and are actually determining the course of political action, while better sounding words serve to cover over this reality and confuse the masses and comrades. Lenin's words, which the Chinese comrades often referred to during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, are cruel but unfortunately right on target: "In falsifying Marxism in opportunist fashion, the substitution of eclecticism for dialectics is the easiest way of deceiving the people. It gives an illusory satisfaction; it seems to take into account all sides of the process, all trends of development, all the conflicting influences, and so forth, whereas in reality it provides no integral and revolutionary conception of the process of social development at all."¹⁶

Yes, there is a marked tendency toward dogmatism in the ranks of RIM and the ICM more generally. But the CPN(M) "solution" is not the antidote to the dogmatic disease. A dogmatic refusal to make a "concrete analysis of concrete conditions" as Lenin referred to "the living soul of Marxism" has often gone hand in hand with revisionist political positions.

Rather than look to find a "middle ground" between two opposite forms of revisionism, be it the classic rightist form or sterile dogmatism, and end up incorporating the worst features of each, we propose that comrades focus their attention on what is in common between these "mirror opposite" forms of revisionism. The Manifesto recently issued by our Party points to the following common features of both forms of revisionism prevalent in the ICM as a whole:

*** Never taking up – or never engaging in any systematic way with – a scientific summation of the previous stage of the communist movement, and in particular Mao Tsetung's path breaking analysis concerning the danger of and basis for capitalist restoration in socialist society. Thus, while they may uphold – or may in the past have upheld – the Cultural Revolution in China, they lack any real, or profound, understanding of why this Cultural Revolution was necessary and why and with what principles and objectives Mao initiated and led this Cultural Revolution. They reduce this Cultural Revolution to, in effect, just another episode in the exercise of the dictatorship of the proletariat – or, on the other hand, reinterpret it as some kind of bourgeois democratic 'anti bureaucracy' movement, which in essence represents a negation of the need for a communist vanguard and its institutionalized leading role in socialist society, throughout the transition to communism.

** The common tendency to reduce 'Maoism' to just a prescription for waging people's war in a Third World country, while again ignoring, or diminishing the importance of, Mao's most important contribution to communism: his development of the theory and line of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, and all the rich analysis and scientific method that underlay and made possible the development of that theory and line.

** Positivism, pragmatism, and empiricism. While again, this may take different expressions in accordance with different particular erroneous viewpoints and approaches, what is common to them is the vulgarization and degradation of theory – reducing it to a 'guide to practice' only in the most narrow and immediate sense, treating theory as, in essence, a direct outgrowth of particular practice, and attempting to establish an equivalence between advanced practice (which itself, especially on these people's part, involves an element of subjective and

arbitrary evaluation) and supposedly advanced theory. A scientific communist, materialist and dialectical, viewpoint leads to the understanding that practice is the ultimate point of origin and point of verification of theory; but, in opposition to these narrow, empiricist distortions, this must be understood to mean practice in the broad sense, encompassing broad social and historical experience, and not simply the direct experience of a particular individual, group, party, or nation. The very founding, and the further development of, communist theory itself is a powerful demonstration of this: From the time of Marx, this theory has been forged and enriched by drawing from a broad array of experience, in a wide range of fields and over a broad expanse of historical development, in society and nature. Practice as the source of theory and the maxim that 'practice is the criterion of truth' can be, and will be, turned into a profound untruth if this is interpreted and applied in a narrow, empiricist, and subjective manner.

** Very significantly, these 'mirror opposite' erroneous tendencies have in common being mired in, or retreating into, models of the past, of one kind or another (even if the particular models may differ): either clinging dogmatically to the past experience of the first stage of the communist revolution – or, rather, to an incomplete, one sided, and ultimately erroneous understanding of that – or retreating into the whole past era of bourgeois revolution and its principles: going back to what are in essence eighteenth century theories of (bourgeois) democracy, in the guise, or in the name, of 'twenty first century communism', in effect equating this 'twenty first century communism' with a democracy that is supposedly 'pure' or 'classless' – a democracy which, in reality, as long as classes exist, can only mean bourgeois democracy, and bourgeois dictatorship. All this while ignoring, treating as outdated, or dismissing as dogma (or consigning to the meaningless category of the 'ABCs of communism', which are acknowledged as an abstraction and then put to the side as irrelevant to the practical struggle) the fundamental, scientific communist understanding, paid for literally and repeatedly in the blood of millions of the oppressed from the time of the Paris Commune, that the old, reactionary state must be smashed and dismantled and a radically new state must be brought into being, representing the revolutionary interests of the formerly exploited in transforming all of society and emancipating all of humanity, or else any gains of the revolutionary struggle will be squandered and destroyed, and the revolutionary forces decimated.¹⁷

In Summation: Fight To Save The Revolution!

It is true that now that the Party has dug itself such a big hole it will be difficult to dig out. But however difficult this task may be, the only

solution is a real radical rupture, a revolution in thinking, a determined and protracted effort to criticize and repudiate the revisionist orientation that has been increasingly dominating the Party ideologically, politically and organizationally. Anything short of such a determined effort, any attempts to maneuver and "finesse" away from the abyss without confronting the magnitude and source of the problem will not only fail to avoid the impending disaster but will actually be ideologically and politically paralyzing. "Half solutions" are no solution at all and, on the contrary, part of the problem.

We are not in a position to comment on what tactics or immediate steps the CPN(M) should take in the present situation. But we are convinced that if fundamental clarity is achieved on the vital questions of the state and revolution, the comrades in Nepal can find appropriate means to reverse the current path. The CPN(M) enjoys a tremendous reservoir of support from among the masses of the people of the whole country. The People's War ignited the hopes of the long downtrodden and unleashed them. The masses of the poor peasantry, the oppressed nationalities, women and oppressed castes need the revolution to go forward and will never be satisfied by a few representatives in parliament or government. The PLA is in peril, but it has not yet fallen victim to the conspiracies to dissolve it. And despite the efforts of the Party leadership to pander to the backward ideas of the urban middle classes (especially their illusions about "pure democracy"), experience has shown that the educated youth, intellectuals and others from the middle strata can be won to the side of the revolution on a positive basis by showing how their interests can best be fulfilled not by aborting the revolution but by carrying it through to its victory. Despite the great damage of the wrong line in command of the Party, a strong objective basis remains to rescue the revolution and carry it through to the establishment of a revolutionary state led by the proletariat and its vanguard.

On the other hand, unless the Party abandons its current confusion on the nature of the state, on the class nature of dictatorship and democracy, on the confounding of the socialist road and the capitalist road, and the confusion of friends and enemies on the international scale, all efforts to rectify the present state of affairs will be in vain. It will not be possible to reduce the fever without attacking the underlying sickness that is causing it.

The main form that revisionism has been taking in Nepal – and a major problem in our Movement as a whole – has been eclecticism and centrism. While some leaders of the Party have all along expressed their support for the political system of bourgeois democracy and their belief

in the necessity for the country to pass through a whole stage of capitalism, the greater problem has been those in the Party leadership who have floundered ideologically – confusing bourgeois democracy with the New Democratic dictatorship, combining two into one, confusing strategy and tactics, confounding secondary and principal aspects of a contradiction, talking one language in private and another in public, and in general saying one thing and doing another.

The problem can be overcome, but only if a radical rupture takes place with the current dominant centrism and eclectics. This means that a pressing and immediate task is the ideological reaffirmation of the basic goals of the proletarian revolution as distinct from bourgeois democracy, reaffirming the New Democratic revolution as the vehicle for achieving this in Nepal, and reaffirming the basic means to accomplish the revolution. On this basis it will be possible to sweep away the cobwebs of revisionism, eclecticism and centrism and really meet the challenges of communism of the twenty first century. It is worthwhile recalling that one of the main focal points of the final ferocious struggle against the capitalist roaders in China was the debate over the dictatorship of the proletariat. Chang Chunbiao, one of the main leaders of Mao's revolutionary headquarters in the party, spoke sharply to some of the other party leaders who were not playing a good role in the struggle. He pointed out: some of you consider the study of the dictatorship of the proletariat to be a "flexible task", but the capitalist roaders understand very clearly that it is an "inflexible task" with life and death implications for the revolution. Similarly, the current debate concerning the path forward in Nepal is no less vital.

Our comrades in Nepal are caught in a swamp and in dire danger of drowning. And what has been the reaction of RIM comrades in other countries to this emergency? While a few have tried to assist as best they can, unfortunately some others have thrown flowers to the floundering comrades when what they critically need is a strong rope to pull themselves out of the swamp. The necessary rope exists: it is nothing other than the revolutionary communist ideological and political line, its stand, viewpoint and method. It is a scientific understanding of the world and the revolutionary process, which is constantly developing as it steadfastly upholds and builds upon the achievements as well as summing up the positive and negative experiences of the first wave of proletarian revolution, incorporates discoveries and advances in every sphere of human endeavor and confronts both new problems of revolution and old problems in new forms. The current two line struggle within the CPN(M) is taking place within the context of the greater question of

whether, and on what basis, a whole new wave of world proletarian revolution can be brought forward.

The experience of the revolution in Nepal is very rich indeed, and one can see the real life implications of political and ideological line, both positively through the ten years of People's War and more recently negatively in the period of dismantling the people's power. Nevertheless, the belief that the advanced practice of the Nepal revolution has made it unnecessary to learn from advanced understanding from other comrades is part of the pragmatism and empiricism that has, unfortunately, been a growing part of the CPN(M) leadership's ideological orientation for some time now. Any effort to resolve the crisis in the CPN(M) only "on its own terms", and on nationalist or empiricist grounds to ignore or resist the advanced revolutionary communist understanding developing elsewhere is to severely handicap the struggle for a correct line. In particular, we sincerely hope that the comrades of the CPN(M) will give serious attention to engaging with the body of work, method and approach, the New Synthesis, that Bob Avakian has been bringing forward.

We will conclude by sending our warm greetings to the leaders, cadres and fighters of the CPN(M) at this crucial crossroads of the revolution and our hopes that the crucial struggle will be carried through to a successful conclusion. The correct political and ideological line is capable of transforming the present direction of the Party and avoiding the abyss. Those who have played a revolutionary role in the past can, if armed with a correct line, cast off the baggage of eclecticism, pragmatism and centrism and retake the revolutionary road. But this will only be achieved by fighting through for the necessary radical rupture. We pledge again to do everything we can to assist you in this struggle, which will not only determine the future for Nepal but is inseparable from the crucial questions that are now facing the entire international communist movement.

Revolutionary Communist Party, USA 4 November 2008

References :

1. See Red Star, Number 15, "Fall of Koirala Dynasty".
2. A decisive turning point in this process was in October 2005 when a line struggle in the Party reached a culmination at the Central Committee meeting. One of the important subjects in that two-line struggle was whether or not the revolution must pass through the stage of anti-monarchical struggle and the establishment of a bourgeois democracy ("transitional state"). In typical eclectic fashion, this thesis was rejected theoretically by saying that such a sub-stage was not an absolute requirement but at the same time this thesis was made the guiding
3. From the Tenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China, adopted August 28, 1973.

4. See Mao Tsetung on this subject, especially "On New Democracy", *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 339.
5. See *Red Star*, Number 16.
6. Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France*.
7. In our October 2005 letter speaking to the "New State" article, we argued that the ideology of classless democracy (or "pure democracy") corresponded to capitalism where goods must be exchanged according to "equal" value and where this formal equality covers over the actual exploitation of the working class (the exchange of a "fair day's pay" for a "fair day's work"). See Bob Avakian's book *Democracy Can't We Do Better than That?*, as well as his polemic against K. Venu "Democracy: More Than Ever We Can and Must Do Better than That", which appeared in the journal *A World to Win*, Number 17. Many of these and other writings of Bob Avakian and the RCP are available for downloading at the web address: www.revcom.us or www.bobavakian.net
8. Bob Avakian has done important work on the subject of democracy as well as re-envisioning the process of socialist revolution including bringing forward the concept of "a solid core with a lot of elasticity". In addition to the works on democracy cited above, see his discussion of the socialist revolution in, among other recent writings, "Making Revolution and Emancipating Humanity" in *Revolution and Communism: A Foundation and Strategic Orientation* (2008).
9. See *Red Star*, Number 14, "The Essentials for Fusing Two Armies".
10. The comrades of the Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist) have summed up at length the error of their predecessor organization, the Union of Iran Communists, in this regard.
11. *Communism: the Beginning of a New Stage: A Manifesto from the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA*, September 2008.
12. We are well aware of the fact that the US imperialists and others are making use of the reactionary nature of the Tibetan leadership, especially the Dalai Lama, to put pressure on China and manipulate the discontent of the Tibetan masses. But this does not change the fact that real national oppression exists in Tibet, nor does it justify the vicious repression by the Chinese authorities.
13. Here we can only speak of the English language materials of the CPN(M). If such exposure of the true nature of capitalist China has appeared in Nepali publications we would like to have them pointed out to us.
14. Although the USSR had long previously become a revisionist, social-imperialist superpower, the fact that its leaders still referred to themselves as "communists" made the collapse of this regime and the unchallenged hegemony of the US and other "Western democracies" an occasion for further anti communist "summation" from the Western imperialists and other reactionaries.
15. See the argument that the CPN(M) made on this question in their reply to our October 2005 letter.
16. Lenin, "The State and Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 405.
17. We strongly encourage comrades to study *Communism the Beginning of a New Stage: a Manifesto from the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA*, which includes our party's understanding of the overall situation of the international communist movement in today's juncture and discusses the lessons of a major struggle within our own party to uphold and advance communist principles.



Letter of RCP, USA

(March 2008)

**19 March 2008 To the Participating Parties and Organizations of the
RIM Comrades,**

For some time now our Party has been greatly disturbed by the direction the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (CPN(M)) has been taking in terms of its political and ideological positions and the policies that flow from them. Many of our concerns about fundamental questions were expressed in a letter sent to the comrades of the CPN(M) in October 2005. That letter was written before the April 2006 anti monarchy movement and the subsequent ceasefire, the adoption of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), the joining of the interim Nepal government and other developments. However much the CPN(M) comrades laid out that our Party is simply unable to understand their "creative tactics", in reality our debate with the CPN(M) around points of theory and basic line preceded their practice over the last two years. The CPN(M) has a theory leading to a series of steps down a path whose final outcome is coming into sharper and sharper focus. It is the CPN(M)'s political and ideological line, and not this or that tactic, which was and remains the central focus of our struggle.

One of the central political questions we raised in our debate with the CPN(M) was whether the current stage of the struggle is for the establishment of a new democratic republic, that is, the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat appropriate in the conditions of Nepal, or whether the revolution must "pass through" the process of consolidating a bourgeois democratic republic. This question that we were debating in theory has, over the last two years, taken on flesh and bones. Two states had emerged in the course of the ten yearlong People's War: the old reactionary comprador bureaucrat capitalist feudal state led by the monarchy in league with imperialism, and the embryonic new democratic state that had emerged in the countryside on the basis of the strength of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). The objective question facing Nepal is which of these states will emerge victorious and be consolidated on a nationwide level and which of them will be defeated. The great tragedy is that the political line and muddled thinking of the comrades of the CPN(M)

has to a large degree delegitimized the revolutionary state that had emerged in the countryside and relegitimized the dictatorship of the reactionary classes linked to the world imperialist system. The Party is now focused on the upcoming Constituent Assembly (CA) whose task is precisely to consolidate a bourgeois democratic republic, with all that that means in the conditions of the oppressed countries.

Over the past two years and more our Party has conducted a continual struggle with the comrades of the CPN(M) within the framework of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) and we will continue to do so to the best of our capacity.

We are convinced that unless the CPN(M) makes a radical rupture with its present course, unless it repudiates a series of conceptions that have been guiding it in the past period, the tremendous accomplishments of the People's War in Nepal will be squandered, and the great hopes that the revolution in Nepal has lit among the masses of that country and many others worldwide will be dashed once again. Indeed, this process of the undoing of the revolution and its transformation into something else is already well advanced.

Despite this heartbreaking trajectory it is late but not too late for the comrades in Nepal to radically change directions. This is the pressing and immediate task without which it is impossible to lead the revolution to a successful conclusion.

It goes without saying that the outcome of the struggle now unfolding in Nepal will be felt far beyond the borders of that country. The comrades in Nepal have been an important component of RIM since its formation and our Movement has been deeply engaged with the ideological and political questions as they have emerged in connection with the launching and unfolding of the People's War in that country. As the comrades of the CPN(M) have themselves often put it, the outcome of the revolution in Nepal is a common responsibility of the whole RIM.

It is in this spirit that our Party is continuing the struggle, in order to have a constructive impact on the situation in Nepal and fight for the RIM and all of the parties that make it up to accept their responsibilities to wage a fierce and substantial struggle against the line that has been in command in the CPN(M). After all, RIM has rightfully declared itself the embryonic political center of the world's Maoist forces and has tried to live up to this great task. What meaning would this have if our Movement were to remain silent and passive, or worse yet cheering along, as an important party of our Movement takes decisions of a tragic dimension with such profound consequences for a revolution we hold so dear? Of

what meaning is "proletarian internationalism" and "international solidarity" if it does not have as its bedrock the need to cry "halt" when the precious achievements of the revolution are being destroyed?

On one level, the positions and policies of the CPN(M) over the last two years are, or should be, recognizable as a departure from basic Marxist Leninist Maoist (MLM) principles and the very basis on which our Movement was formed. The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of November 2006 in which the organs of political power built up through a decade of People's War were dismantled, in which the People's Liberation Army (PLA) was confined to cantonments and most of its weapons locked up under UN supervision, the "legitimization" of the old army, the old parliament and the old state generally, redefining the goal of the People's War as the establishment of a (bourgeois) "federal democratic republic" (under the CPN[M] slogan of "restructuring the state"), the promotion of a whole series of erroneous positions on crucial questions of the nature of the state, elections and so forth—all of this does, or should, cause any communist more than just alarm. And indeed a great many comrades have, in one form or another, expressed their "concerns" or reservations about the direction of events in Nepal. But the particular form of the leading line in the Party, as we will explain, is characterized essentially by eclecticism in philosophy—the merging and reconciliation of opposites, put simply, to "combine two into one" instead of the Marxist method of "dividing one into two." The CPN(M) leaders listen politely to the "concerns" of comrades, thank those who offer them, assure others of their commitments to our common communist objectives and then proceed ever deeper into the quicksand. Unfortunately, the main reaction of many comrades of other parties has been to accept the hollow assurances of the Party leadership.

In the most recent period, as the Party has geared up for its Constituent Assembly electoral campaign, the promotion of revisionist positions has reached new heights. When our Party pointed out in our previous letter why we felt that the CPN(M)'s line and policies were wrong and contrary to Marxist principles, we were told that all we had done is repeat the "ABCs of Marxism". This is true to an important degree: substituting the goal of a "federal democratic republic" for new democratic revolution led by the proletariat is something that anyone the least familiar with Marxism could fairly easily recognize to be contrary to Marxist principles. Later, we will examine why so many of the parties and organizations of RIM seem to find this departure from the "ABCs of Marxism" tolerable—if not laudable.

As mentioned earlier, our dispute with the comrades of the CPN(M)

did not begin with their decision to sign the Comprehensive Peace Agreement with the Seven Party Alliance, the main representatives (except the king) of the reactionary classes in Nepal. A discussion within the CPN(M) intensified in 2005, which the Party characterized as a "two line struggle." In particular one of the protagonists in this struggle, Comrade Baburam Bhattarai, published a comprehensive article entitled "The Question of Building a New Type of State" which, in our opinion, represented a basic departure from a correct Marxist understanding of the state, democracy and the proletarian dictatorship. In hopes of contributing to the discussion that was then underway in the Party, we wrote our criticism of that article, along with our criticism of the proposal for the "demobilizing of the PLA and the Royal Nepal Army" and eventually merging them into one.¹

At more or less the same time our letter was received, the CPN(M) held a Central Committee meeting which resolved the two line struggle with what represented, in our opinion, the adoption of the line argued in the "New State" article in an eclectic form. The explanation in the resolution of that meeting was that the line adopted of going for a "democratic republic" and a "transitional state" was only "tactical" but that the "strategy" remained one of new democracy, socialism and communism.

This eclecticism in politics and ideology is reflected throughout the writings and actions of the CPN(M) in the past period. To make things even worse, there is an increasing tendency to identify the "federal democratic republic," which is most definitely a bourgeois republic, with the elimination of exploitation and classes. The tendency toward combining "two into one" is reflected right down to the publication of photos of their leaders smeared with tikka² coupled with the explanation that "red is the color of the proletariat."

Later we will return at more length to the vital question of eclecticism and the tending to combine "two into one". For the moment we will simply recall Lenin's words:

"Dialectics are replaced by eclecticism—this is the most usual, the most widespread practice to be met with in present day official Social Democratic literature in relation to Marxism. This sort of substitution is, of course, nothing new: it was observed even in the history of Greek philosophy. In falsifying Marxism in opportunist fashion, the substitution of eclecticism for dialectics is the easiest way of deceiving the people. It gives an illusory satisfaction; it seems to take into account all sides of the process, all trends of development, all the conflicting influences, and

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so forth, whereas in reality it provides no integral and revolutionary conception of the process of social development at all." ("The State and Revolution," Collected Works, Vol. 25, p. 405.)

Troubling Tactics In the Pursuit of a Wrong Ideological and Political Line

Many of the articles and documents of the CPN(M) are content to express the goal of the revolution as simply the achieving of a "democratic, federal and proportional" republic. But it is true that there are other articles and speeches, not to mention the frequent informal assurances, such as in the letter to the RCP, that the Party "understands" or aims to achieve new democracy, socialism and communism. Here is where eclecticism plays its role in dulling the vigilance of the communists and the advanced masses. Promises about the final goal are sprinkled here and there, but the operative thing is elections for the Constituent Assembly and throwing all the Party into gear around this.

We will not review all of the arguments made in our previous letter concerning the relationship between strategy and tactics, the danger of tactics eating up strategy, and so forth, other than to encourage the comrades to reread our previous letter in light of the developments of the last two years. In this broader sense tactics, or perhaps better put, policy, is a necessary and appropriate arena for discussion and debate within our Movement. Nevertheless, it is the overall question of political and ideological line and not the specific tactics and policy of the CPN(M) that is the central and decisive question.

In the CPN(M)'s reply to our letter, they go so far as to make a principle out of denying this point. The problem with the RCP, according to the Nepalese comrades, is that we address only the level of "strategy," whereas, the comrades insist, revolutions are not won or lost on the strategic level but rather on the level of tactics. The comrades argue, "Frankly speaking, it is very easy not to commit any mistakes in strategy... The test of revolutionaries, including your

Party, is best taken by tactics, not strategy. Therefore, the fate of the revolution depends fully not on the strategy alone, but on what kinds of tactical moves one adopts at various junctures of the revolution to attain the strategic goal."

In reality, history is quite different. Sometimes revolutions are defeated not because of the mistakes of the revolutionaries but because of the unfavorable balance of forces. But in those cases where the subjective factor, that is, the understanding and actions of the

revolutionaries, has been the major factor leading to the failure of the revolution, it is often precisely that communists have misidentified the strategic tasks of the revolution, mistaken enemies and friends, or departed from the fundamental path. On the contrary, a tactical blunder can usually be overcome unless it has strategic implications.

In this same vein, the reason we are so disturbed by many of the tactics, or policies, that the CPN(M) has been following in the last period is that these tactics objectively go against the strategic objective of accomplishing the new democratic revolution.

Despite the CPN(M)'s charge against our Party of dogmatism and inflexibility, we are quite aware of the need, especially in a period of revolutionary upsurge, for tactical flexibility, making use of contradictions among the enemy, reaching broader sections of the masses and creative and daring initiatives in the interests of the proletarian revolution. For example, our Party defended the possibility of ceasefire and negotiations in the course of the People's War in Nepal and more generally.³ It is quite likely that in the specific conditions prevailing after the collapse of the absolute monarchy in April 2006 it would have been difficult and perhaps undesirable to continue uninterruptedly the armed struggle against the Royal Nepalese Army or refuse to enter into negotiations with the Seven Party Alliance. Due to the terror of repression during the People's War, the Party's contact with the masses had been restricted, especially in the urban areas. It was no doubt necessary for the Party to take maximum advantage of the crisis of the ruling class and its political institutions to project its program for the future society and prepare the masses for a revolutionary solution to the institutional crisis. But unfortunately this is not mainly what the Party has done. The nationwide and even international platform that the CPN(M) gained as a result of ten years of People's War and the ensuing April 2006 anti monarchy movement and political and institutional crises has not been used to extol the new form of state in Nepal they had built in the base areas, not to expose the bankruptcy of the ruling class forces, and most definitely not to draw a clear line of distinction between bourgeois dictatorship and bourgeois democracy, on the one hand, and the proletarian dictatorship and proletarian democracy on the other. We will even go so far as to state that the decision to participate in the Constituent Assembly elections might have been necessary and justified if it were part of a different and, in fact, opposite, political line in command in the Party.⁴

None of the above is meant to justify the actual policy and tactics that the CPN(M) has been adopting. What we are saying is that these tactics alone, abstracted from their overall political and strategic context,

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cannot be the basis for judging the line and direction of the CPN(M). The opposite is true as well: a return to more open combat will not, in and of itself, answer the question of political and ideological line. It is certainly to be expected that the denouement of the profound institutional crisis in Nepal will not be peaceful. Even run of the mill bourgeois elections in the third world countries are often accompanied by bloodshed. And in Nepal there is every reason to expect social explosions, upheavals and an intensification of class struggle in connection with the Constituent Assembly elections (if they actually take place) or in their aftermath.

One of the reasons for the paralysis of our Movement in the face of the emergence of a wrong line by the CPN(M) seems to be a difficulty in going beyond immediate policies and looking deeper into the ideological and political orientation propelling them. Instead of flipping from being concerned when the fruits of the revolution are being compromised to being reassured when the conflicts sharpen and flipping back again with the rapid changes of the political situation in Nepal, comrades must, to paraphrase Mao, take the appearance only as the threshold and use dialectical materialism to understand the essence.

It is true that those of us outside Nepal will never be able to fully understand the situation well enough to have strongly formulated opinions on all the many specific questions that arise in the course of the revolution. Our debate with the CPN(M) is focused not on this or that tactic, but on the fundamental questions of the revolution and, most specifically, what kind of state must be established by the revolution. It is because of fundamental errors on this level—because of the blurring or even negation of the fundamental goals of the revolution—that the CPN(M) has adopted first one then another erroneous and damaging tactic which has led away from the achievement of the revolutionary goals.

What is the Goal—to "Restructure the State" or to "Smash It"?

One of the phrases that recurs in CPN(M) writings like a leitmotif is the call to "restructure the state." In fact, this very phrase sharply sums up what is wrong in the CPN(M)'s political program. It is worthwhile reviewing the much maligned "ABCs of Marxism" in this regard. In summing up the experience of the different revolutions in 19th century Europe, Marx made the very profound observation that "all revolutions perfected this machine instead of smashing it" (our emphasis).⁵ What did Marx mean by this?

In particular he was referring to the fact that the several rounds of revolution in Europe and especially France (1789, 1830, and 1848) had

resulted in transforming the state machinery to correspond with the capitalist economic base and "perfecting" its ability to fulfill its role as the enforcer of bourgeois dictatorship. Quite clearly Marx is referring to the abolition of the monarchy in much of Europe and the generalization of bourgeois democracy as the "perfection" of the capitalist dictatorship that the state represents. Later Marx specifically draws the lesson of the Commune which was not, in its essence, an effort to further perfect the bourgeois state apparatus in France but rather a first, albeit halting, sometimes irresolute, and ultimately unsuccessful effort to smash the bourgeois state machinery and replace it with a different state emerging from the proletarian revolutionary struggle.⁶

At stake in the present debate in Nepal is whether, when all is said and done, the 10 years of People's War will have served to smash the reactionary state machinery or perfect it. To put it quite bluntly, if the result of the war is the consolidation of a bourgeois republic, the tragic result will be that the sacrifice of the people will have served not to establish a new form of proletarian rule but only to "modernize" and "perfect" the very instrument that keeps them oppressed.

The theoretical basis of this confusion between "smashing" and "perfecting" the state apparatus can be seen quite clearly in the October 2005 CC resolution which "resolved" the two line struggle in the party and laid the basis for the Party's subsequent policies. In that resolution it is argued that never in history has a monarchy disappeared without dissolving and defeating "the army on which the state power is based."⁷

This reflects a very wrong understanding of exactly what the historical experience has been, and specifically the very experience Marx was referring to in the above mentioned citation of the experience of "all previous revolutions." In most of the major countries of Europe the bourgeois republican state was able to be consolidated without ever thoroughly destroying the state apparatus associated with the monarchy for the very reason that bourgeois relations had grown up in the shell provided by the monarchy and that the earlier feudal monarchy had become a bourgeois monarchy to varying degrees. This process, of course, did not take place smoothly and involved revolutions, advances and retreats. In Great Britain no revolution took place after the Glorious Revolution of 1688-89 and there was a gradual process of the monarchy being adapted and remolded to be thoroughly in the service of capitalism, which is the situation right down to today. In other countries such as France, Germany and Italy there were repeated revolutionary explosions and both bourgeois counter revolutions (France 1814 or Germany after 1848), as well as relatively peaceful bourgeois consolidation of the state

system in the wake of revolutionary outbursts (Louis Napoleon in France, 1852). The result of this complex and varied process throughout the 19th century was, however, exactly as Marx described it—the consolidation, the perfecting of the bourgeois democratic regime, with or without a residual monarchy, in all of the advanced capitalist countries. Even in France, home of the quintessential bourgeois revolution, the reactionary army of the monarchy was never thoroughly "smashed" and the bourgeoisie found it useful to preserve or reintroduce aspects of the monarchy into the bourgeois framework even as it continued to struggle against remnants of feudalism at home and abroad, Napoleon I being a very clear example. In short, stating that no republic has been established without the thoroughgoing destruction of the state apparatus serving the monarchy does not correspond to the facts and serves to obscure the real tasks of the revolution in relation to the state. It is an illustration of the confusion and eclecticism that is reigning in the Party, where the correct revolutionary strategy of new democratic revolution is combined with a very reformist strategy (now masquerading as a "tactic") of fighting for a "transitional" bourgeois republic.

Furthermore, how are we to reconcile the description the CPN(M) offers with the experience of the Russian revolution? Is it not the case that the revolution of February 1917 established a bourgeois republic in Russia without "dissolving and defeating" the army and bureaucracy of the Tsar? In fact, the Provisional Government led by Kerensky very much represented the "perfecting" of the bourgeois state apparatus in republican form. It should not be any surprise that this "perfecting" also includes incorporating and protecting many reactionary features of the previous form of rule nor that some of the forces grouped around the Tsar also conspired against the Provisional government itself, such as in the Kornilov revolt in July of 1917 when these same forces tried to reverse the whole revolutionary process then going on in Russia. Lenin's line was clear—the task of the revolution was not to consolidate a bourgeois republic but rather to fight to "smash" the bourgeois state apparatus and establish a completely different type of state. And this, of course, is exactly what he did.

Similarly in more recent history we have seen monarchies that were overthrown and replaced with different forms of a republic without requiring the smashing of the state. This can be seen in the 1979 revolution in Iran when the autocratic regime of the Shah was overthrown and an Islamic Republic established. The state apparatus of the Shah, and especially the army, was most definitely not smashed but rather reformed as part of the consolidation of the equally reactionary Islamic Republic of Iran. And while the general historical tendency has been for

monarchies to give rise to republics, there are cases where a bourgeois monarchy has served as a more suitable shell than a republic for perfecting the bourgeois democratic state. The clearest example is Spain where the Franco dictatorship had outlived its usefulness to the bourgeoisie and the best means of avoiding revolutionary explosion and assuring a transition to a modern and effective bourgeois democracy was through the vehicle of a restored monarchy in the person of Juan Carlos. And it must be said that the transition of modern Spain from fascist bourgeois state to democratic monarchy was particularly successful and has indeed further perfected the state in the interests of the bourgeoisie and the world imperialist system as a whole.

So why does the CPN(M) insist so strongly on a portrayal based on the need to "dissolve and defeat" the armed forces of the monarchy? Their analysis is consistent with the CPN(M)'s constant efforts to portray the basic struggle in the country as between the forces of reaction grouped around the monarchy against the forces who stand for the Republic. In reality, this picture actually combines several contradictions. The contradiction between the masses and the enemy classes (feudalism, comprador bureaucrat capitalism and imperialism) is eclectically merged with a real but secondary contradiction among the reactionary classes themselves, between the diehard supporters of the monarchy and other sections of the exploiters who now believe that the monarchy is a threat to their continued rule. Certainly the possibility of a move against the Constituent Assembly by the monarchy and sections of the Army cannot be discounted, but the main tendency within the ruling classes of Nepal and their foreign backers is now to favor the Constituent Assembly and the declaration of a republic.

There is a particular form of eclecticism at work here, where the CPN(M) takes the well known and central Marxist precept about the need to smash the existing state apparatus and narrows and misapplies it to the institution of the monarchy. It appears to be very revolutionary to insist on the thorough smashing of the monarchy but in fact this covers over that the target of the new democratic revolution is not the monarchy but rather the whole of the bureaucrat comprador and feudal classes and their foreign and imperialist backers.

The monarchy in Nepal does need to be thoroughly uprooted by the new democratic revolution. It is certainly no surprise that the reactionary classes will be inclined to incorporate many elements of the monarchy or even the king himself into a new reactionary state. In this sense it is quite correct for the communists to call for the thorough eradication of the monarchy and lead the masses in eradicating the

monarchy as part of the new democratic revolution and the bringing into power of a new state. But this is not what the comrades have been arguing—or doing. Instead, they are continuing to insist that the complete eradication of the monarchy and the establishment of "pure" (bourgeois) democracy with parties representing interests of the reactionary classes is a necessary preliminary step before the revolution can advance toward its new democratic objectives, or redefining new democracy to being really no different than bourgeois democracy. And it doesn't really matter if this step is considered a required strategic step as is argued in "New State" or merely a "tactical" step as the 2005 resolution argues—in either of these interpretations the accomplishment of the republic is the necessary preliminary to further advance.

To this we have two main responses. First, any reactionary bourgeois comprador feudal republic established in Nepal must and will incorporate all sorts of reactionary features of the previous system. This is because such a republic will and can only be, in the most fundamental sense, a continuation of the previous (monarchical) state exactly because it will maintain and enforce the rule of the same reactionary classes. Whether the king remains, the stench of feudalism of which he was the symbol and main representative can never be eliminated without the completion of the new democratic revolution. Our second and more fundamental response is that the bourgeois republic is, as Lenin put it, the "most suitable shell" for the growth of capitalism even if the bourgeoisie and the principal bourgeois parties (including the reformist and revisionist ones) may tremble with fear at the thought of standing alone without the protection of the monarchy. After all the monarchy has been the pillar of the whole comprador bureaucrat feudal system in Nepal and thus the bourgeoisie and even revisionists have an ambiguous attitude toward it. This is exactly Marx's point that hitherto existing revolutions have only perfected the bourgeois state apparatus even if they have often done so in opposition to the bourgeoisie itself (or at least large sections of it). The bourgeoisie's exploiting nature and its tendency to compromise with other, even more antiquated, forms of exploitation has often led to its own vacillation and sometimes even paralysis, including in a revolution in which, objectively, its class and its mode of production are the ultimate beneficiaries. Often in history "the people" have put the bourgeoisie in power even when the bourgeoisie, or most of them, were slinking in fear.

In other words, the goal of "pure" bourgeois democracy, scrubbed clean of the odor of monarchy, is both unobtainable and undesirable. Yet rather than recognize, and proclaim to the masses, that the system that is presently being consolidated in Nepal through the whole process of the Constituent Assembly is exactly a kind of truncated, feudal infested.

national be betraying democracy, the "best" that is obtainable without overthrowing the reactionary classes, instead of extolling the democracy that was built in the course of the People's War and calling on the establishment of that state system, that democracy and that dictatorship, on a countrywide level, the comrades in Nepal set out in quest for the Holy Grail of "pure" democracy, constantly discovering first one then another unfulfilled criteria of bourgeois democracy, and trying to focus the fight on this ever narrowing basis.

Bourgeois Democracy and New Democracy

Mao developed the theory of the new democratic revolution (NDR) and clearly conceived of it as, in its first stage, bourgeois democratic in character in that its objective is to clear away the fetters that keep the oppressed nations undeveloped and subjugated to foreign powers—specifically semi feudal relations and comprador and bureaucrat capitalism dependent on and serving foreign imperialist powers and, importantly in the case of Nepal, neighboring India. The NDR is not socialist in so far as it does not immediately seek to do away with all capitalist exploitation and, to a certain extent and to a certain degree, even opens the door for the growth of national capitalism. All this is well known.

But Mao was also adamant that the NDR was not part of the old democratic revolution of the bourgeoisie but a part of the world proletarian revolution whose aim is socialism and ultimately communism. This was not just an empty proclamation on Mao's part, but a reflection of the class analysis he had made of China and his programmatic understanding of the tasks of the NDR. And he gave great emphasis to the "socialist elements" within the NDR which lay the basis for the transformation of the NDR into a future socialist revolution.

Today Nepal is at a crossroads between new democracy and bourgeois democracy of the old type, with all that that means in the conditions of an oppressed country. Under these circumstances one would have expected the communists to be clarifying this choice to the masses, exposing the sham and reactionary nature of the democracy proclaimed by the reactionary classes and their foreign backers, extolling the accomplishments already achieved in the course of the NDR in the countryside and calling upon the people to institute this system throughout Nepal. But instead what is objectively a clear choice has been blurred and muddled, in particular by the propaganda, slogans and actions of the communists themselves in their quest for "pure democracy."

When we take a concrete look at Nepal and how the revolution has developed, we can see that there are a number of crucial questions

which are bourgeois democratic in nature but challenge the very framework of the bureaucrat comprador, semi feudal system dominating in Nepal. Several of these questions which have been so powerfully expressed in revolutionary struggle during the ten years of People's War are 1) the fight to eliminate the oppression of women, 2) the fight to definitively destroy the caste system, 3) the fight for the equality of nationalities, 4) the realization of "land to the tiller", and 5) establishing real independence from India and the imperialist powers. None of these questions are, by themselves, socialist in character but they are very much at the heart of the new democratic revolution. They can only be achieved by the revolution led by the proletariat through mobilizing and relying on the people. Furthermore, each of these contradictions and the struggle to resolve them carries within it seeds that lay the basis for the future transformation of the revolution beyond the democratic stage toward the socialist and communist future.

It is quite clear that a reactionary bourgeois, comprador feudal regime, republic or not, will never thoroughly solve any of the democratic questions mentioned above. Such a regime might try to "mitigate" some of these contradictions but ultimately cannot succeed, as can be seen in the example of neighboring India. "The world's largest democracy" is a good illustration of the reactionary nature of bureaucrat comprador, semi feudal democracy. In India, caste discrimination is formally illegal and "reservations" are set aside in government jobs for the oppressed classes, women have legal equality, and the equality of languages and the secular character of the state is formally proclaimed. But everyone knows how far the formal proclamations are from the daily reality of the humiliation and oppression of Dalits and Adivasis, constant Hindu domination periodically punctuated by communal massacres, the subservience of women highlighted by frequent dowry murders, and the list could go on and on. In reality, in a few short years in Nepal, the unleashing of the masses in the People's War brought about transformations of the relations among the people and of many of the corresponding ideas that were never accomplished in bourgeois comprador, semi feudal India. For example, the very large number of young women volunteering to serve in the People's Liberation Army, many of whom came to be leaders, is linked to the fact that the new revolutionary order, or new democracy taking root in the countryside, made an immediate and dramatic impact on the status of women—child marriage was effectively abolished in deed as well as in law, anti women louts were disciplined, many young people chose their own spouse without concern for caste or family. Can India, where over 90 percent of marriages respect caste barriers, say the same? One of the great transformations in the Nepalese countryside has been

the body blow to the caste system. While almost all political parties in Nepal declare in words their opposition to the caste system, only the revolution was able to make a real dent in this centuries old practice. The formerly downtrodden, now standing up tall and proud, look anyone directly in the eye. These are the real democratic tasks that the revolution already accomplished to an important degree and which can be put forward as a model to the whole country. Ironically, the search for "real democracy," which can only be considered a code word for thoroughly implemented ("real") bourgeois democracy, has undercut the very power of these revolutionary democratic accomplishments exactly because "real democracy" cannot in Nepal, anymore than it has in India or other third world countries, thoroughly uproot these archaic and backward forms of oppression, and indeed "real democracy" generally makes no such claims. Rather, "real democracy" focuses on the form of state, and especially multiparty elections, to which democracy is systematically reduced.

Experience all over the world has shown again and again that multiparty elections will not prevent the political power, the dictatorship, from being firmly in the hands of the exploiting classes. The advantages these classes hold in experience in ruling, education, finances, connections to the imperialist world system (and in Nepal's case to the Indian ruling class) give these classes and their representatives a great advantage in the electoral contest, even a "fair" one by bourgeois democratic standards, not to mention all of the "extra democratic" features that most often accompany elections in third world countries—ballot stuffing, police intimidation, foreign intrigue, etc. And, of course, there is always the ultimate "veto" of the reactionary armed forces that can be imposed in the highly unlikely event that the electoral results actually did pose a threat to the interests of the ruling class and their foreign backers. We are about to witness this same process in Nepal. In the conditions of today it is extremely unlikely that the CPN(M) will be a majority in the upcoming Constituent Assembly elections, and the two thirds majority necessary to make any substantial changes to the interim constitution is impossible. The most likely result is that the CPN(M) will be defeated "fairly" at the elections—after all, if the reactionaries were not confident of this result they would simply postpone the elections as they did in June 2007—and the legitimacy of the newly consolidated reactionary state will emerge reinforced. If in the extremely unlikely event that the Party did come to occupy the key positions of government through this electoral process the very alliance required, the entanglement in bourgeois political institutions and with the "international community" will ensure that there is no transfer of power to the proletariat and the oppressed classes and no basis for the state to carry out the revolutionary transformation of society.

We would hope that the comrades of the CPN(M) will not accept the "verdict of the ballot box" despite their repeated pledges to do so and despite the immense pressure that they will be under to "accept the rules" of bourgeois elections. But even in the welcome event the comrades do reject such an outcome, they will be doing so on substantially weakened grounds having lent the authority of the Party to the legitimacy of this whole process. And there remains the underlying problem of the strategic conception and strategic goal of bourgeois democracy as a transitional state, an orientation which is constantly reasserting itself in the domain of tactical choices and policies. Even if, belatedly, the Party decides to take a different path—and we will continue to struggle for precisely such a radical shift in direction—pres sure to return to the parliamentary road will continue to come from this very unclarity on strategic objectives. It won't be enough to simply adjust tactics once again; a real repudiation of the approach and thinking that led to this impasse is required.

"Proportional" Bourgeois Democracy or the New Democratic System?

Nepal even more than many other third world countries is "a prison house of nations." The minority of "mainstream Nepalese" has ruled and run roughshod over the majority of the population at least since the establishment of the Gurkha kingdom in 1768 by Prithur Narayan Shah. A great achievement of the revolution has been to awaken the oppressed nationalities of Nepal all across the country and to organize them into the ranks of the revolution. As the revolution developed, organs of power were established in the areas of concentration of different nationalities, for example the Magarat Autonomous Region that was established in the Rolpa Rokum heartland of the revolution in western Nepal. Certainly we would like to understand this experience better and learn more about specific forms of state and mass organizations in relation to overcoming national oppression. However, it is clear that these forms generally met with widespread approval of the masses.

We would like to emphasize the obvious—none of this was possible without the organized strength of the armed masses and specifically the victories of the PLA over the armed forces of the old reactionary state. It was on the basis of clearing away the police stations, courts, jails as well as the organized bands of reactionaries and lumpens that it was possible for people's rule to be established and give expression to the long smothered aspirations of the minority nationalities.

There is a great deal of experience in how the problems of minority

nationalities have been addressed as part of the proletarian dictatorship in the course of the 20th century. This experience needs to be deeply summed up as part of the broader experience of socialist revolution. One of the key summations we have drawn from the overall experience of the proletarian revolution is, as Comrade Bob Avakian has put it, the need for "a solid core with a lot of elasticity." That is, with proletarian authority established and a firm grip on state power maintained, it is possible and necessary to allow a flowering of diverse political opinions and political groupings. Our limited understanding of the experience of people's rule in Rolpa Rokum and elsewhere in liberated Nepal suggests that this describes at least in part the process that was taking place there. The authority of the revolution based on representing the highest interests of the masses and the military strength of the PLA—that is, the dictatorship over the reactionary classes—created the conditions that allowed a real flowering of political life, including awakening diverse and sometimes even centrifugal forces among the different national groupings. As long as the authority of the Party was firmly in command and providing an anchor, such centrifugal forces did not threaten the advance of the revolution but gave it additional strength and vitality.⁸

It is well known that in the most recent period following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the confinement of the PLA in cantonments, there have been some very negative developments, especially in the Madesh (also called the Terai) region of south eastern Nepal. The Terai is home to a large percentage of the Nepalese people and is the most important area of grain production in the country. It is also an area where most of the people have suffered different forms of national oppression at the hands of the central state, which has favored the population groups historically based in the hilly regions.

In particular, the Madeshis have been raising the demand for full proportionality in the new state, demanding that they have representation in the Constituent Assembly, state jobs, and so forth that corresponds to their share of the population. The CPN(M) had become a target of this movement because of its earlier endorsement of the interim constitution which, at the demand of the Seven Party Alliance, refused to accept a proportional system. Demagogues were able to whip up the national sentiment of the Madeshis against the CPN(M) and even murdered many comrades, especially in the Gaur massacre of March 31, 2007. The CPN(M) summed up that it had been an error to go along with the interim constitution, which had not provided for proportional representation, and the Party has since raised this as the crucial element in solving the problems of the Madesh and other oppressed nationalities.

The CPN(M) has focused its demands concerning the new constitution on the creation of a "federal republic" where the rights of all of the national groupings (and, in some cases, caste groupings) are assured on a proportional basis. Indeed, it is possible to find many references where it is claimed that "Once the Federal Structure of the national and regional autonomous republics is ensured, the Terai problem and other tensions will also be settled."⁹

We are not at all convinced that regional autonomy and a proportional federal structure will solve the problems of the oppressed nationalities. Rather this insistence is one more indication of the CPN(M) losing sight of the central question of which class rules in alliance with which other classes and instead focusing on the form of rule, in this case federal or proportional, and treating this above and outside of its class context.

Certainly measures such as regional autonomy can and must, under a state system with the leadership of the working class, play an important role in combating national inequality and mobilizing the masses of the minority nationalities in the revolution. As noted above, this is our understanding of what actually happened to a large degree in the base areas under the leadership of the CPN(M) where, it must be noted once again, the state power was based on the strength of the PLA. In the Madesh as well, during the course of the People's War, although there were certainly efforts by reactionaries and forces backed by India to try to divide the masses along national lines and foment opposition to the Party, there was not the kind of fratricidal conflict among the nationalities that has appeared in the last period. Instead, the demand for the recognition of the national rights of the Madeshis mainly took place within and on the basis of the political power that the revolution had established. In the Madesh as well as elsewhere in the country the PLA included young men and women from many different national groupings. Without this firm political power, without this solid core of proletarian leadership and authority, it is not possible, and indeed it has not been possible, to maintain and advance the unity of the people and take real concrete measures to uproot national inequality and injustice.

Proportionality cannot by itself be the key link nor be the central solution to solving national oppression or ensuring the unity of the masses. The proletariat alone (and those from other strata won to and trained in its outlook) can rise above national considerations and actually oppose all national discrimination and injustices. If the masses are told to elect their representatives according to their national or specific group interests, there will everywhere be conflict even among the masses of the oppressed themselves. For example, the Madeshis in the East will come

into conflict with the Tharus in the West, Dalits will be fighting the small peasant landholders and the Badis will be in conflict with everybody else. There can never be a solid voluntary unity of the oppressed if this unity is looked at or conceived as a kind of coalition of different oppressed peoples and sectors. Sooner or later, and probably sooner, the objective contradictions that exist in class society will assert themselves and the masses will be divided up in their specific "tents." Bourgeois parliamentary democracy will fuel this tendency.

Once the problem of nationalities is restricted, confined and channeled into the bourgeois arena, once the idea is enforced that each nationality, sub nationality, caste or grouping should be fighting for the representation of their own narrow interests in competition with and opposition to those of other nationalities and groupings, the result will be what can be seen so clearly in neighboring India, where groups are constantly mobilized to fight for the reservation of jobs or parliamentary seats. Such measures have not made any real dent in the whole system of national and caste oppression. Indeed, bloody massacres are common in the "fair competition" of nationalities, while real inequality remains intact. We doubt very much that a federal republic of Nepal will have any better results than those of India.

Again, it is extremely painful to watch the achievements of the revolution being dismembered on the altar of a bourgeois republic (federal and proportional or not). Instead of the Party promoting the essence of the state system that emerged in the People's War (newdemocratic dictatorship) and calling for that state system to be established through the whole country, it is promoting the form that people's power had developed in Nepal (autonomous republics) as the solution to democratizing the republic that is being established by the bourgeoisie. It is an arena that will never unleash and unite the enthusiasm of the masses on a correct basis.

Land to the Tiller

While the CPN(M) still maintains "Land to the Tiller" as a slogan in its electoral campaign, mobilizing the rural masses around this central demand is not at the heart of the Party's work in the rural areas. This is all the more surprising since the agrarian revolution, more than any other single factor, drove the whole process of People's War forward. Of course, the CPN(M) does call for land reform in its program and it is quite probable that the new bourgeois republic of Nepal will carry out some kind of land reform. But experience in many countries has shown the difference between an incomplete, undemocratic, bureaucratic land reform

organized in cooperation with the ruling classes and a real agrarian revolution such as Mao carried out in China, that relied upon unleashing the enthusiasm of the peasantry, especially its most downtrodden sections.¹⁰ Once again, neighboring India provides a very good showcase. Significant land reform was carried out in India, but it was done in a way that compromised with the feudal classes. It was very unevenly applied and scarcely touched some areas, keeping the poorest sections of the masses from obtaining much if any land. Most importantly from the viewpoint of the ruling classes, it did everything to avoid revolutionary upheaval in the countryside. In South Africa, also, land reform was declared a national priority but, more than ten years after the end of the apartheid regime, the great majority of the land is still in the hands of a minority of white farmers.

On this question also the two types of democracy—bourgeois democracy and new democracy led by the proletariat—stand in sharp contrast. Because of the central role of private property in the capitalist system, because in countries like Nepal the bourgeoisie has links to landed property, and because of the common fear of the rural poor among all of the exploiting classes, the bourgeoisie will back away from a really revolutionary reform program, even though, by itself, land to the tiller does not escape from the bounds of bourgeois democracy.¹¹ In the conditions of the oppressed nations today, it is the proletariat alone that can accomplish this most central democratic demand in a revolutionary way and, in so doing, unite the great majority of the peasantry and broad sections of other classes as well who can understand that this is a crucial measure to really lay the basis for an independent and rapidly developing country. Furthermore, agrarian revolution can lay the basis for rapidly developing the voluntary cooperation and collectivization that plays such a central role in propelling the revolution beyond new democracy to the socialist stage.

Here again the problem of the Madesh is of particular importance because it is in the fertile plains where there is a great deal of feudal ownership and where there is a particularly important problem of uniting the masses and opposing different kinds of national and caste oppression. Furthermore, the land revolution could have a very important impact on the national economy as well if it were to liberate the capacity and enthusiasm of the masses to produce. It is possible to see how a revolutionary land policy based especially among the poor could unite the majority of the population despite the long standing national oppression and divisions. Isn't the agrarian revolution also key to uniting the Madesh with the rest of the country? So while the CPN(M) maintains

"Land to the Tiller" in its program, this is not what is at the center of its current approach to the Madesh or other rural districts. Instead the main appeal is to proportionality and federalism that has not united and cannot unite the masses of the poor around the proletariat and instead pushes them into the arms of the exploiters (large and small) of their respective nationalities.

The very experience of the revolution in Nepal, as well as previous historical experience, demonstrates that it is the state power of the proletariat that makes possible the united front, especially the alliance of the workers and peasantry. Lenin had made the same point on the eve of the Russian Revolution: "To smash this machine, to break it up, is truly in the interest of the people, of their majority, of the workers and most of the peasants, is 'the precondition' for a free alliance of the poor peasants and the proletarians, whereas without such an alliance democracy is unstable and socialist transformation is impossible."¹²

The actual history of the Nepalese revolution has confirmed this orientation. It has been on the basis of clearing away the authority of the old state, and most centrally, the presence and reach of its military authority, that it became possible to unite the great majority of the population around the leadership of the proletariat. But once this proletarian authority is undermined and with the old army and old police force again in com

mand, the unity of the masses will also be undermined, and the masses will have little choice but to seek to protect their interests against and in competition with other sections of the oppressed masses and come under the wing of the bourgeoisie.

On the Constitution and Class Rule

In their reply to the RCP, the Nepalese comrades write, "Your letter has very apprehensively raised one question. If the enemy accepts your demand, just for example, a constituent assembly, you are obligated to agree with it; otherwise you will lose the confidence of the masses. We appreciate your anxiety. But we understand that a constituent assembly in itself is not a solution, but its political content can be. For example, if the constituent assembly can ensure the dissolution of the royal army, the reorganization of the national army under our leadership, the implementation of revolutionary land reform based upon the policy of land to the tiller, the right of nations to self determination, an end to social discrimination, development and prosperity, etc., why should one oppose it?"

The problem is that the Constituent Assembly will not and cannot carry out the above mentioned tasks. Does anyone really think it possible that the CA will lead to the "dissolution of the royal army" (and not just a name change), let alone the reorganization of the national army under the leadership of the CPN(M)? No! This is just as impossible as the claims of the old revisionist program of the Communist Party USA which proposed to do away with capitalist exploitation through a constitutional amendment. And if there was any doubt as to what is possible and what is impossible, it is sufficient to regard the actual process as it has unfolded. It has been the PLA which has been put in cantonments and largely disarmed while the only important change for the RNA was to drop the "royal" in its name.

So the question is not why should one "oppose" a Constituent Assembly that could accomplish the tasks of the new democratic revolution, but rather why should one promote an illusion that cannot be fulfilled?

Even now, when the results of this process are coming into focus, the CPN(M) continues to spread these illusions. For example, "It is aimed that the political crisis will be resolved by writing a new constitution which can pave the way for a new progressive system in Nepal that can lead the country to forward progress and further advancement by creating a society in which the exploitation of man by man in all forms is abolished."¹³

Thus we see that the CPN(M) is arguing rather clearly, in public and informally, that it is possible that the Constituent Assembly process can consolidate a system which can evolve peacefully toward socialism and communism. Of course, the Party keeps open the possibility that die hard elements, most especially the monarchy, can be expected to oppose such a constitution, in which case the use of force by the masses will be justifiable and necessary.¹⁴

In this way, the discussion of the provisions and wording of a future constitution displaces what really is the central question: on whose power will the new state be based? Generally speaking, a bourgeois constitution will uphold the "sovereignty of the people," proclaim the equality of all its citizens enshrined in the principle of "one person, one vote," proclaim rights of free speech and assembly, and so forth. It is also quite unlikely, to say the least, that the constitution resulting from the CA process will attack in a fundamental way the property of the exploiting classes.¹⁵

While a constitution can play an important role in any political system, it is not the promises of the constitution that will lead to a society without class exploitation if the army is in the hands of the exploiting

classes and if the principal means of production are under their ownership and control. Indeed, the role of the constitution in any bourgeois republic is precisely to ensure that the political system does not interfere with and in fact serves the underlying economic system of exploitation. The democratic rights granted to the people are within this context and restricted by this reality. When the professed rights of the people come into conflict with the imperatives of the socio economic system based on exploitation, it is the interests of the system of exploitation that "trump"—overrule the rights of the people. The comrades of the CPN(M) point to the possibility of a constitution coming out of this Constituent Assembly which will institutionalize the victories of the People's War. But these elections are being held under the supervision of the "international community" (meaning the world imperialist system and India), with the Nepal Army guarding the premises, and the television and newspapers for the most part firmly in the hands of the exploiting classes. The result of these elections under these conditions cannot open the way to socialism, and to argue that they can is either demagoguery or self deception.

Revolutionary Practice

It is the strategy of a "transitional" (bourgeois) republic that is driving and directing the tactics, and not the other way around. It is true that any revolutionary process will combine diverse forms of struggle, and it can be easily seen that revolutionary war may pass through periods of ceasefire and negotiation. And conversely, as we have seen from diverse experience historically and internationally, seemingly revolutionary tactics have been, and often are, used in the service of thoroughly non revolutionary strategies such as "fighting to negotiate," calling the masses into the streets to serve as pressure for bourgeois electoral gains, and so forth.¹⁶

Nor is the essence of the question, even now, the fact that the Party is up to its neck in electoralism and parliamentarism. A "revolutionary" road to the bourgeois republic would not be any better than the path of compromise and collaboration that we have witnessed over the last two years. But there is a connection—the goal of a bourgeois republic and, we must add, one which is effectively "cemented" into the existing imperialist world order, will mean that a certain type of tactics will tend to predominate and that impulses to go in a more revolutionary direction, whether arising from the masses, the Party rank and file or sections of the leadership, will tend to be smothered. Indeed, the period of the last two years has also been one in which repeated plans and promises of the leadership to bring forward the masses to assert their class interests have gone unfulfilled. This should not be seen as a result of willful deception. Rather, it is the inevitable result of the class nature of

the objective—the bourgeois republic—imposing itself on the choice of tactics to follow. Nor are we arguing for more "revolutionary" tactics divorced from a rectification on the level of strategy and goal. History has also been full of "insurrections" which have ultimately served as a "left cover" for cloudy or non revolutionary objectives. Indeed, in Central America in the 1980s, different types of "left" as well as the more dominant rightist tactics were employed. We will again call attention to the line which emerged in the Communist Party of the Philippines pushed by Villalobos. It had the merit of articulating clearly the "short path" to "partial victory" which he specifically contrasted to the Maoist path of protracted people's war for "complete victory," which Villalobos considered unreachable and/or undesirable.¹⁷ In other words, to focus the discussion with the CPN(M) principally over tactics is to mistake the symptom for the disease and to reverse cause and effect.

Who's Fooling Whom?

One of the most painful things for friends of the Nepalese revolution to watch is the way in which the army of the people has been largely disarmed and herded into cantonments isolated from the people, while the reactionary armed forces, now renamed Nepal Army, which previously could not leave heavily fortified barracks except in large convoys, are now free to roam about the countryside. Also very significant is the reestablishment of hated police posts in the very heart of the former base areas, while the structures of people's rule built up in the course of the People's War are dismantled.

The origin of this situation predates even the April 2006 upsurge—it can be found clearly in the proposal reprinted in *The Worker* no. 9 where the Party proposes that the PLA and the RNA be demobilized and a new national army formed. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement has this as a cornerstone.

For a long time the CPN(M) would tell worried comrades that any merger of the two armies would come on the basis of the authority of the PLA and the Party and would be under its leadership. Of course, no integration of that type was even considered for a fleeting moment by the reactionary classes. On the contrary, the reactionary classes and their backers have been clear, ironically far more so than our comrades, on the central role of the armed forces in the state. The CPA legitimized the monopoly of force of the NA which was, after all, allowed to openly keep the great bulk of its weapons, granted responsibilities for controlling the country's borders and transportation routes, and, generally speaking, left free to march about the country armed. In January 2008, the Army

Chief of Staff made a clear statement that he would refuse the integration of PLA fighters in the NA.

The response of the CPN(M) has included some very pointed and correct exposure of the Nepal Army. For example, Chairman Prachanda's statement, reprinted in The Red Star no. 3, rhetorically asked why a gang of murderers is fit to be part of the national army but not the sons and daughters of the people who fought for liberation. But this is exactly the point. The National Army will have only one central role—to maintain and enforce the rule of the exploiting classes. That the CPN(M) would demand that the fighters of the PLA be integrated into such an army is itself a real indication of how far the Party has departed from a Marxist understanding of the state. Again, the reactionaries have no such unclarity. They are determined to maintain a tight grip on the state apparatus and are not about to let large numbers of PLA fighters join the army, at least not unless and until the PLA had given adequate proof that it has definitively and thoroughly abandoned its goal of revolution—something which has not happened and must not be allowed to happen. So again the CPN(M) has allowed the debate to be firmly circumscribed by the reactionary classes. The question was shaking Nepal at the time of the collapse of the absolute monarchy—which state and which army, the old state of the king and the exploiting classes based on the hated Royal Nepal Army or the new state which had been emerging in the countryside based on the strength of the PLA, should consolidate its rule throughout the country? This has transformed into: is the PLA sufficiently committed to "real democracy" for it to be dissolved into the Nepal Army or will it have to be dissolved by some other means? Each answer is worse than the other.

Arming the Masses with the Truth or Sowing Deliberate Confusion?

In their response to our earlier letter the CPN(M) argues that some of their current positions may not appear clear because of the need to dissimulate in the eyes of the international and domestic enemies, but that their comrades should not be worried because the Party is clear on where the struggle must go. They say: "Yes, there are some confusing positions in our interpretations, in several contexts. We think sometimes they are necessary. If we can confuse our enemies and the international community with our tactical dealings, it can divide them to a certain extent, which will benefit our revolution. Problems will arise only if the Party of the proletariat itself is confused."

This reasoning is wrong on a whole number of levels. Even if it were the case that the Party leadership was clear and united on the

goals of NDR, socialism and communism, it would still be necessary to educate and arm the masses to understand the difference between a reactionary bourgeois solution to the country's problems and a radically different solution led by a proletarian party and based on the masses of people. The love and support of the masses acquired in the People's War is a precious achievement, but it is no substitute for their conscious training and their learning to perceive, beneath the honey coated words of democracy, the real class nature of every party and political figure. Otherwise there is the danger that loyalty can become blind, and that the masses who were the bedrock of the People's War will look to the Party mainly as a protector of their most narrow and immediate interests, interests that might and sometimes do come into conflict with other sections of the masses. How will it be possible for the masses to be won to the need for further struggle and sacrifice if the goal of this struggle is not clear? Are we really to believe the masses are quite clear on the goals of revolution or that they will reach this understanding spontaneously, without systematic training by the communists?

It is enough to read the Party's own publications or the interviews with different leaders to see that the Party itself is not at all so clear on the crucial questions of democracy, state and so forth. Often vital questions of political orientation and policy are presented as a mere question of tactics: either the revolution will proceed smoothly to the republic or, if this process is interfered with by the reactionary classes, it will thus become necessary for the revolution to advance by more confrontational means. This leaves out the basic question of the revolutionary goal. In other words, the main question is not a peaceful or non peaceful transition to a federal democratic republic, but rather what type of republic needs to be established (what class will rule) and specifically how can there be a seizure of power by masses led by a proletarian vanguard. This is objectively the question before the society, but it is not what is being presented.

Further, the idea that ideological acrobatics are necessary in order to confuse the class enemy is extremely naive at best. No major move by the CPN(M) goes unobserved by the class enemy. If the Party suspends negotiations or leaves the government, the other side is extremely attentive to the possible implications of such moves and discusses it from every angle in the press and in their semi public think tanks such as the International Crisis Group, which has been particularly well informed about the situation in Nepal.¹⁰ In fact it is the masses, friends of the Party and the ranks of the Party themselves who are most often deceived by the Party's double language. For example, the main representatives of the

reactionary classes in Nepal and internationally seemed much clearer than many comrades that the CPN(M)'s decision in September 2007 to leave the government, and its threats to call the masses out into the streets, probably did not mean a basic reversal of the road to the Constituent Assembly and the bourgeois republic. And in fact, these reactionaries were right—the goal and the attraction of going for the bourgeois republic reimposed itself and molded the Party's choice of tactics.

This is not to say that all of the masses are happy with the direction the Party has taken or that they will not find different ways to convey their discontent. But even assuming that the new regime which emerges from the Constituent Assembly really does provide the formal right to organized political expression, and even assuming that these formal rights exist in the rural areas as well as the cities as is rarely the case in the third world, it is very difficult to see how, without an organized and coherent leadership, the growing discontent of the masses will be able to be expressed in a concrete political program. This is another example of the falsity of the promise of bourgeois democracy and how really unequal the masses of people are in the "competition" of political forces. In the name of preserving the rights of the masses to supervise the state through "multiparty competition," the CPN(M) is actually taking away the rights of the masses established through the People's War to have political institutions and political representation that truly represents their own class interests as opposed to the interests of other class forces and against the interests of the reactionary classes.

In fact, history provides many indications of what happens to the people once the leadership has embarked on a course that contradicts and undoes the struggle the masses have been waging. Massive discontent and widespread demoralization does not easily transform into conscious political action. In Palestine, Zimbabwe, Guatemala, to name but a few situations from more recent history, compromise political solutions and the reversal of promises and slogans to which the masses had rallied (remember that even Yasser Arafat started out proclaiming "revolution till victory") were not effectively countered. Instead a few frustrated elements are more likely to split and lash out without being able to develop a coherent program. But this does not make the reformist compromise any more correct or any more legitimate. Under the slogan of the "rights of the masses" a "new" old state will stand apart from the masses and over them.

There is a reason why double talk, the art of saying one thing and doing another, corresponds to the reactionary classes and cannot characterize the policy of the proletarian party. First of all, the reactionary

classes cannot hope to survive except by deceiving the masses whose interests they can never represent. Communists, on the other hand, have everything to gain the more the proletariat and the masses of people understand the society and the tasks of the revolution. Helping the masses to get this kind of understanding is a crucial task of the vanguard party, but it is not an easy one. There are all sorts of prejudices and blinders that keep the masses from seeing the real features of the society. After all, if the masses were clearly able to see their own class interests, having their own vanguard party would be far less necessary. But we know from experience in all countries that this is most definitely not the case and that the masses desperately need communist leadership that can help sort out the fundamental contours of class interests in a complicated world.

We are not so naïve as to believe that communist revolutionaries can or must reveal all of their plans and thinking on all subjects on all occasions. At the same time, in a fundamental sense and from a strategic viewpoint, communists enthusiastically uphold the Communist Manifesto's famous statement, "The communists disdain to conceal their views and aims." What possible strategic advantage could the communists achieve by saying publicly to the masses over and over again that they are only about winning a majority in the electoral arena, or that their goal is "pure democracy"? Where is the training of the masses about the real class nature of such "pure" (bourgeois) democracy? This is no less of a task in Nepal, where a comprador feudal bourgeois republic is on the horizon, than it is in the West where bourgeois democracy is the most common form of rule of the capitalist class. In fact, communists in a country like Nepal, where there are crucial bourgeois democratic tasks to be accomplished through revolution, have a special responsibility to combat bourgeois democratic illusions and show the real class nature of the bourgeois democracies of the West being upheld as a model.

Togliatti and Thorez

There have been some rather astounding statements made about the path breaking nature of the CPN(M)'s decision to go for a democratic republic. In his May 1, 2007 speech, Chairman Prachanda even goes so far as to say, "The twelve point agreement was a wonderful and unprecedented type of understanding in history. The twentieth century never saw such a type of unique understanding that has been proved in history." Unfortunately, this is not the case.¹⁹

We say "unfortunately" because there are many tragic examples during the 20th century when the communists abandoned their struggle for political power, demobilized their independent armed forces, and

restricted their struggle to within the bourgeois democratic framework of the enemy. In some of these cases the Communist Parties maintained or even expanded a considerable influence over the working class and other sections of the masses and often had significant representation in parliament.

Two of the most significant cases were the experiences of the Communist Party of Italy and the Communist Party of France in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. The history of France and Italy diverge, especially in that France was occupied early in the war by Nazi Germany while Italy was allied with Germany in the war, but in both cases the Communist Parties had rallied important sections of the proletariat and the masses to wage armed struggle against foreign occupiers and the domestic fascist rulers.²⁰ At the end of the war these parties emerged with immense popularity, whereas almost all of the bourgeois political formations were thoroughly discredited by their collaboration with the fascist powers and/or their incapacity to wage any resolute struggle against them. In both Italy and France, the Communist Parties had important armed contingents under their leadership. Many people forget that it was the partisans led by the Communist Party of Italy who captured Mussolini and hung his body in a public square in Milan amidst massive popular celebration.

However, despite the revolutionary movement that swept Europe with the collapse of the fascist powers, despite the fact that the bourgeois state apparatus had been discredited and greatly weakened through the course of the war, and despite the tremendous prestige that the Soviet Union under the leadership of Stalin then enjoyed, these Communist Parties disbanded their armed forces and took part in the provisional governments established in both of these countries under the watchful supervision of the occupying forces (mainly the U.S. and British). Most significantly, these parties accepted the political framework of bourgeois democracy. They did not, however, in words at least, drop the strategic objective of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" (it was only two decades later that this open admission of revisionism was to take place). Rather, participation in the bourgeois institutions was presented as a "tactic" which would, somehow, open the way to a later seizure of power by the proletariat. Nor should it be assumed that the entrance of the Communist Parties into the governments in Italy and France meant that this was a period of calm devoid of class struggle. On the contrary, those first postwar years were marked by extremely acute struggles, general strikes, powerful movements aimed at punishing collaborators with the fascists and so forth. In other words, participation in the bourgeois institutions did not

preclude struggle and did not remove the necessity of the bourgeoisie of these countries (egged on and backed to the hilt by the unmatched military and economic might of U.S. imperialism) to hit hard at the communist parties as part of their effort to re-consolidate a bourgeois order after the havoc of world war and in the face of the revolutionary restlessness of the masses. The Communist Parties were held in great esteem by the working class at that time because of their role during the war and because even while they were following an objectively capitulationist policy they were also in sharp conflict with the ruling class both inside and outside parliament. In other words, these parties continued to uphold the goal of the dictatorship of the proletariat, socialism and communism. In 1947 the communists were driven out of the government as part of the beginning of the "Cold War."

The point of this historical reminder is that there is indeed nothing so new, let alone so positive, about an agreement of communist forces to abandon their struggle for power and enter bourgeois institutions. Nor does such a step mean that the communists did not come sharply into conflict with the main representatives of the bourgeoisie. Nor should we assume that the objective circumstances were easier for the communists in Italy or France than they are today in Nepal. For example, in both Italy and France there was a heavy presence of the Allied military forces after the war. It is easy to imagine the justifications and the rationales that were offered to those who disapproved or were uncomfortable with what, in retrospect, can be seen as a decisive step toward revisionism.

The decisive question, then as now, is the political and ideological line of the communists. We are not in a position to say exactly what tactics the communists in France or Italy should have adopted. But it is possible to say that their decision to accept the "legitimacy" of the reestablishment of the bourgeois order after World War 2 was objectively a tremendous service to the bourgeoisie at exactly the moment when the bourgeoisie was battered and in real difficulty in reorganizing its rule and ramming it down the throats of the masses. Once the basic framework of the bourgeois state institutions is accepted as legitimate, then the efforts of the communists to organize the proletariat and the masses to exert their interests within this framework (through both electoral and non electoral means) has the objective effect of strengthening and perfecting these reactionary institutions themselves. Here we can only touch on the important international dimension and specifically the line of Stalin and the CPSU in the whole period before, during and after the Second World War. A more thorough discussion would show that this abandonment of the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat and

adoption of the framework of bourgeois democracy is linked to the position adopted by the CPSU and the Comintern concerning the "united front against fascism" and the fight to preserve and/or restore bourgeois democracy as a necessary stage at that time.²¹

Rewriting Party History

We were disappointed that the response of the CPN(M) to our original letter of October 2005 focused to a considerable degree on a defense of its past practice and tried to use the experience of the whole trajectory of the Party since 1996 to the present as an answer to the arguments our Party and others have raised. Simply put: because the People's War has developed this far it shows the correctness of the Party's ideological and political line.

First of all, the fallacy of such a method of reasoning is easy to see. Even if the Party had been previously right on every question of politics and ideology (which we will see is far from the case), that would neither be a guarantee that the Party would be right on every question in the future nor a reason for not addressing in substance the arguments about what needs to be done now. The fact, for example, that the Party was correct in initiating and waging a People's War in no way proves that it is correct in abandoning it.

Further, the account of the disagreements between our two parties and the description of the CPN(M)'s own history is not accurate. One important point to clarify is that our Party did not oppose the CPN(M)'s participation in parliament in the early 1990s. For one thing, our own knowledge of the situation in Nepal at the time did not provide enough basis to have a clear opinion on that policy. Furthermore, our Party did not and does not subscribe to the view of many other parties in the Maoist movement that the "boycott of parliament" is a "strategic question" which has been settled for all parties and all time. Nor did we ever support the positions of M.B. Singh. In fact, we waged struggle with Singh's semi Hoxhaite revisionism from our first encounter with him at the time of the formation of RIM in 1984 when the leaders of today's CPN(M) were still united with him in a single party. What our Party did believe at that period and continues to believe today is that there was a great deal of rightism in the thinking and policy of the CPN(Unity Center)²² at that time and that unless the Party effectively ruptured with that approach there would be no successful revolution. Our Party, together with others in the RIM, struggled for exactly such a rupture. It is to the lasting credit of Chairman Prachanda (supported by a core of other leaders) that he was able to lead this process of leap and rupture with the previous wrong line. It was

precisely this ideological leap that was central to the organizational formation of the CPN(M) and the great historic decision to launch the People's War.

The current version of history that is contained in the letter to the RCP, USA and echoed in other recent articles and documents of the CPN(M)²³ is, alas, much different. Rewritten with 20/20 hindsight, the entry into parliament and the exit from it were both well considered and carefully orchestrated maneuvers or tactics in the service of a clear strategy of preparing and launching a protracted people's war. Any serious study of the actual positions of the time shows that this was far from the case. There was a whole process of struggling to break with what had been the dominant understanding in the CPN (Mashal)—the original parent organization of the CPN(M)—which had a million and one reasons why revolution could never be successful in Nepal. Previously the CPN(M) noted and gave correct importance to this process of breaking with what the CPN(M) called the M.B. Singh "school of thought". It is quite disturbing to see this process now distorted or even denied by many who know better.

The new history is full of "on the one hand" the struggle against revisionism, and "on the other hand" the struggle against "dogmatism," an eclectic treatment that effectively obfuscates the actual need that Comrade Prachanda faced in waging an implacable struggle against revisionism and the lessons of that earlier leap and rupture and replaces it with a harmonious process devoid of contradiction.

It is certainly true that a great wealth of experience has been achieved in the course of the People's War in Nepal. We have strived to learn from this precious experience as best we can and we think that all revolutionary communists must do so. We have seen nothing in this experience, however, that strengthens the argument of the comrades for the possibility of a "transitional state" which is neither new democratic in character nor a bourgeois republic. In fact, actual results of the past two years of experience in which the comrades of the CPN(M) have been trying to put this understanding into practice show quite the opposite.

More Reversal of Historical Verdicts

We have seen that the CPN(M) leadership has decided to rewrite Party history in relation to RIM from the standpoint of retroactively justifying every previous position, especially now that some of those positions, such as participation in parliament and the "peaceful pursuit of the revolution" are being implemented today. It is worth pointing out that this rewriting of history, however, is not limited to the debate with our Party or other RIM parties and organizations. It stands out in particularly

shocking and bald form in the CPN(M)'s new version of the history of the communist movement within Nepal itself.

Consider the report "Single Communist Party."

"The Communist Party of Nepal in its 59 years of journey has come through several splits and unhealthy inner struggle. These kinds of tendencies have not only weakened the communist movement but ultimately resulted disadvantages to the people and the nation. Although communist and leftist parties have the overwhelming support and sympathy of the majority of the people of Nepal, the rightist and retrogressive forces have always won the race. Currently, leftist parties hold the majority in the interim legislature too but the leader in the government is not from the communist parties."²⁴ (emphasis added.)

This whole article, and not just the above passage, basically says that the overall process of rupture with revisionism (a word which is completely absent from this article) was "unhealthy" and led to "disadvantages." What about the People's War? Does anyone believe that the People's War could have been launched without the rupture with revisionism? The fact of the matter is that this article rewrites history from a parliamentary perspective—the existence of several "communist and leftist parties" divides the electoral vote. This is where the rejection of what is called "one divides into two" (discussed more later) will ultimately end up—in an effort to cobble together a "leftist" or "communist" party composed of all sorts of opportunists and revisionists who have turned their back on revolution but which can "win" in a parliamentary election and preside over the government of the old state.

Not surprisingly, changes in the Party's ideology and politics are reflected in its organizational affairs as well. Coupled with the change in political line and in light of the Party's call to consolidate the "new Nepal" through all out mobilization for the Constituent Assembly elections, the Party's leadership now calls on changing the style of work, and specifically for members to be broadly and openly out among the electorate. Remember that breaking with the whole aboveground and parliamentary tradition of the communist (and pseudo communist) movement in Nepal was an important part of the necessary rupture to begin the People's War in 1996. It is true that different phases of revolutionary work will require adjustments in organizational matters, but some bedrock principles about the need to build and preserve the kind of party capable of waging revolutionary struggle are gone. Revolutionary work requires one type of organizational structure. Parliamentary work requires another. Party leaders are exposed to the possibility of attack from what the

CPN(M) calls "monarcho imperialist forces," not to mention the military apparatus of the old state. So we see another example of merging of two into one, as the Party says it is in the stage of strategic offensive and engaged in "war" to win the elections, yet the Party structure is laid bare for anyone to disrupt or destroy and the lives of precious Party leaders are put at great risk by revealing their identities. This is a matter of great concern to us also.

The International Dimension

We do not intend in this letter to explore in depth another often advanced argument as to why the revolution in Nepal cannot win victory, namely the unfavorable international and regional situation. We should remember that one of the key features of M.B. Singh's revisionist line was his contention that revolution was impossible in landlocked Nepal unless it was preceded by revolution in India and/or China. The CPN(M) was correct to criticize this capitulationist theory as part of the preparation for the People's War and this verdict must be upheld. The article from February 11, 2008 A World to Win News Service, is worth noting:

"...No revolution exists in a vacuum. In Nepal as well, the advance of the revolution is closely linked to the advance of the revolution in the neighboring countries and the world as a whole.

"Nepal's close proximity and interconnection with India is a double edged sword. True, that increases the country's vulnerability to pressure, interference and outright attack. It is also true that there are great advantages to the revolution as well. India has huge numbers of desperately oppressed masses, many with common cultural and linguistic links to Nepal. Already the millions of Nepalese who regularly work in India have been an important vector spreading knowledge and support for the revolution among the people of that country. Given the extreme and intensifying contradictions in Indian society, a real revolutionary regime in Nepal will have immediate and deep reverberations throughout India, especially the north and northeast. Furthermore, although it has no common border with Bangladesh, Nepal is only a few dozen kilometres from that country, most of whose 150 million people live in conditions of great hardship. Previously the CPN(M) had put forward the very revolutionary call for a Soviet Federation of South Asia which would create a new state structure in the region based on a common battle for new democracy and the genuine equality of nations. If the revolutionary regime is established in Nepal, there is a real possibility that the people of the region may come to its rescue.

"The military strength of India and the imperialist states, it is true, is an imposing and formidable obstacle. But here, too, it is necessary to understand their weaknesses as well. India has had a hard time dealing militarily with insurgencies within its own borders. Its major counterinsurgency operation in Sri Lanka in the 1980s ended in a dismal failure. It would be very difficult for India to intervene in Nepal, where hatred of Indian expansionism runs very strong and where revolution can benefit from a very favourable mountainous geography. The Indian reactionaries would have to think hard before taking on such a desperate gamble.

"The U.S. is, of course, an enormously dangerous and vicious enemy. But it is also true that the American military is highly overstretched, short of manpower, and facing ever increasing opposition to its imperialist aggression all over the world, including from its own population. Even the U.S. military knows how difficult it would be to fight Maoist revolutionaries deeply linked to the people and enjoying their active support.

"It is definitely true that the revolution in Nepal cannot be separated from the revolutionary process in the world as a whole and there are positive as well as negative factors that have to be considered. In the whole region there are extreme and intense conflicts within the ruling classes and between the masses and their oppressors. The establishment of a real revolutionary regime in Nepal would be like a thunderbolt for the whole region. Yes, the governments of the neighboring states would try to interfere and overthrow such a regime, but it is also true that the hopes of the people of these countries would be aroused in an unprecedented way. The masses of people of the region and ultimately the whole world represent a real, if presently untapped, reserve of strength for the revolution in Nepal. A clear revolutionary programme and the living example of the masses actually taking power and ruling society can unlock this potential."²⁵

The international situation is certainly, in its main aspect, unfavorable. But it is also true that it will remain unfavorable unless and until communist revolutionaries in first one or several countries succeed in opening a breach in the world imperialist system. If everyone waits for the maturing of a favorable situation internationally before acting, we will as Lenin put it, all be "suspended in mid air".

"Combine Two into One" or "Divide One Into Two"?

As we have seen, eclecticism, that is, the orientation of combining "two into one," of putting different contradictions on an equal level and not determining the principal contradiction, and failing to distinguish between the principal and secondary aspects of a contradiction, has

increasingly come to characterize the political and ideological line and methodology of the CPN(M). Instead of criticizing and digging up the roots of this eclecticism, the very philosophical bases for many of the errors in the present course are being justified, upheld and even proposed as a model for others as well.

In order to understand a thing or a process, it is necessary to correctly identify the principal contradiction which determines its nature and its motion from among the many contradictions that are involved in any process. The revolution in Nepal is no exception. Clearly the revolution in Nepal is a complex phenomenon involving a series of contradictions, such as the contradiction between the forces grouped around the monarchy and those forces in the ruling class that are in favor of a republic, the conflict between the proletariat and the national bourgeoisie, the contradiction between the oppressed nationalities and the central state, the contradiction between women and men, and so forth. But it is crucial to emphasize that the fundamental contradiction is between the masses of people led by the proletariat and the three mountains of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. Nor can we accept that the principal contradiction in Nepal is between the monarchy and the "forces of democracy." We do not know if the CPN(M) has made such a conscious theoretical formulation, but their policies and choice of tactics are consistent with such an analysis.

A particular feature of the eclecticism of the CPN(M) is to place two opposing policies on an equal level, or better said, to put them on an equal level in words while in actual life elevating the immediate, temporary and secondary above the decisive and principal.

The confounding of strategy and tactics, reversing principal and secondary, is part of the eclecticism that increasingly marks the Party's writings. The following statement is typical of the kind of statements that rid dle the articles and documents of the CPN(M):²⁶

"The country is in the transitional period from autocratic rule to federal democratic republic. The historical achievements are being institutionalized through the election of the constituent assembly. For this, there is a sharp struggle between the re gressive reactionary forces and revolutionary pro gressive forces. CPN M is leading to the direction of building New Nepal. The restructuring of old state power, the fusion of two armies, the awareness of the people and the adoption of proportional election system, the federal framework in place of unitary feudal state structure and the participation of the nationalities, women, region, Madesh, Dalits, minorities etc. in the state power, are all achievements

of the great people's war. A decade long people's war has given birth to the power of people and its leadership without alternative. But to wipe out the old and establish the new victoriously, the last encounter is inevitable."

The first thing that jumps out in reading the above statement is that the goal is clearly misrepresented as a "federal democratic republic" which is quite clearly not a new democratic republic. In case there was any confusion, the excerpts clarify that the goal is the "restructuring of the old state" and the "fusing of the two armies." And this is misrepresented as the "goal of the People's War"! Then this rather crass description of a bourgeois republic is declared "the power of the people." The conclusion about the "last encounter" is most definitely not referring to the "final conflict" of the stirring refrain of the Internationale but clearly to the struggle to establish the republic. It is a perfect example of combining two into one.

This same eclectics is reflected in the following passage of an interview with Chairman Prachanda in the same issue.

"[Interviewer] How can you concretize the achievements of People's War?

"Prachanda: It has various dimensions. First, the present Nepali politics has moved following its steps on its way and it has proved certain basic aspects of our politics. Second, it brought the awareness among the people living in different corners of the country. Similarly class, regional, racial, gender issues have been established in Nepali society which are the day properties for the people of Nepal and world. Third, Constituent Assembly, Federal Democratic Republic, the concept of new Nepal, restructure of the state are the basic achievements of this war. For this, thousands of great people of Nepal sacrificed their lives, many more got wounded and disappeared. To sum up the ideas it's a historical revolt. To my mind, the final victory is too near, we got victory and the last struggle is still going on and surely Nepali people will defeat the enemies. That would be the greatest achievement of People's War."

It is true that elsewhere in the same issue other, contradictory, messages appear. For example:

" Now, we are advancing ahead in the peaceful process through the historical process of the ten year long people's war and nineteen days people's movement. The goal of the great People's War is to move ahead in the direction of Socialism and Communism by establishing the New People's Republic in Nepal. At present, we are advancing ahead energetically to the direction to build new Nepal through the election of the constituent assembly (CA) as the starting point of achieving the goal."²⁷

This statement, unlike most of the other passages and recent articles, reaffirms the communist orientation of the struggle. But it too concludes by arguing that the Constituent Assembly is the vehicle for advancing in that direction. Nowhere is it explained why the consolidation of a "federal democratic republic" is a stepping stone to new democracy.

Eclecticism Defended

This whole approach of "combine two into one" is not unconscious. In fact, it was one of the substantive arguments made in the CPN(M)'s reply to the letter of the RCP. In their letter they take to task our Party, and indeed the whole Maoist movement, for insisting on the principle enunciated by Mao that "one divides into two." Their letter holds:

"Historical and dialectical materialism is the philosophy of revolution; it not only applies to society but also in human thinking. The unity and struggle of opposites is its fundamental law. It means every entity divides into two, and each of the two aspects transforms into its opposite. We think the latter is the principal aspect for us—communists.

"It is our opinion that the ICM, in general, failed in the past to grasp the totality of this law of dialectics. Our class paid more attention to 'one divides into two' in the past and is doing so at present, but knowingly or unknowingly it has skipped grasping and applying in practice the transformation of one aspect into its opposite, the principal aspect."

Comrades from one RIM organization wrote:

"In reality, 'one divides into two' isn't just one 'aspect' of dialectics; rather it is a concentrated way of summing up the law of the unity of opposites, the fundamental law of the universe, and as such, it also includes or encompasses the transformation of the two aspects of a contradiction into their opposite. This is the way Mao and the revolutionaries in China understood it too. For example, the pamphlet published by the proletarian line in China Three Major Struggles on China's Philosophical Front says that 'The concept of one divides into two that Chairman Mao put forward profoundly and concisely summarizes the law of the unity of opposites and grasps the heart of materialist dialectics.'"²⁸

"According to the CPN(M), however, as we see in the above mentioned quote, 'one divides into two' is something different than and contrary to the transformation of the two aspects into their opposite (and they call for paying 'more attention' to this transformation instead of 'one divides into two'). Therefore, they do not see the process of the two aspects transforming into their opposites as a process of 'one divides

into two,' but as something different. Independent of the intentions of the CPN(M), this can only lead to an erroneous, metaphysical and eclectic conception ('two combine into one') of qualitative transformation."

Indeed, the striving to combine two opposites and to mislabel this as "dialectics" is a feature that we can see in many aspects of the CPN(M)'s line. As we saw above, this understanding is being openly and forcefully argued as a creative development of Marxism, a rectification of the one sidedness of the previous understanding forged by Mao and popularized world wide during the Cultural Revolution.²⁹ The CPN(M) has become so permeated with the method of "on the one hand this, on the other hand that" that it has become second nature and is constantly given as the explanation for their successes. In fact, this is a dangerous and wrong worldview which, far from guaranteeing the continued success of the revolution, underpins a whole approach in theory and practice which threatens to reverse the revolution.

One point in particular in the previously mentioned article needs to be emphasized here—the need for "one to divide into two" does not mean that a communist party or group is destined to split and split again, as the CPN(M) argues. Repudiating revisionism and defeating an incorrect line can, and often does, lead to strengthening the party not only ideologically and politically but also in terms of organizational solidity, numbers, and influence and, most importantly, ability to make revolution.

The Nepalese comrades are upholding the resolution of the two line struggle between comrades Bhattarai and Prachanda in the CPN(M) as a model. We consider the "resolution" of that struggle to be precisely an example of "two into one," when opposite viewpoints are reconciled which can only, and did in this particular circumstance, lead to the predominance of the incur rect line.³⁰

The struggle against eclectics was an important feature of Mao and the revolutionaries in the Communist Party of China, especially in the final, and tragically losing, battle with Deng Xiao ping. Deng criticized the revolutionary headquarters for being "only" concerned about class struggle and not "also" paying attention to production. Of course, this was a slander against the revolutionaries and Deng's real purpose was to negate and oppose Mao's teachings.

The revolutionaries in the Communist Party of China (CPC) put it this way:

"Eclecticism is revisionism. In putting the three directives on a par, and placing politics and economy, politics and vocational work and

technique all on an equal footing, Deng Xiaoping was using sophistry to negate the principal contradiction and the main aspect of a contradiction. This was an eclectic sleight of hand. Lenin pointed out in criticizing Bukharin: "His theoretical attitude is: "on the one hand, and on the other." That is eclecticism." (Once again on the Trade Unions, the Current Situation and the Mistakes of Trotsky and Bukharin). We can use these very words to give an apt description of Deng Xiaoping. The phenomenon only shows the weak nature of the revisionists. They want to reverse the theoretical conclusions arrived at by Marxism Leninism Mao Tsetung Thought and replace them with revisionist theories. But revisionism goes against the interests of the workers, peasants, soldiers, revolutionary cadres and revolutionary intellectuals, that is, the masses who comprise 95 per cent of the population; and since practicing revisionism goes against the will of the people they dare not expose themselves too much, so they resort to eclectics because in falsifying Marxism in opportunist fashion, the substitution of eclecticism for dialectics is the easiest way of deceiving the masses."³¹

Crux of the Matter—Ideological and Political Line

One of the most often cited quotations used by our Movement is Mao's celebrated formulation: "If one's line is incorrect, one's downfall is inevitable, even with the control of the central, local and army leadership. If one's line is correct, even if one has not a single soldier at first, there will be soldiers, and even if there is no political power, political power will be gained. This is borne out by the historical experience of our Party and by that of the international communist movement since the time of Marx.... The crux of the matter is line. This is an irrefutable truth."³²

And indeed, this quotation does concentrate brilliantly and accurately expresses the relationship between a correct line and the consequences in practice of any given line. The political and ideological line is a concentration of the class outlook, methodology and approach of a party (ideology) and the basic application of this outlook to the question of waging the class struggle, seizing power and advancing to communism (politics). Once the proletarian line is no longer in command, bourgeois goals, bourgeois methods and bourgeois politics will inevitably fill the void.

Our own Movement was born out of precisely such a struggle against an incorrect ideological and political line, specifically the revisionist line that triumphed in China after the death of Mao Tsetung by means of the coup d'état directed at his consistent followers. While the struggle in Nepal has not played the same kind of central and

defining role in the world as the revolution in China under Mao's leadership, it is still useful to remember the circumstances of that great struggle on an international level.

There were many parties and organizations who had professed agreement with Mao Tsetung and the Cultural Revolution and then went along with the revisionist usurpers in China. In the case of some it was open attraction to the politics of class collaboration, but in other cases a kind of realpolitik prevailed by which communists in other countries refused to accept the responsibility for understanding and evaluating the line of the CPC. They argued instead that the line of that Party was its "internal affair" and/or that the tremendous experience and prestige of the CPC meant that others had no real basis or capacity to understand the political line questions involved. Still others argued that the CPC had many previous two line struggles and even if there were elements that they found disquieting in Hua Kuo feng and Deng Xiao ping, China after all, was a socialist country, things might well be reversed in the future, etc.

Some of this can be dismissed as slavish tailism and crass opportunism—for example, fear of losing what support China may have given this or that movement. However, the problem was much deeper than that: it went to the very way people looked at revolutionary experience, the understanding of internationalism and the responsibilities of communists in different countries for the problems of the movement as a whole. In short, criteria other than the correctness or incorrectness of the ideological and political line were used to assess the situation in China and guide the "communists." The results of this pragmatism and opportunism were tragic. Most of the erstwhile communist movement crashed on the rocks, were unable to maintain their revolutionary bearings and ended up, more often than not, in reconciling with the existing reactionary order and/or disappearing entirely. Furthermore, the developments in China completely bore out the scientific predictions of what the result of the change in line in the CPC meant—namely the restoration of capitalism with the re emergence of all of the horrors, oppression and exploitation that is at the heart of this system. Almost alone in the world, RIM was able to keep its ideological bearings in the face of the reactionary ideological tsunami that accompanied the loss in China precisely because RIM was able, at least in its main aspects, to understand the reasons for the reversal in China and uphold the principal tenets of MLM, including as they had developed and were advanced by Mao.

Today we cannot indulge in anything less than the same kind of thorough, scientific examination of reality and, on that basis, a firm

orientation and determination to carry the struggle forward. Unfortunately, the ability of the Movement to carry out these responsibilities has been undermined to no insignificant degree by some of the ways the *Peru* difficulties were approached. While this is not the place to review that whole history, the truth is that a wrong approach interfered with and at times even overshadowed the correct revolutionary communist orientation upon which our Movement was founded. In particular, there arose the criterion of "political truth," an approach which abandoned principles and took decisions not on the basis of "seeking truth from facts" and applying our revolutionary science to understanding reality but on the basis of what seemed "useful." In particular this type of outlook was used to justify the "hoax" theory put forward by the leadership of the Communist Party of Peru (PCP), which insisted, against available evidence, that Chairman Gonzalo had no connection to the Right Opportunist Line in the Party and that to even investigate this possibility was to commit the vilest treason. Today we are paying the price for those errors as well, as the Movement flounders in the face of a great challenge of stepping forward and coming to the assistance of the revolution in Nepal which has given so much to the international communist movement and which we hold so dear.

Another quotation from Lenin often used in our Movement but too often misunderstood or ignored in practice is worth repeating: "There is one, and only one, kind of real internationalism, and that is—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." We have the responsibility of fighting "for this, and only this, line and no other" in Nepal, no less than the responsibility to advance the revolutionary struggle in one's own country. Otherwise "proletarian internationalism" is reduced to a mockery and "international solidarity" is nothing more than a kind of "commodity exchange," as can be readily seen in the dealings of opportunists and revisionists on the international level. Trading the "capital" of the struggle in Nepal (i.e., its influence and prestige in the world) in return for silence or acquiescence in a wrong line is the worst kind of opportunism. And we have also seen what happens if the "capital" loses its value, as was the case in Peru: people with this kind of approach are quick to look for another trading partner. This is partially what explains how some who shamelessly tailed the screeching of PCP supporters against even the idea of negotiations now find it so easy to swallow the CPN(M)'s "Comprehensive Peace Agreement."

Many comrades fail to understand what is going on in Nepal, or fail to draw the appropriate conclusions, because they have a great deal

of confidence and respect for the leaders of the CPN(M) and do not understand why comrades such as these would adopt a line which, objectively, serves the efforts of the class enemy to reimpose reactionary rule on the society. Once again, the central question of political and ideological line is replaced with the subjective realm of intentions. We have no doubt that Chairman Prachanda and other leaders of the CPN(M) believe very much in the communist goal and are convinced that the present steps they are taking are a necessary if convoluted means of reaching this goal. And intentions do count in the sense that the comrades' desire to reach the communist future provides a favorable basis for struggle and a reason to believe that they can be won to understand why their present course is so harmful. But it is also true, as comrade Chang Chun chiao said, that theory is the dynamic factor in ideology. It is the theories of the CPN(M) concerning the nature of the state, the summation of the proletarian revolutions of the 20th century, how to understand democracy, and, on the philosophical level, the Party's criticism of the centrality of one divides into two, that are playing the "dynamic factor" in transforming the ideology of the party. Thus it is necessary to sharply criticize and repudiate these erroneous theories, and without such repudiation even a shift of tactic or policy, however welcome such shifts would be, is unlikely to get at the root of the problem by itself.

What Type of Ideological Synthesis Is Needed?

Our previous exchange of letters with the comrades of the CPN(M) focused, among other subjects, on the correct understanding of "democracy" and its role in the revolutionary state.

It should be apparent from reading the exchange of letters between our Party and the CPN(M) that the ideological and political differences are not limited to the question of the policies CPN(M) has adopted over the last two years nor even to the more general points about the nature of the new democratic revolution. Comrade Bhattarai's "New State" article that was the original focus of our Party's criticism closely links its theses concerning the "transitional state" to the author's summation of the experience of the proletarian revolutions of the 20th century and their reversals.

One could sidestep this question with the observation that if the revolutionaries refuse to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat in the first place there is no reason to worry about preventing its reversal. But there is a very real link between the ideology and politics that the CPN(M) is developing as "democracy of the 21st century" and the tragic policies the CPN(M) is carrying out today. Basically it comes down again

to the ABCs of Marxism: the proletariat, led by a vanguard political party, must, by force, defeat the existing apparatus of the state, establish its own rule (class dictatorship) and use this state power to transform society step by step until the very basis for classes no longer exists, either in the material conditions of life or in the thinking of people. This crucial question of the dictatorship of the proletariat has been at the heart of the major struggles between Marxism and revisionism throughout the whole history of the international communist movement, and it is no surprise to see them resurfacing today.

It is most definitely the case that simply repeating the experience of the past, or simply recycling past polemics, cannot resolve the problem of how the proletarian revolution can reemerge from the cinders of defeat and actually advance amidst tumultuous class struggle toward the communist future. Tremendous things were accomplished by our predecessors, which reached their greatest peak in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution led by Mao Tsetung. But the world moves on, humanity's understanding advances on different fronts, material conditions of life are transformed and revolution faces new and unexpected challenges. If we insist so much on the "dictatorship of the proletariat," it is not because it is an ABC of Marxism but because all that we understand about history and all that we can learn from contemporary society and the class struggle argues that there is no other vehicle for reaching the goal of communist society—a goal which is possible and which corresponds more than ever to the needs of the masses of the people on this earth. The Chairman of our Party, Bob Avakian, has been working for several decades on the vexing problem of learning from the past experience, negative and positive, of the proletarian revolution, and has developed a new synthesis which he has referred to as "a solid core with a lot of elasticity." Comrade Avakian put it this way:

"This new synthesis involves a recasting and recombining of the positive aspects of the experience so far of the communist movement and of socialist society, while learning from the negative aspects of this experience, in the philosophical and ideological as well as the political dimensions, so as to have a more deeply and firmly rooted scientific orientation, method and approach with regard not only to making revolution and seizing power but then, yes, to meeting the material requirements of society and the needs of the masses of people, in an increasingly expanding way, in socialist society—overcoming the deep scars of the past and continuing the revolutionary transformation of society, while at the same time actively supporting the world revolutionary struggle and acting on the recognition that the world arena and the world

struggle are most fundamental and important, in an overall sense—together with opening up qualitatively more space to give expression to the intellectual and cultural needs of the people, broadly understood, and enabling a more diverse and rich process of exploration and experimentation in the realms of science, art and culture, and intellectual life overall, with increasing scope for the contention of different ideas and schools of thought and for individual initiative and creativity and protection of individual rights, including space for individuals to interact in 'civil society' independently of the state—all within an overall cooperative and collective framework and at the same time as state power is maintained and further developed as a revolutionary state power serving the interests of the proletarian revolution, in the particular country and worldwide, with this state being the leading and central element in the economy and in the overall direction of society, while the state itself is being continually transformed into something radically different from all previous states, as a crucial part of the advance toward the eventual abolition of the state with the achievement of communism on a world scale.

"In a sense, it could be said that the new synthesis is a synthesis of the previous experience of socialist society and of the international communist movement more broadly, on the one hand, and of the criticisms, of various kinds and from various standpoints, of that experience, on the other hand. That does not mean that this new synthesis represents a mere 'pasting together' of that experience on the one hand, and the criticisms on the other hand. It is not an eclectic combination of these things, but a sifting through, a recasting and recombining on the basis of a scientific, materialist and dialectical outlook and method, and of the need to continue advancing toward communism, a need and objective which this outlook and method continues to point to— and, the more thoroughly and deeply it is taken up and applied, the more firmly it points to this need and objective."³³

The above excerpt expresses in a concentrated way how we understand the process of making revolution and continuing to go forward toward communism. Our fear is that instead of sifting through, recasting and recombining the criticisms of the socialist experience and integrating that into a deeper and more thorough understanding of the need for a revolutionary state power of the proletariat to transform society, the comrades of the CPN(M) are actually uncritically adopting wholesale ideological and political positions of the opponents of the proletarian revolution. This is particularly the case in how "democracy" is being portrayed and promoted in a way that rips it out of its historic and class content, treats it as an end rather than a means, and reduces the struggle

to one for formal political rights—bourgeois democracy. Twenty first century democracy as the comrades of the CPN(M) are portraying it, looks more like the 17th and 18th century democracy proclaimed by Locke or Rousseau than the 21st century communist revolution which we need to lead.

We cannot in this article review all of the many important points of discussion that have emerged in the exchange between our Party and the CPN(M) or in the other contributions of RIM parties and organizations. These questions of ideological and political line have immense implications for the future of our cause and we are more than a little disturbed by the fact that many or even most of the RIM parties and organizations apparently do not consider the current debate a crucial matter. The comrades of the CPN(M) told us to "be patient—wait and see." Well, we have not been patient and we have not just waited, but we most certainly have seen. The ideological and political line that the CPN(M) adopted is being put into practice and the initial results are there to be seen now. Even more tragic and disastrous results will surely follow unless the Party leadership finds the orientation and resolve to chart a different, and in a fundamental way, an opposite path. Contrary to the CPN(M)'s efforts to convince us that their theory is a result of their practice, we see the opposite. Theory, line, has preceded practice, has led practice, as indeed it must. In 1996 it was the adoption of Maoism by the CPN(M) and in particular the theory of new democratic revolution and people's war that preceded and prepared the initiation of the great People's War in Nepal and which remained the dominant and determining line through ten years of heroic struggle. Unfortunately, today it is an erroneous theory of fighting for a "transitional state" floating somewhere between the new democracy of the proletariat and bourgeois democracy (in its form in the semi feudal and semi colonial countries) which is preceding, shaping and guiding the practice of the Party.

What is needed now is for the RIM to come squarely to grips with its urgent responsibilities and really be the center of the world's Maoist forces that the world so desperately needs and really be the thorough going proletarian internationalists we claim to be. Today this is taking a particular focus in the struggle to save the revolution in Nepal. This very important battle is part of a greater process of rescuing the communist project in the only way that it can be rescued, by confronting the ideological and political questions of revolution in the 21st century, daring to examine and reexamine our precepts and understandings and forging the solution to the problems of humanity. Our own steps along this process have convinced us, more than ever, of the viability and necessity of the communist revolution. The great lesson of ten years of People's War in

Nepal is that it is possible, even in a generally unfavorable international situation and in a small country, to lead the masses to break free from a system dominated by imperialism and reaction and in so doing hasten the downfall of that world system. Revolution in Nepal is, as any real revolution will be, exceedingly complex, rich, and difficult, and to advance from one step to another is not easy. The important thing is to get back on the right road and use the most advanced and correct understanding to guide the revolution forward.

The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA March 19, 2008

References :

1. See the article by Chairman Prachanda, "A Brief Introduction to the Policies of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)", *The Worker* no 9, "In the given context of the existence of two ideologies, two armies and two states in the country, the Party is agreeable to demobilization of both armies and carrying out of elections to the Constituent Assembly under the supervision of the United Nations organization and international human rights organizations."
2. Smearing red ash (tikka) on the forehead, especially in the case of men, is a Hindu custom.
3. For example, in the debate over the Right Opportunist Line in Peru, our Party refused to categorically reject the possibility of negotiations and we struggled against those who condemned the CPN(M)'s previous ceasefires and negotiations. It is worth recalling later that we were also attacked for these positions, including by some who are now among the most ardent supporters of the CPN(M).
4. Of course, any discussion of this type quickly falls into speculation because it is impossible to know how the actual situation in Nepal would have developed if the CPN(M) had maintained a firm grasp on the crucial political and ideological questions.
5. Karl Marx, *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Chapter VII, p. 122.
6. How to sum up the Paris Commune has always been an important debate between communist revolutionaries and different types of reformists and anarchists. We will only note here that the "New State" article is a continuation of the tradition of misusing the experience of the Commune against the actual lessons that Marx and Engels drew at the time—the need for the more vigorous and more thorough struggle, the dictatorship of the proletariat.
7. Central Committee Resolution, October 2005. "To shut eyes on the historical necessity of dissolving and disarming the royal army that has been defending absolute monarchy by booting down people's democratic movement and its achievement since 250 years, in general, and past six decades, in particular, becomes moving around feudalism and imperialism. In the history, no republic has been established ever without dissolving and defeating the army subservient to monarchy and Nepal cannot be an exception to it..."
8. We would be interested in knowing more about the experience in the elections held under the authority of the Magarat Autonomous Republic, including the CPN(M)'s decision to let other political parties participate—which some did on a local level. In one district the candidate of the party was defeated, leading the Party as a whole to study the reasons for the dissatisfaction of the masses. But the important thing to

stress here is the world of difference between this experience under the system of rule (class dictatorship) led by the Party and the multiparty elections conducted under the dictatorship of the exploiting classes.

9. *The Red Star*, no. 2, January 1-15, 2008, article by a reporter identified as a member of the CPN(M) Central Committee.
10. See in particular William Hinton's magisterial *Fanshen*, an account of the land reform movement in one village in China.
11. Lenin pointed out in his celebrated work *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* (Vol. 3 first published in 1905) that small commodity production of a free peasantry creates a fertile ground for the rapid development of capitalism.
12. "The State and Revolution," *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, 422.
13. Comrade Gaurav, *The Red Star* no. 2, January 1-15, 2008.
14. In fact, the proponents of the "peaceful transition to socialism" have never denied that force might be necessary on the part of the "legitimate elected majority" against those who might refuse to accept the will of the people.
15. The post-apartheid ANC regime in South Africa instituted what has been often touted as the most democratic constitution in the world. However, one of its pillars is its infamous "property clause" which recognized and preserved the right of the small minority of white exploiters to maintain their property.
16. We saw, in our study of the negotiations in relation to Peru, the fundamental difference between "negotiating in order to fight" and "fighting in order to negotiate." In other words, both a revolutionary and a revisionist strategy made room for both tactics of fighting and talking (and many other forms of political activity as well). But from the revolutionary perspective, the strategy of the complete destruction of the old reactionary state leads and determines when, if and how, the tactics of negotiations and compromises are necessary.
17. See the "Open Letter to the Communist Party of the Philippines" from 1987 printed in *A World to Win*, no. 8, which analyzes this line at length.
18. Reports from this high-powered imperialist-sponsored institution can be found at www.crisisgroup.org
19. The 12-point agreement (November 2005) is the political agreement between the CPN(M) and the Seven Party Alliance of the principal parties of the bourgeoisie which later developed into the Comprehensive Political Agreement (November 2006).
20. There was also a serious political error in seeing the struggle as essentially a fight between fascism and bourgeois democracy that helped ideologically disarm the communists and lay the basis for the very error we are discussing. See Bob Avakian, *Conquer the World* at revcom.us.
21. *Conquer the World* discusses these questions in depth.
22. The CPN(Unity Center) was the organization that was transformed into the CPN(M) in 1994.
23. See, for example, the article by Comrade Basanta on the "International Dimension of Prachanda Path" in *The Worker*, no. 10.
24. *The Red Star* no. 5, March 1-15, 2008.
25. *A World to Win News Service*, February 11, 2008.
26. *The Red Star* no. 4, February 16-29, 2008.

27. Comrade Kiran, The Red Star no. 4, February 16-29, 2008.
28. ****The article from RIM comrades cites Three Major Struggles on China's Philosophical Front. "One divides into two," correctly understood as a concise way of expressing the law of the unity and struggle of opposites, embraces both aspects of the identity of opposites: first, that the two aspects of a contradiction mutually condition each other and coexist in the same process, and second, that in given conditions the two aspects are transformed into their opposite (the more important aspect). In "On Contradiction," Mao explains that the coexistence and mutual conditioning of the two opposites corresponds to a situation of quantitative change ("relative rest"), and the transformation of the aspects into their opposite—to qualitative change, the leap in which the secondary aspect becomes principal and vice-versa (conspicuous change). Both phases are processes of the struggle of opposites, and therefore, they are processes in which "one divides into two," but in different conditions and moments. Mao sums it up in this way: 'Things are constantly transforming themselves from the first to the second state of motion; the struggle of opposites goes on in both states but the contradiction is resolved through the second state. That is why we say that the unity of opposites is conditional, temporary and relative, while the struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute.'"**
29. Of course, if an understanding is wrong or one-sided, it is correct to criticize it, even if it has been formulated by our great leaders. However, the principle of "one divides into two" as the fundamental law of dialectics is correct and should be mastered and applied and not repudiated.
30. Central Committee Resolution, October, 2005: "What those discussions and interactions clarified was that comrade Laldhoj and other comrades were not for split, there remained no basic difference even though there were differences in emphasis and angle in some questions related with ideology of protracted nature, remained similar kind of thinking in tactic against the absolute monarchy, party could be carried forward more unitedly in the sensitive moment of history by criticizing and self-criticising, verbally and in written, the weaknesses emerged from several doubts in the past."
31. Peking Review, 1976
32. From the 10th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, adopted August 28, 1973.
33. Bob Avakian, Making Revolution and Emancipating Humanity, 2007 at revcom.us



Letter of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)

(June 2006)

To the Central Committee Revolutionary Communist Party,
USA From CC CPN (M) June 2006

Dear Comrades,

The letter your Party had written on 1 October 2005 to ours had reached to our hand quite late, and it was necessary on our part to reply to it quickly. But, we failed to do so given that we were very busy with the speedily changing political situation in our country and the need to lead it closely. However, firstly, we appreciate the initiative your Party has taken up to put forward criticisms and raise questions on our ideological and political position and the tactics we have adopted in recent years and, secondly, we make an apology for being late in replying to your letter. We firmly believe that the exchange of opinion will undoubtedly help identify the points of unity and disunity among us that, through comradely struggle, will help develop a higher level of unity between us by narrowing down the gap. We are in no doubt that this process of line struggle based on the ideological unity we already have will help both of our parties learn more from each other and elevate our ideological grasp to a higher level, which in fact can be one of the important cornerstones for developing MLM in the twenty first century. Definitely it will have far reaching significance.

Nevertheless, the letter has raised serious criticism on the ideological and political line and tactics we have adopted to accomplish New Democratic Revolution in our country and pave the way for socialism and communism. Not only this, your letter has accused us of sliding towards revisionism, though not mentioned directly. In this sense, the letter shows that we have serious differences in our ideological and political grasp, which calls for thoroughgoing struggles. This reply of ours can only be the initiation of that struggle, not the end.

Historical Context

Your Party, the RCP, USA, is very much aware that we were trying to develop our ideological and political line in an adverse international

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situation.. We had shouldered this historic responsibility when the International Communist Movement was facing a serious setback the world over following counter revolution in Russia and China, when our philosophy of MLM was facing all round attack from the imperialists and revisionists, when the world imperialist system too had undergone a change in which inter imperialist rivalry had weakened and the unipolar imperialist plunder, mainly of US imperialism, was escalating all across the world in the form of a globalized state. In addition to this, the Peruvian People's War, which was the most inspiring movement for our Party in the 1980s, had suffered a serious 'bend in the road', and when other ongoing revolutionary armed struggles, quite a few in numbers, were gaining no momentum but were cycling around the same circle year after year. On the other hand, the development of technology, mainly in the field of information, was making this world a small unit, and the growth of bureaucrat capitalism in our semi feudal and semi colonial country had brought about a certain change in the class relations of society. All of these questions were pressing us to think more creatively about how a revolutionary line in our Party could be developed. The semi Hoxhaite dogmatic legacy of the MB [Singh] school of thought, which was deep rooted in our veins, was also creating obstructions to going ahead creatively. It was really a challenging task subjectively for us to come out from the aforesaid adversities. We came to realize that the traditional way of thinking and applying MLM is not sufficient to face the new challenges created by the new situation. However, we were confident that a firm grasp of MLM and a proletarian commitment to revolution could face this challenge.

Taking into account all these particularities of the new situation, our Party creatively developed its ideological and political line. Of course, the way we tried to apply historical and dialectical materialism in the particularity of Nepalese society from the very beginning of developing our line and preparing for People's War, from the early 1990s, was to a great extent different from how other communist parties did before and were doing then in the world. The firm grasp of MLM, the 'concrete analysis of concrete conditions', the 'correct application of mass line' and the creative application of historical and dialectical materialism, the philosophy of revolutionary practice, in the particularity of Nepalese society were the basis with which we fought back alien ideologies and reactionary and revisionist attacks against us, which in turn prepared the ground for us to initiate People's War in 1996. What we have achieved during the past ten turbulent years of class struggle is before the world's people.

In fact, the past ten years have not been years of smooth sailing for us. We have gone through twists and turns, ups and downs, and

rights and lefts.. Every revolution does so. When we applied our line in revolutionary practice, it not only developed People's War in leaps but also started generating new ideas so as to enrich the philosophical arsenal of MLM. It is known to your Party that the experiences and the set of new ideas that we gathered from the revolutionary practice of the initial five years had already been synthesized as Prachanda Path in 2001. It is heading towards a higher level of another synthesis.

From the time when we established our proletarian internationalist relations with your Party through RIM, though we have basic unity between our two parties, we have not found your Party satisfied with our political line and tactics at different historical turning points. Even now, your Party, RCP, USA, is looking at our Party mainly with the same eyes with which it used to see 15 years before. Frankly, RCP never correctly understood our Party, its political line and the tactics we adopted at times. The traditional way of thinking and the dogmatic understanding of MLM that the RCP is suffering from has made your Party unable to understand ours at every turning point of history. Just for example, when we had united with Lamas, in 1991, your Party reached a conclusion that the unity was wrong and it was a deception to the proletarian revolution in Nepal. When we partially used parliamentary elections, you thought that we were bogged down in parliamentarism. In your Party's opinion, MB Singh, who opposed our Party unity as revisionist and partial use of parliamentary struggle as parliamentarism, was correct. When we sat for two negotiations with the enemy you thought that we were finished. But, the objective reality never proved your judgment to be correct, because it was the result of your dogmatic analysis and subjective synthesis. Now, we understand that you don't agree with our present tactics of ceasefire, interim constitution, interim government, constituent assembly election and democratic republic to be established by extensive restructuring of the state. It is because your way of thinking is subjective and does not follow the mass line. The present letter is a proof of that.. However, it is our firm belief that with the correct grasp of MLM and its creative application in our particularity we will be able to establish a new democratic state under the leadership of the proletariat, possibly soon in our country, which will objectively prove your disagreement, serious criticism and indirect accusation of revisionism raised in the letter to be utterly subjective and wrong.

Experience Of History And Our Effort

History is a witness that the proletarian class had succeeded in establishing its power in almost one third of the globe, with the breath taking sacrifice of millions in the twentieth century. The imperialist world

system of war and aggression for loot and plunder of the poor nations and people of the under developed countries was under threat from the socialist system. Poverty, deprivation, corruption, unemployment, etc. – the general phenomena of the capitalist mode of production – had been basically eliminated from those socialist countries.

But questions have come up as to why those proletarian powers turned into their opposites without any bloodshed, right after the demise or capture of the main leadership? Why did Comrade Stalin fail to control the emergence of revisionists from within the Party he had led, despite that he did his best, including forceful suppression against them? Why did the CPC under Mao's leadership, despite that it launched the Cultural Revolution, fail to stop revisionist Deng and his clique from grabbing power after his demise? Why did the Russian Red Army that was able to defeat the fascist Hitler and his powerful army with the sacrifice of about 20 million Russian patriots, fail to retain proletarian power after the death of Comrade Stalin? Why did the Chinese PLA, which was able to defeat Japanese imperialist aggression and 5.5 million in the Chinese reactionary army, turn out to be a silent spectator when the revisionist Deng clique grabbed power? Why did the Vietnamese people's army, which was able to defeat the US army, the strongest army in the world, and equipped with the most sophisticated weapons, fail to notice the transfer of proletarian power into its opposite? These and alike are the questions for which we are trying to find correct answers. Only cursing the revisionists does not solve the problem.

It goes against dialectics to believe that we are immune to committing any mistakes while translating MLM into practice. Therefore, we not only welcome but demand suggestions and criticism from our comrades the world over. In this sense, we very much welcome your creative suggestions and criticism.. But, we have been very much frustrated by how you understand us, and your effort to teach us the basics of MLM as if we don't know them at all or we have derailed from it. We clearly observe inconsistency between what ideological and political assistance we need from our international comrades and what they, presently the RCP, are providing to us through this letter. We need assistance in our effort to try to connect the missing links in the ICM by which our class had to lose its power in the twentieth century, but your letter is trying to draw us back to the struggle around the basic and classical questions of MLM. We want debate on the aforesaid questions to overcome the problems our movement faced in the 20s, when we have got no undisputed answer to date. Your letter does not focus on those ideological and political questions, but mainly teaches the ABC of Marxism. It is frustrating us.

Historical and dialectical materialism is the philosophy of revolution; it not only applies to society but also in human thinking. The unity and struggle of opposites is its fundamental law. It means every entity divides into two, and each of the two aspects transforms into its opposite. We think the latter is the principal aspect for us communists.

It is our opinion that the ICM, in general, failed in the past to grasp the totality of this law of dialectics. Our class paid more attention to 'one divides into two' in the past and is doing so at present, but knowingly or unknowingly it has skipped grasping and applying in practice the transformation of one aspect into its opposite, the principal aspect. Because of this mistaken grasp, in practice at least, our class applied the dialectics of negation in two line struggle so as to create splits among our own ranks instead of helping to unite by creating the material environment to make the wrongdoing comrades transform. In other words, our class practiced unity struggle split, not unity struggle transformation. The fatal consequences that the communists are confronting to date justifies [proves] this fact. Our ranks must correct it, and our Party is trying to do so.

Now the question comes up, how can we help the fellow travellers to correct their mistaken ideas? Definitely, we don't have any magical rod. Firstly, and importantly, it is the correct grasp and appropriate application of dialectical materialist principles in the practice of two line struggle within the proletarian Party that can correct the mistaken ideas of given comrades. And secondly, it is the masses of the people, the proletariat and oppressed class, that can help their leaders transform by supervising, controlling and intervening, if necessary, upon them and the institutions they work in. We say, "Revolution from within the revolution", and of course believe that it is the developed practical manifestation of and so the development of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, as propounded by Mao. In other words, it is the process of making mass action against the mistaken leaders a regular phenomenon under the dictatorship of the proletariat. We believe this is how the Party of the proletariat can help the wrongdoing comrades to transform in the service of the oppressed people and thereby check counterrevolution from within its ranks. We will discuss later on how we are trying to develop the mechanism and methodology to achieve this goal.

State, Democracy And Dictatorship Of The Proletariat

It is the ABC of Marxism that state power is an inevitable means to apply dictatorship upon one class by another in a class society. In a letter, dated 5 March 1852, to Weydemeyer, Marx says, "What I did that

was new was to prove: 1) that the existence of classes is only bound up with particular historical phases in the development of production; 2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat; 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society...." In the same way, in his famous work, *State and Revolution*, Lenin says, "Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

For those who claim to be communists to think that both of the hostile classes in a society enjoy equal rights under the existing state power is sheer nonsense and unscientific. The fact is that the class in power enjoys democracy and applies dictatorship over the enemy class. Hence, democracy and dictatorship are two opposites of a single entity, state power. That is why there can be no absolute democracy in a class society nor can absolute dictatorship exist there. It is entirely true for both of the states, the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. When classes cease to exist in society, then the state power too ceases to exist, and consequently both dictatorship and democracy wither away. Where should we focus on is how our practice of democracy and proletarian dictatorship can lead to the abolition of state power and the withering away of both democracy and dictatorship from society.

Of course, our Party's serious concern is how the proletarian class, when it reaches power after the violent overthrow of its enemy, can strengthen the dictatorship over its antagonistic class so that it can continue towards the abolition of the state by preventing counterrevolution. We believe that the more democracy for the oppressed classes is guaranteed, the stronger will be the voluntary and principled unity among them, which as a consequence will strengthen the dictatorship over the bourgeois class. When democracy does not take root in the entire oppressed classes, then bureaucratic tendencies emerge in the Party, state and the society as well that consequently weaken the dictatorship of the proletariat. The history of the ICM and our own practice of people's power, though in an immature form, have demonstrated us this. This is why we have been emphasizing developing democracy under the proletarian dictatorship.

Now, we would like to see how our pioneering leaders looked at democracy under socialist society and the state. The *Communist Manifesto*, on page 57 writes, "... that the first step in the revolution by the working class, is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy."

In his famous work, "*The Socialist Revolution And The Right Of Nations To Self Determination (Theses)*", Lenin writes, "The socialist

revolution is not one single act, not one single battle on a single front, but a whole epoch of intensified class conflicts, a long series of battles on all fronts, i.e. battles around all the problems of economics and politics, which can culminate only in the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. It would be a fundamental mistake to suppose that the struggle for democracy can divert the proletariat from the socialist revolution, or obscure, or overshadow it, etc. On the contrary, just as socialism cannot be victorious unless it introduces complete democracy, so the proletariat will be unable to prepare for victory over the bourgeoisie unless it wages a many sided, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy."

Let us quote Mao from his "Speech at the Second Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China". (Vol. 5, 15 November 1956). He says, "We are not even afraid of imperialism, so why should we be afraid of great democracy? Why should we be afraid of students taking to the streets? Yet among our Party members there are some who are afraid of great democracy, and this is not good. Those bureaucrats who are afraid of great democracy must study Marxism hard and mend their ways."

From the above quotations we find the Communist Manifesto, Comrade Lenin and Comrade Mao urging for democracy. But we find the past practice of proletarian democracy was inadequate, particularly in the lack of a specific mechanism and appropriate methodology to institutionalize it, which as a consequence weakened the dictatorship of the proletariat. We are not arguing for something new, not in MLM, but what we are suggesting is to connect the missing link of the past to make both democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat more effective. So, we don't think your Party should be afraid of the democracy that we are talking about. Rather, we want your Party to concentrate more on how the genuine democracy of the proletariat can be established so that the voluntary unity of the whole oppressed classes can exercise effective and real dictatorship over their class enemy.

Of course, we have put forward some proposals to develop a methodology and mechanism within the state so that it can effectively help implement the dialectical relation between proletarian dictatorship and democracy in society. We have seen Chinese practice, the latest, where we find eight different political parties of various sections of the masses, not of the enemy class, playing a co operative role in the people's government. We think it was mechanical and formal, so it is inadequate. What we have proposed is to raise this multiparty co operation to the level of multiparty competition in the proletarian state within an anti feudal (or anti bourgeois) and anti imperialist constitutional framework. The RCP's criticism that the

CPN (Maoist) is sliding towards the abandonment of the proletarian dictatorship by adopting bourgeois formal democracy reflects your Party's unawareness to reach at the crux of the problem we are raising. So, instead of accusing us of having adopted bourgeois democracy, we request RCP to take it seriously and launch debate from the height we need.

Now a question arises, what the Party of the proletariat will do if it is defeated in elections under multiparty competition, which we think is your main concern. We believe this question is less serious and less dangerous than, what will the proletarian class do if its Party in state power degenerates into revisionism? These are the questions related to how to develop a methodology and mechanism to continue the revolution until communism amidst various internal and external threats of counter revolution. This is why we have proposed that the constitution, which is put into action after the proletarian class seizes power, should provide the right for the oppressed classes, not the enemy, to rebel against the Party, if it turns revisionist, and to form a new one to continue the revolution under the given circumstances.

On the other hand, the Party's necessity to go for the people's mandate makes them more responsible towards the masses of people. If they are not to face competition among the masses to remain in the leadership of power, then there remains a material basis, in which the relation between the Party and the masses becomes formal and mechanical, consequently it provides an opportunity for bureaucracy to breed up from within the Party itself. Past experience justifies this. Hence, we believe multiparty competition for the people's government and, along with this, the people's right to supervise, control and intervene, including the recalling of their representatives from power, provides a kind of hook in the hands of the masses that can drag the wrongdoing comrades into their court. This process makes the relation between the Party and the masses livelier and vibrant, which creates a helpful objective environment for the wrongdoers to transform, either in a positive or negative direction.

Criticizing our position, your letter writes, "We feel that to make the most essential question one of formal democracy, and its expression in elections, competing political parties, and the like, is a serious mistake and will strengthen tendencies toward the abandonment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, or its outright overthrow by counter revolutionaries." We don't think the question is as simple as you have placed here. Everyone knows there was no multiparty competition, and the like, in Russia and China, which according to you is the main source of strengthening tendencies towards the abandonment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Then why did Russia and China fail to sustain the

revolution and continue with the dictatorship of the proletariat until communism? Multiparty competition is not the only way by which imperialism can play a role to reverse the revolution. We request comrades to focus the debate on what positive and negative consequences it can lead to if such a competition is put into practice under the proletarian dictatorship, but not to reject it outright by accusing it as formal democracy of the bourgeoisie. Simply criticizing our proposals, based on logical arguments, does not solve the problem that our class is confronting now. We think the fate of the proletarian revolution in the twenty first century relies on our generation, mainly our two parties at present. We request RCP to dare to break the traditional way of dogmatic thinking and raise the level of struggle to meet the need of the day.

We would like again to quote two sentences from your letter. It writes, "China did not just gradually become more and more capitalist, more and more 'totalitarian', as the state grew stronger and stronger. In order for capitalism to be transformed state power had to be seized by the capitalist roaders, which they did through a coup d'état after Mao's death." Firstly, this kind of interpretation doesn't represent dialectical materialism, because it negates the inevitability of quantitative development for a qualitative leap. There was a material basis mainly in the superstructure for the counter revolution to take place, which was constantly developing from within the socialist state itself. Had there been no such situation, why had Mao to struggle against various evils like, for example, the three excesses and five excesses and finally launch the GPCR against the revisionist headquarters? Had there been no such material basis, counter revolution could not have taken place in a single stroke on the wish of revisionists.. Rather, the fact is Mao was late to foresee this situation.

Secondly, this kind of argument leads to the conclusion that it is the revisionists alone who are responsible for counter revolution. This way of thinking does not go into the depth of the problem but skips the question of why revolutionaries failed to prevent the emergence of revisionists from within a revolutionary party. Revolutionaries must not remain self content only by cursing revisionists for the damaging consequences, but should emphasize more what mistakes they made in the past and what measures they should take to correct them at present. The trend of cursing others for a mistake and enjoying oneself from such acts does not represent either a proletarian responsibility or culture.

Democratic Republic – A Transitional Form

Let us initiate our discussion on this topic by quoting a sentence from your letter to us. It writes, "The role and character of the ruling classes and their political representatives, such as the parliamentary parties,

are determined fundamentally not by their relation to the monarchy but by their relationship to imperialism and feudalism." Strategically, it is very much correct. But, in our case, even though there is no fundamental difference between monarchy and the parliamentary parties strategically on the question of their relation to feudalism and imperialism, in a tactical sense there are some conflicting aspects existing between them. It was for this reason that we have been able to take advantage of their conflict during the past ten years of People's War. This conflict is not yet resolved. Our political tactics of an interim government, constituent assembly and democratic republic of this conflict.

The political resolution that our Central Committee Meeting adopted unanimously in 2005 clarifies our position on this tactical slogan. It reads, "Now the slogan of interim government, election of the constituent assembly and democratic republic that our Party, taking into account the international and domestic balance of power, has formulated is a tactical slogan put forward for the forward looking political way out. Remaining clear on the principle that the tactics must serve strategy, our Party has viewed the democratic republic neither as the bourgeois parliamentary republic nor directly as the new democratic one. This republic, with an extensive reorganization of the state power as to resolve the problems related with class, nationality, region and sex prevailing in the country, would play a role of transitional multiparty republic. Certainly, the reactionary class and their parties will try to transform this republic into a bourgeois parliamentary one; whereas our Party of the proletarian class will try to transform it into a new democratic republic. How long the period of transition will be is not a thing that can right now be ascertained. It is clear that it will depend upon the then national and international situation and state of power balance. As for now, this slogan has played and will play an important role to unite all the forces against the absolute monarchy dominant in the old state, for it has been a common enemy for both revolutionary and parliamentary forces." We don't think more explanation is required to clarify our position on this tactic.

The question of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is very much linked with this tactical slogan. Clarifying our position on the PLA, a unanimous resolution of the CC meeting held in 2006, writes, "In the present context, when domestic and foreign reactionary elements are conspiring against the Nepalese people's aspiration of progress and peace, the whole Party from top to bottom must give maximum emphasis to the question of consolidating and expanding the People's Liberation Army and keeping them prepared to go any time into the war front. In the present sensitive stage, when imperialism and reaction will struggle to disarm the People's

Liberation Army, and our Party will struggle to dissolve the 'royal' army in the front of talks, if the Party failed to consolidate and expand the People's Liberation Army and keep it prepared 24 hours for war, the Nepalese people would suffer a big defeat. The Party can have a lot of compromises in the domain of politics and diplomacy, but will never give up the real strength, the People's Liberation Army and the arms they possess that the Nepalese people have gained with the blood of thousands of martyrs. Its name and structure can be changed in accordance with the verdict of the people, but even its name will not be changed as to benefit the imperialists and reaction and their wishes and demands. The Party will never tolerate any vacillation in this basic class and theoretical question."

In general, tactical political slogans are materialized less in practice. This is because reactionary think tanks understand that it has a direct link with the strategic goal of the revolutionaries, and they know that the proletarian class takes advantage of it. But sometimes they are compelled to agree with it because the next alternative remaining for them becomes worse than that. In this sense, revolutionaries must not put forward tactical political slogans with the assumption that they are not being put into action. That is why our tactics has been so adopted that in both cases, whether it is being put into action or not, it can be linked with the strategic goal for a higher level of offensive against the enemy. The main thing it needs to have is the political strength to weaken and isolate the enemy by rallying people around this slogan. When the politics of the proletarian class gets established among the masses, then the masses will have no hesitation to rally around the Party raising that slogan. We believe this slogan has been doing this.

The democratic republic can take its shape only after the restructuring of the state, which the document has clearly mentioned. It will be structured so as to resolve the basic problems of the oppressed classes, nationalities, sex and regions, the content of the new democratic revolution. In whatever ways we manoeuvre in between with this terminology, it does not make any difference in the essence of the strategic goal. What we can say now to your Party is, just be patient – to wait and see.

Strategy And Tactics

Dialectical and historical materialism, the revolutionary ideology, is a science, and revolutionary politics is the art of developing tactics in favour of the proletarian class interest. Tactics cannot be copied from a book, nor can anyone away from the knowledge of objective reality suggest it. It is creatively developed on the basis of the concrete analysis of concrete conditions. In this sense, one should be very flexible in tactics.

because the objective situation goes on changing. But strategy represents a specific target or goal so as to resolve the basic contradictions in the given society. The revolutionaries must remain firm on strategy till the basic contradictions of the society are resolved. And tactics must serve strategy.

Memorizing things from books and interpreting for hours and hours on their basis is one thing, and applying them in living practice is qualitatively another. Frankly speaking, it is very easy not to commit any mistakes in strategy. But it is extremely difficult to take up and apply appropriate tactics in the service of strategy. It is dangerous too. Where there is more danger, there is more opportunity, this is dialectics. The test of revolutionaries, including your Party, is best taken by tactics, not strategy. Therefore, the fate of the revolution depends fully not on the strategy alone, but on what kinds of tactical moves one adopts at various junctures of the revolution to attain the strategic goal.

We can confidently say that we have been correctly applying the dialectics of strategic firmness and tactical flexibility in our revolutionary practice, since before the initiation of the People's War. It is open to the world's people, including your Party, that we had united with revisionists, we had been in parliament with 11 MPs, we already had two rounds of negotiations with the enemies, and the third round is going on. The Interim Government and constituent assembly election are on the immediate agenda. Comrades, if we were wrong in handling the dialectics of tactical flexibility and strategic firmness in our practice of waging class struggle, we would have been finished quite before. Any one of these tactical moves was enough to make us revisionist, the whole set was not necessary.

Yes, there is always a serious danger of tactics eating up strategy or policy eating up politics, the synthesis of MKP according to your letter. Tactical flexibility without strategic firmness creates this danger, and its ultimate consequence is reformism and revisionism. It is manifested in the form of 'fighting to negotiate', not 'negotiating to fight'. But, there is other danger too, which you did not mention in your letter. It is: strategy becoming tactics, in other words, having no tactics, or politics eating up policies. To say this in another way, it is strategic firmness without tactical flexibility, of which the end result is dogmatic sectarianism.

Those who are drowned in the quagmire of tactical flexibility without strategic firmness understand our Party as dogmatic, whereas, those who are suffering from the jaundice of strategic firmness without tactical flexibility see us moving towards reformism and revisionism. Confidently, what we can say is that both of these accusations are wrong, but we are correct, because we have been applying in our practice strategic firmness and tactical flexibility dialectically. The qualitative leap of the People's

War in the past ten and a half years justifies this fact.

Our Party is very keenly trying to learn from the experiences of revolutionary struggles and tactical moves of the International Communist Movement, in general, and the latest experiences of Peru and Nicaragua in particular. We believe that both ways of adopting tactics, in Peru and Nicaragua, were wrong. We are confident that we can protect our movement from the mistakes committed in these two countries.

On the basis of our experience of unity and struggle with your Party in the past in general and your letter at present in particular, we believe that your Party is deeply suffering from the dogmatic sectarian trend. Therefore, we are not surprised to receive from your Party a warning bell through your letter in which it has doubted that our revolution is sliding towards revisionism. We know it is not your wish to indirectly accuse us of revisionism, but it is your way of thinking that has led you to this conclusion. Nevertheless, we don't claim that we are immune to committing any mistakes in our path. In this sense, your letter has contributed significantly to alerting us to the possible dangers ahead on our journey.

New Democratic Republic Of Nepal And The Army

What our present position is on the PLA in the context, when your letter has suspected us of dissolving it, has been clarified in the part of the document excerpted before. We don't think it necessary to elaborate on this more. But, given our geopolitical situation, we are developing some concepts about the strength of the army in the New Democratic Republic of Nepal. It is a geographical fact that our country, inhabited only by 25 million people, is sandwiched between two giant nations, India and China, each of which has more than one billion inhabitants. Chinese military strength is being developed so as to counter US imperialism. The Indian army is known to be the fourth strongest army in the world. From the resources we have in our country and the strength of our PLA, even if we recruit all of the youths within it, we cannot think of defeating either of the armies neighbouring us, let alone the US imperialist army, to defend our geographical integrity from foreign military aggression.

In this objective situation, we have to maintain our army not to fight foreign military aggression, but so as to provide military training to the general masses in the form of the militia. Only the armed sea of the masses, equipped with revolutionary ideology and politics, can defend our geographical integrity. Just for example, we have a brilliant history of heroic struggles in the past. The Nepalese masses equipped with domestic weapons and aged from 11 to 65 years had, under the leadership of patriotic army generals like Bhakti Thapa and Balbhadra Kunwar, defeated British

aggressors attacking from the South, in Nalapani. Based upon the aforesaid historical facts too, we think that some thousands of the PLA will be sufficient to train the general masses so as to defend her geographical integrity under the New Democratic and Socialist Republic of Nepal.

Our Party has developed this concept on the basis of the bitter experiences of the past revolutions too. This means it is related to how the relation between the army and the general masses can be maintained as cordial as it was before the capture of power. But, after the seizure of power, if the PLA are set in big permanent army barracks, objectively this would cut off the previous vibrant relation of 'water and fish' and 'soil and seed' between the general masses and their army, and consequently a bureaucratic set up would start getting its shape from within this. This is why we are for developing a new methodology and mechanism by which bureaucracy could be frustrated from within the army, so that a strong people's relationship with them is maintained. We think this way of maintaining the People's Army can democratize it more, can involve them more with mass activities and strong ideological and political unity, which so develops among their ranks and the masses, and enables them to fight unitedly against both threats, internal and external. This can also be a new concept for maintaining the army in the socialist countries, in the 21st century, to fight international imperialism. We want to debate from this height.

Miscellaneous points

Let us excerpt some of the important parts of a sentence or sentences from the latter part of your letter under different headings like, "A Questionable Proposal", "On The International Community", "Nepal and the Imperialist World Order", etc. These are as under:

"And, it must be pointed out, if the enemies were to accept such a 'political solution' it could well be coupled with, or be a prelude to, relying on military means to enforce a military solution, as we have seen far too often in history (Indonesia, Chile, Iraq in 1965)."

"...it is equally true that the existing world order will not tolerate a genuine people's revolutionary state."

"...an unwritten consensus in the international community that the Maoists must not be allowed to come to power. ... We think it is very accurate."

"...the 'international community' — will bitterly oppose you and do everything they can to prevent you from coming to power in the first place, and to overthrow your rule, if you do succeed in coming to power, and this will very likely involve different types of military aggression as well as economic sabotage and blockade, espionage activities and the

financing and training of counter revolutionaries all of which is "business as usual" for the imperialist states and India as well, for that matter."

First of all, we would like to say that your concerns expressed in these excerpts is very much correct, so we share them. Imperialism will not tolerate any revolutionary to rule in any part of this earth as long as they can.. It was not true that the CPSU and CPC first made imperialism happy with their politics and tactics, and then collected support to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat in their countries. Also it was not true that they successfully established the dictatorship of the proletariat because they were superior to imperialism militarily. The fact was that the Party of the proletariat was superior in mobilising people around it, handling contradictions among the enemies and using them in one's favour dialectically, because their outlook was scientific and they were far sighted. The same is true for now also.

From the whole of your letter, it implies that imperialism will not allow any revolutionaries to have a political settlement in a peaceful way and will conspire with 'business as usual' to destroy revolution.. And it also implies that what our Party is doing now tactically is wrong and nonsense. Therefore your letter has suggested us to go straightforward in a military way, with 'business as usual'. We appreciate your concern; but we understand imperialism will not tolerate us in power at all, as long as they can, even if we go with 'business as usual' too. That is why, whether imperialism will tolerate us or not is not the question at all behind our tactics; with which tactics we can defeat imperialism in the present context is the only question. We are not self assured on the question that imperialism will allow resolving the civil war peacefully in the way our Party wants, but we are confident that we can defeat imperialism and their puppets in the military front by going through this tactic only. This is the question of applying the mass line correctly.

Yes, there are some confusing positions in our interpretations, in several contexts. We think sometimes they are necessary. If we can confuse our enemies and the international community with our tactical dealings, it can divide them to a certain extent, which will benefit our revolution. Problems will arise only if the Party of the proletariat itself is confused. So long as the ideological and political line is clear and the Party is committed to accomplishing its strategic mission, it can lead the masses in all circumstances. Revolutionaries can lead the masses ahead from the height of consciousness they acquire from the class struggle in society, not from the height of consciousness the Party of the proletariat has. It is a question of not dictating to them to do what we want, but of being together with the masses to deal with the situation and applying the mass line to develop their consciousness.

Your letter has very apprehensively raised one question. If the enemy accepts your demand, just for example, a constituent assembly, you are obligated to agree with it; otherwise you will lose the confidence of the masses. We appreciate your anxiety. But we understand that a constituent assembly in itself is not a solution, but its political content can be. For example, if the constituent assembly can ensure the dissolution of the royal army, the reorganization of the national army under our leadership, the implementation of revolutionary land reform based upon the policy of land to the tiller, the right of nations to self determination, an end to social discrimination, development and prosperity, etc., why should one oppose it? By this, we mean that the constituent assembly is decided by its political content, not by its form. It is not an inert thing but full of contradictions, only what is required is our capability to use those contradictions in favour of our strategic goal.

The masses never compromise with their necessities but prefer peaceful execution. It is the task of the revolutionary parties to prove through practice that their necessities are not met by peaceful means. And only by doing this can the Party of the proletariat lead them to violent struggles. We understand that the enemy will not allow us to attain our strategic goal in a peaceful way, but we can lead the masses in violent struggle to overthrow them with such political tactics.

Conclusion

This is our short response to your letter dated 1 October 2005. We hope we succeeded to place our position clearly, mainly on the questions you have raised in the letter.

We understand that our two Parties have a convergence of views on the need to synthesize the positive and negative experiences of the past successful revolutions. Also we have convergences of views on the need to develop MLM to confront the challenges before our class in the twenty first century. We believe that MLM can be developed in the course of applying historical and dialectical materialism in the practice of class struggle in society, two line struggle among the entire revolutionary ranks all across the world, and the correct synthesis of past experience. Our two parties have a good opportunity to wage struggle, both being together in RIM. As an internationalist class, both of us have an important responsibility to fight unitedly for our class in the USA, in Nepal and the world as well. We take this response of ours as a first step towards that direction.

**With Revolutionary Greetings! From the Central Committee,
Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)**



Letter of the RCP, USA

(October 2005)

To Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)

Dear Comrades,

Our party, and especially its leadership, has paid close attention to the unfolding of the People's War in your country and the thinking of your party. We have particularly appreciated the orientation of Comrade Prachanda that Marxism Leninism Maoism advance into the twenty first century and that the lessons of the first great wave of proletarian revolution beginning with the Paris Commune and continuing up until the defeat of the proletarian revolution in China must be summed up.

As you know the Chairman of our Party, Bob Avakian, has made the study of this experience a major focus of his attention. In many important aspects we have noticed a convergence between positions put forward by your party and the directions that we have also set forth. However, for some time now we have been disturbed by some of the political positions and their theoretical justifications that have been adopted by your party or, at least, by some leading comrades. Many of what we consider incorrect, or confused and eclectic positions are to be found in issue number 9 of The Worker, particularly, but not only, in the article by Comrade Baburam Bhattarai on "The Question of Building a New Type of State" (hereafter referred to as "New State").

Our growing concerns over the questions of political line and approach – especially on the question of dictatorship of the proletariat and democracy – are not just points of abstract theory, they very much have to do with the key line questions that in turn are relevant in terms of the immediate tasks of the revolution in your country when the old state is on its death bed and the question arises if the revolution will be fully victorious, what type of state will replace the monarchy, what will be the role of this new state in world politics and how your struggle will help advance the world proletarian revolution.

The two line struggle that has broken out in your party is focusing on precisely those questions where your past positions were, in our

opinion, unclear, problematic or eclectic. "One is dividing into two" or at least it appears so, and it provides a great opportunity for the party to cast aside those aspects of its previous understanding and political line which go against the mainly correct orientation your party has been following throughout the long and complex course of the People's War.

Our own central understanding of the question of democracy and dictatorship is best expressed by the following quotation from Comrade Avakian: "In a world marked by profound class divisions and social inequality, to talk about 'democracy' – without talking about the class nature of that democracy and which class it serves – is meaningless, and worse. So long as society is divided into classes, there can be no 'democracy for all': one class or another will rule, and it will uphold and promote that kind of democracy which serves its interests and goals. The question is: which class will rule and whether its rule, and its system of democracy, will serve the continuation, or the eventual abolition, of class divisions and the corresponding relations of exploitation, oppression and inequality."

Our concerns center on two basic levels. First of all, the theoretical understanding of democracy under the socialist transition presented in "New State" loses sight of the most essential problems of advancing socialist society toward communism and, in particular, undermines the understanding that it is not possible to transform society and advance toward the communist future without the dictatorship of the proletariat. Secondly, and partially flowing from the erroneous conception of democracy expressed in "New State", arguments are made that tend to negate the necessity of establishing a new democratic (People's Republic) as the immediate goal of the People's War in Nepal and would instead argue for instituting some kind of bourgeois democratic republic as a necessary step.

Democracy: Form And Content

In the different documents of The Worker number 9 a great deal of emphasis on the importance of

democracy under the dictatorship of the proletariat in the transition toward communism. It is very important that your party is emphasizing the state as a transitional form to the final goal of communism. It is also correct to stress that the concrete measures, policies and features of the state system that are developed in the transition period must have as their aim the achievement of this final goal.

The viewpoint that "New State" implies is that the simple extension of formal democracy is the main aspect in leading toward the "withering

away of the state". In support of this argument it quotes Lenin "the more complete the democracy, the nearer the moment when it becomes necessary." But several points need to be made here.¹⁾ The experience in the USSR and China and the world revolution generally has shown that the need to develop and build up a powerful state machinery is not something that can be quickly dispensed with after the victory of the revolution in a particular country. In a world still dominated by imperialism it is quite impossible to imagine that the need for a powerful standing army, to take one key example that is cited in "New State", will quickly disappear. This has clearly turned out to be a more protracted process than envisioned originally by Marx and Engels and even by Lenin when he wrote State and Revolution on the eve of the Bolshevik Revolution.²⁾ When Lenin writes of "democracy" in the passage cited in "New State" he is clearly not mainly talking about formal democracy, such as elections and the right to vote. Rather, he is emphasizing that the majority of society will "have learned to administer the state themselves." This, too, is not something that is easily accomplished and will no doubt take generations to accomplish on a world scale, especially with the remaining strength of international imperialism. But it does provide one very important measure for determining to what extent the proletarian state is truly democratic in the most profound sense of the word and, specifically, in a way that is consistent with and serves rule by the proletariat and the advance, under that rule, toward the goal of communism and, with the achievement of communism, and not before, toward the abolition, the "withering away," of the state. The bourgeois concept of democracy is that election and formal rights is the essential feature of democracy. The classical revisionist conception is that as long as the state is acting in the "interests of the people" it can be considered democratic with or without elections. But Mao situated the fundamental and essential problem elsewhere – in the problem of eliminating what the Chinese comrades referred to as the "4 Alls" in reference to an crucial citation from Marx when he said the communist revolution must aim at the elimination of: all classes and class distinctions generally, all the relations of production on which they rest, all the social relations corresponding to them, and all the ideas that result from these social relations.

As long as the three great differences exist, as long as relations of production are still not completely free of bourgeois right, as long the differences and inequalities left over from the old society still exist, as long as production and exchange of commodities and the law of value persist, even if restricted, then the possibility of the emergence of new forms of exploitation exists and there will be representatives who emerge to champion these exploitative relations of production and ultimately

attempt to establish a different class rule. And the existence of these various expressions of social inequality and of bourgeois right will, for a long time, exist at the same time as and in connection with – and will be interacting with, and reinforced in important ways by

– the existence of, and the influence of, imperialist and reactionary states and their continual attempts to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat where it exists. The world historical problems connected with all this, the reasons why this emphasizes the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat, until communism is reached, worldwide, and crucial questions bound up with how to exercise the dictatorship of the proletariat so as to, at one and the same time, continue to transform society toward the goal of communism, in unity and dialectical relation with the world revolution, and to develop the proletarian dictatorship as a state that is radically different from all previous forms of the state – these and related questions are at the heart of, and provide the foundation and framework for, how as communists we have to understand and approach the specific question of democracy, its class character in different societies, under different systems of class rule, and its relation to the goal of moving beyond the whole realm – and, as Marx put it, the narrow horizon – of bourgeois right, both in the material world in the thinking of people.

Formal Democracy Under Socialism

One important common concern of both our parties is to sum up the whole experience of the proletarian revolution and the proletarian dictatorship to date. It is certainly the case that we will not be able to make revolution in the twenty first century if we fail to really examine, from many angles and in depth, the positive and negative experience of our class in this respect.

We cannot go into depth in this letter into this crucial question of the understanding of the transition period – the dictatorship of the proletariat. Comrade Avakian has written a great deal on this subject, and we would like to call your attention in particular to his article "Democracy: More than Ever We Can and Must Do Better Than That" refuting K. Venu in number 17 of *A World To Win*, the article "Dictatorship and Democracy, and the Socialist Transition to Communism" [.....], and the article on "Discussion With Comrades On Epistemology – On Knowing And Changing The World" an excerpt of which was submitted for publication in an upcoming issue of your English language journal *The Worker*.

In order to achieve a higher level of synthesis on the problem of the socialist transition, even as we correctly refuse to exempt anything from critical re examination, it remains necessary to firmly uphold certain

basic principles of our understanding, including the central Marxist thesis on the nature of the state and the need to maintain a dictatorship of the proletariat. And while the dictatorship of the proletariat is upheld in words in the "New State" article, the article actually promotes a bourgeois democratic orientation that would, if followed, lead to not establishing a proletarian dictatorship¹ or to abandoning it if it were established.

The articles in The Worker number 9 address the difficult question of what forms of laws, elections and so forth should take place under the dictatorship of the proletariat. We feel that to make the most essential question one of formal democracy, and its expression in elections, competing political parties, and the like, is a serious mistake and will strengthen tendencies toward the abandonment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, or its outright overthrow by counter revolutionaries. This orientation actually directs attention away from the main source of capitalist restoration and away from the main vehicles for involving the masses in the further revolutionizing of society.

Finally, it should be noted that elections in socialist society are no guarantee at all against the rise of revisionism in the state apparatus or its conversion into machinery of oppression against the people. In same way in which the bourgeoisie in the West generally finds bourgeois democracy suitable for exercising its dictatorship, indeed the "most suitable" form as Lenin put it, new exploiters, arising within socialist society, and in particular within the state and the party leading the state could also keep the masses ignorant, inactive politically and oppressed while allowing them to cast a ballot every few years.

Does this mean we are arguing that there is no importance to formal democratic rights under socialism, or that there does not have to be a Constitution, a set of laws, norms which take into account the rights of the people? No, this is not our understanding. Comrade Avakian has stressed in his recent writings on this subject the importance of such guarantees in keeping with the Maoist understanding that even under the dictatorship of the proletariat the contradiction between the people and the state will continue to exist, albeit in a different way than under the rule of the exploiting classes. He has also explored the possibility of allowing competing political parties, using elections and so forth as part of the socialist state system. At the same time, these possibilities have been put forward in a framework of what Comrade Avakian has referred to as "solid core with a lot of elasticity" – the solid core being the dictatorship of the proletariat led by its vanguard party. Without this "solid core" elasticity turns into bourgeois democratic pluralism, which will quickly lead to the re establishment of capitalism and a real dictatorship

over the vast majority of the people. Again, in this letter we can only briefly refer to and characterize these important points, and in addition to calling comrades' attention to the talk on "Dictatorship And Democracy, And The Socialist Transition To Communism" by Chairman Avakian, as well as the polemic he wrote against K. Venu, we have included, along with this letter, two short excerpts from a recent talk by Chairman Avakian – "Some Further Thinking On: The Socialist State As A New Kind Of State" and "The Creative Development of MLM, Not Of Revisionism" – which deal with questions concerning the nature of the state, the proletarian state in particular, and the transition to communism.

We see this as a different approach than that argued for in "New State" and some other documents. For example, there is the suggestion that it should be possible to adopt wholesale the methods of direct rule used in the Paris Commune or to dissolve the standing army. But there will be no dictatorship of the proletariat in the conditions of the world today without a standing army, and in fact, to dissolve the revolutionary standing army, once socialism has been established and consolidated – to a certain beginning level only, in relation to the long term and strategic task of advancing through the socialist transition to communism, on a world scale – to dissolve the people's army in those circumstances would be to invite, and in reality to be defenseless against, attack at the hands of counter revolutionaries within the socialist country and imperialist and reactionary states, with the objective effect that the socialist society would be crushed and abolished and the masses subjected, once again, to the horrors of rule by imperialism and reactionary classes. And it will not be possible to utilize the Commune forms such as the direct election of all officials as a general principle in running the state. History has shown that without the leadership of a genuine proletarian party there will be no seizure of power or possibility of consolidating and maintaining that power after it has been seized.

The quotation from Rosa Luxemburg's 1918 criticism of the October Revolution, reprinted favourably in "New State", argues that the leadership of the party will inevitably lead to the dictatorship of the party. It is definitely true that the very existence of the proletarian state, a vanguard proletarian party, a standing army, etc., all can be transformed into their opposite – a state of the bourgeoisie oppressing the masses of the people. The same can be said for the revolution itself – there is no guarantee that it will continually advance toward communism – revolutions can be and unfortunately many have been aborted or turned into their opposites. But this is no argument not to make a revolution. Whether a state continues to advance toward the ultimate goal of communism, and its own eventual withering away, depends on whether and how that

state is fighting to transform all of the objective material and ideological conditions that make the existence of the state still necessary. There is no easy way around this. Relying on the institutions and practice of formal democracy will not solve the problem – it will not remove the contradictions that make the dictatorship of the proletariat absolutely necessary, it will only strengthen the hand of those forces who are seeking to overthrow and abolish the dictatorship of the proletariat, and who can draw strength in these efforts from the remaining inequalities in socialist society and from the existence of reactionary and imperialist states, which for some time are likely to be in a position of "encircling" socialist states as they are brought into being through revolutionary struggle. Abolishing or undermining the monopoly of political power and, yes of armed power, by the proletariat, and its vanguard leadership – in whatever form this is done, including by having elections in which the vanguard party and its role is put up for decision in general elections – this will, for all the reasons we have spoken to here, lead to the loss of power by the proletariat and the restoration of reactionary state power, with everything that means.

"New State" argues that past proletarian states, "instead of serving the masses and acting as instruments of continuous revolution turned into masters of the people and instruments of counter revolution, and rather than moving in the direction of withering away transformed into huge totalitarian bureaucracies and instruments of repression.." This description suffers from a classless treatment of the state more reflective of the petty bourgeois belief that oppression springs from contradiction between society and the state, rather than the Marxist understanding that the state exists to ensure the dominance of one or another class in society. And, to be frank, it echoes much of the slanders of the bourgeoisie itself against the dictatorship of the proletariat and falls, to a significant degree, into accepting the outlook and methods of the bourgeoisie and the corresponding "verdicts" against revolutions led by the proletariat, through its communist vanguard, and aiming for socialism and ultimately communism. While we share with your Party the understanding that it is crucial to engage deeply and sum up comprehensively the experience of socialist society and the dictatorship of the proletariat, it is also crucial that we do this from the standpoint of, and with the scientific method of, MLM and not allow the influence of the outlook of the bourgeoisie and its "verdicts" to distort and subvert such a scientific summation.

The proletarian dictatorship is portrayed in "New State" as, at best, a "necessary evil." In fact, state power in the hands of the proletariat and its class allies is a tremendous positive achievement that can actually allow the masses of people to transform the world and themselves in the process. There is no reason to be apologetic

about this. In Nepal itself we have seen the transformations in social conditions and culture that have already taken place in the liberated areas, which give a glimpse of the even greater things that will be accomplished when nation wide power is in the hands of the masses under the leadership of the vanguard proletarian party.

We can see from the very clear example of revolutionary China that the proletarian dictatorship was not a "totalitarian bureaucracy". When the state, including the army, was under the leadership of Mao and the genuine revolutionaries, tremendous revolutionary transformations were able to take place, including, very importantly, the incorporation of more and more of the masses into the administration of the state through different vehicles ("three and one committees" and so on). China did not just gradually become more and more capitalist, more and more "totalitarian", as the state grew stronger and stronger. In order for capitalism to be transformed, state power had to be seized by the capitalist roaders, which they did through a coup d'état after Mao's death.

Similarly, for the reasons we have touched on here, Luxemburg's remedy of general elections, "unrestricted freedom of press and assembly", and the elimination of the leading role of the party will only ensure that instead of "a few dozen" party leaders leading the proletarian state, a few dozen (or less) opportunists and capitalist roaders will monopolize the state and use that monopoly of state power to ensure that no real democracy exists for the masses of people, as we have seen time and time again in history.

Competition between different political parties cannot be made an absolute under the dictatorship of the proletariat – it cannot be raised above, or even put on an equal level with, the need for the state to continue to reflect, and to reinforce and further, the objectives of the proletarian revolution, in defending what has been won through revolutionary struggle, continuing to further revolutionize society, in the economic base and the political ideological superstructure, supporting revolutionary struggles through world, and advancing toward the achievement of the "4 Alls" and the goal of communism, on a world scale. Whether or not a state is, in its principal aspect, furthering those objectives (and not whether or not, or to what degree, there are elections with competing parties, etc.,) is essential in determining whether or not the state, in reality, represents the fundamental interests of the proletariat and masses of people. And while, once again, we can recognize a role, and importance, in socialist society for things like elections, even with some aspect of competition between different trends and even organized forces – and while we must recognize the importance of a Constitution, laws,

and so on, which give expression to democracy, in a broad sense, for the masses of people, on the basis of rule by the proletariat – all those things too are dependent on, and find their role in relation to, that fundamental question of whether the state is actually furthering the objectives we have referred to here, or whether it is in fact working against the further revolutionization of society and the achievement of the "4 Alls" and communism, world wide strengthening instead the bases for the restoration of capitalism, expanding the scope and influence of bourgeois right, in the production relations, the social relations, and the political and ideological superstructure of society, and in the relation of the society to the world situation and the struggle between revolution and counter revolution throughout the world.

Certainly the genuine proletarian revolutionaries cannot and should not allow the dictatorship of the proletariat to be overthrown by a vote. And, it is possible to envision circumstances when, even in conditions of proletarian rule, the majority of the masses might

– under the pressure of the world imperialist system as well as the domestic reactionary classes – vote against their own class interests. One thing can be sure – if the reactionary classes return to power through a vote, they will stay in power – there cannot be democratic "alternating" between proletarian and reactionary state power. Again, this does not rule out the advisability of some degree of electoral competition under socialism, but any such measures must take place within the proletarian dictatorship – they can never "stand above" the actual class struggle, both within the particular country and on an international level, and the dialectical interpenetration and interplay between the two.

Yes, there is a real and difficult problem of how to maintain a vibrant political and cultural life, how to train the masses of people to more and more take the affairs of state into their own hands, how to enable them to become fit to rule, to paraphrase Marx. There is a great deal to be summed up about difficulties our class has had in managing this correctly in the past and a great deal we will have to struggle over and learn. But one thing is certain, it is impossible to solve these problems unless the authority of the proletariat is strong. Again, we can see the dialectic between Mao's authority in China, which as we know was considerably strengthened during the GPCR and the unparalleled flourishing of mass democracy that also took place.² As for those who opposed Mao's "dictatorial" role – we know where their type of democracy led the people.

People's Republic Or " Transitional Forms"

In "New State" the point is made that "we should not rule out the

possibilities of having to pass through various mixed and transitional forms of democracy in the process of marching from autocratic monarchy through bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy." This sentence is arguing (or at the very least "not ruling out") that the revolution in the monarchy of Nepal must "pass through" bourgeois democracy as a distinct phase, require a distinct form of state rule, before "proletarian democracy" can be established. This same theme has appeared in other documents of the party as well, in particular in an article aimed at "Our American Friends" in which it specifically states that the immediate goal of the revolution in Nepal is not a people's republic but rather a bourgeois democratic republic referring to the bourgeois republic established by George Washington after the US War of Independence. This is most assuredly not the kind of society and kind of state that the masses in Nepal, the United States or elsewhere need at this stage of world history.

It should be noted in passing that this article is overly generous toward the democracy of the US bourgeoisie – the bourgeois republic established after independence from Britain did not even abolish slavery until a bloody civil war followed eighty years later. And US bourgeois democracy has always meant real dictatorship over the masses of people including murderous suppression aimed at the working class and the oppressed nationalities in the US.

We see in "New State" where the theoretical confusion about democracy, especially the over emphasis on certain forms of bourgeois democracy (competing parties, elections and so forth), leads in the direction of abandoning the Maoist understanding of the new democratic revolution. We all know that the stage of the revolution in Nepal is one of completing the bourgeois democratic revolution, as was case in China and as is generally the case in the countries of the Third World. But what this article misses is that the bourgeois democratic tasks are solved under the leadership of the proletariat, and that it must lead not to the establishment of a bourgeois republic but rather to a new democratic or People's Republic, which is, in essence, a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat in alliance with all other revolutionary and progressive sections of society, including the national bourgeoisie.

The article hinges its argument mainly on the specific conditions of Nepal, in particular that it has a monarchy, which somehow requires a special sub stage of struggle. No doubt the existence of the monarchy is a an important factor to take into account in analyzing Nepal, and developing and applying the strategy and corresponding tactics to advance the revolution in Nepal, but it would be wrong to conclude from this that Nepal exists in a completely separate category than other

oppressed countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and that the political questions involving the stage of the revolution are fundamentally different.

Every country will have its particularity – in Iran the reactionary dictatorship takes the form of a theocracy,³ in many other Third World countries there are essentially one party dictatorships, with or without a parliament, in some countries there is military rule, and there are other countries with monarchies. Again these particularities need to be analyzed and taken into account as part of developing a genuine revolutionary strategy and the corresponding tactics in every country. But we have seen again and again that arguments have been made that these specific forms require a specific stage of first establishing (or "passing through" to use the terms of "New State") a "pure" bourgeois democratic republic and only then can the revolution advance to a proletarian stage. And nowhere have such arguments contributed to – or have attempts to implement such a program led to – the eventual victory of the new democratic revolution and the advance to the socialist stage of the revolution.

The role and character of the ruling classes and their political representatives, such as the parliamentary parties; are determined fundamentally not by their relation to the monarchy but by their relationship to imperialism and feudalism.

The goal of the new democratic revolution cannot be a bourgeois republic and that the state system it establishes cannot be a bourgeois democracy. Indeed this was one of Mao's most important theoretical breakthroughs, which led the way to the establishment of the People's republic of China. He stressed that the bourgeoisie always hides behind the category of "citizen" to conceal the real class distinctions in society and Mao stresses that instead of bourgeois democracy it is necessary to establish a state structure based on "democratic centralism" because "only a government based on democratic centralism will allow the whole of the revolutionary people to express themselves freely and combat the enemies of the revolution with a maximum of energy". ("On New Democracy".)

"New State" cites an important passage from Lenin "The transition from capitalism is certainly bound to yield a tremendous abundance and variety of political forms, but the essence will inevitably be the same; the dictatorship of the proletariat." But then it goes on to say in the next paragraph that, "In the transitional period of backward society like Nepal, where the transition has to take place from semi feudal autocracy through bourgeois democracy to communism, there would be naturally more diversities and complexities."

The above situation is a basically wrong approach to understanding the transitional stage. The leadership of the proletariat means that the bourgeois democratic tasks – freeing the country from feudalism and foreign imperialism – can take place without creating a bourgeois democratic state. It is the new democratic system itself that is the actual application of Lenin's point of the "tremendous variety abundance and variety of political forms" of the dictatorship of the proletariat. New democracy is the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat particular to the oppressed countries and which completes the bourgeois democratic revolution and transforms it, without interruption, to the socialist stage.

In our epoch the liberation of countries and nations cannot take place through bourgeois democratic revolution of the old type. This is not some mere "academic" point – or, worse yet, a dogmatic insistence on strategy divorced from actual conditions – but is a fundamental principle based in reality and confirmed by a wealth of experience, both positive experience and, all too often, negative experience paid for in the blood of masses and the severe setback of the struggle for the emancipation of the masses. This is mainly because the strength of international imperialism reinforces the subordination of the oppressed nations and, as part of this, tends to preserve and utilize backward aspects of the socio economic base and superstructure, such as feudalism and the monarchy in Nepal, even while penetration of imperialist capital undermines some aspects in pre capitalist society and intensifies the class struggle. Exactly because imperialism is a world system and because, in the final analysis only another world system, communism, can finally supplant it, in this epoch no state can exist, at least not for any significant period of time, which is not led either by the proletariat or by the reactionary classes connected to the imperialist system itself.. Parliament or monarchy, junta or single party dictatorship, all the various forms of reactionary comprador bureaucrat capitalist regimes in the Third World share common class features and we must indeed "rule out" (to use the term of "New State") any "transitional form" which is not based on the leadership of the proletariat. Indeed history has shown that when communists participate in such a government the transition is not toward socialism and communism but rather a transition of the party that takes part toward disaster.

If a bourgeois democratic republic is established in whose hand will be the state, and in particular, the army? Would it be in the hands of the revolutionary masses of Nepal who have been struggling and sacrificing or would it be in the hands of the reactionary classes, in Nepal and internationally, who have been waging the counter revolutionary war? It has, alas, often been the case that the oppressed classes and their

leadership, including communists, have not sought to smash the resistance of their enemies, but it has never been the case the exploiting classes fail to use state power to try to suppress the revolutionary masses. What policies will such a state enforce and in what direction will society go? Will the state be allied with the revolutionary masses the world over or will the new state itself become part of the "international community" led and shaped by the imperialists? It is not only basic Marxist theory but life itself that continually shows that there is no such thing as a state that does not have a class character, that is not an instrument in the hands of one class to suppress another.

Tactics And Strategy

We have concentrated on what we consider to be the main questions of political and ideological line that have surfaced in the discussion of democracy and dictatorship in your part. Clarity on strategic questions concerning the nature, stage and tasks of the revolution are essential in guiding any party to correctly adopt the necessary policies and tactics to advance in the complex swirl of revolution. It is not within our capabilities to have opinions on specific tactics that your Party might engage in – for example, we are not in a position to know whether the current unilateral ceasefire declared by your party is correct and useful nor do we feel qualified to form definitive opinions on such matters as "strategic offensive" or the precise form of the class alliances or all of the specific political maneuvering that you are undertaking. On the other hand, we do feel that tactics in a revolutionary process in a specific country can, and sometimes do, come to concentrate major questions of political line in which case it is incumbent on comrades in the international movement to understand these questions as fully as possible and, where they feel it is necessary, raise major concerns or disagreements. Even more importantly, there are basic principles involved in the relationship between strategy and tactics that are common to all revolutionary processes and involve the basic principles of MLM.

Often we say "firm in principal and flexible in tactics". This accurately describes the unity of opposites between strategy and tactics. The principal aspect of this contradiction, the aspect that determines its character, is strategy. This is why the same tactic can take on a completely different meaning depending on what strategy it serves and flows from. We saw, in our study of the negotiations in relation to Peru, the fundamental difference between "negotiating in order to fight" and "fighting in order to negotiate". In other words, both a revolutionary and a revisionist strategy make room for both tactics of fighting and talking (and many other forms of political activity as well). But in the revolutionary

perspective, the strategy of the complete destruction of the old reactionary state leads and determines when, if and how, the tactics of negotiations and compromises are necessary. In the revisionist orientation, for example the strategy openly argued for by Villalobos of the CP of the Philippines in the 1980s, the objective was to arrive at a compromise at the strategic level, "partial power", where the proletariat would share power with the reactionary classes (the famous "Nicaragua model"). And this "Nicaragua model" requires armed struggle as a tactic, as well as negotiations, in order to achieve its strategic goal of "partial power".

Thus we see that both models, both roads, use all kinds of tactics in pursuit of certain strategic goals. But we cannot conclude from this that any strategy justifies any tactic. For example, reactionary military officials often study Mao Tsetung not only to understand the tactics of communists but also, in some cases at least, in hopes of applying some of Mao's principles and tactics to their own counter revolutionary war. For example, it is not hard to understand the advantage of having a population that is favorable to your army in providing intelligence as to the whereabouts of the opposing forces, and so forth. During the Vietnam war the US army called this the policy of "winning the hearts and minds" of the people. Of course, they were completely incapable of "winning hearts and minds" and this very phrase came to be something that was ridiculed and scorned by millions of people in the US as well as all over the world. But does this mean that the US really did not want to, or care, about "winning hearts and minds", that this was only hypocrisy and crude propaganda to cover over their slaughter and torture? No, the US military very much wanted and needed to win over masses in Vietnam, but their strategic goals – preserving reactionary rule in Vietnam and subjugating the nation to US imperialism – was in antagonistic contradiction to the tactics of winning over the people.. Instead the reactionary goal required and relied upon reactionary tactics of mass murder, torture and rape.

The purpose in going in to this example is once again to illustrate the relationship between strategy and tactics. While many, even most, tactics may be used by any class force, there are some tactics that must never be used by the proletariat – such as mass murder, torture, or rape. And there are tactics such as relying on the masses, suffering weal and woe with them, practicing democracy in the army that cannot be effectively employed by the reactionaries even if they want to do so. It is not only, or mainly, a question of subjective intentions, but very much a question of class character and class objectives that ultimately determine specific tactics.

If the goal is a "political solution" then it becomes possible and necessary to make the war serve this strategic goal and this can take

the form of frequently stopping and starting the fighting, or making military tactics aimed at very specific and immediate political results. We can see this among nationalist forces and the kinds of military actions they often use (such as kidnappings, attacks on the civilians of the dominant nationality, etc.) In a revolution led by a MLM vanguard guided by the goal of radically transforming society and advancing to socialism and ultimately communism throughout the world must have the goal of completely smashing the old reactionary state and thus the tactics employed must, primarily, be determined by the strategic laws of warfare.

Do tactics and strategy influence each other? Yes they very much do. In particular there is the danger of tactics transforming strategy. The comrades of the MKP in Turkey and North Kurdistan summed up this problem as "tactics eating up strategy" and "policy eating up politics". There is the danger of the contradiction between tactics and strategy becoming antagonistic, in which case either the tactics must be changed and brought in line with the strategy or there is the danger of the strategy itself becoming something different. In the case of a people's war there is the danger that a war begun with the intention of accomplishing the new democratic revolution throughout the entire country could be transformed into a war whose goal is to achieve "partial power." Not only can this transformation take place, especially in a situation in which the party is trying to unite with intermediate and vacillating classes, this negative transformation, from a revolutionary to a reformist orientation, is very likely to happen unless the conscious leadership, the proletarian revolutionaries, are constantly struggling to ensure that the tactics of the struggle correspond to the strategic revolutionary objectives.

"Fighting to negotiate" or "negotiating to fight": this is a fundamental question and dividing line that our movement confronted sharply in the struggle over how to evaluate the "peace accords" tactic being put forward by the Right Opportunist Line in the Communist Party of Peru. Clearly, negotiating or not negotiating, cease fire or no cease fire, is not the central question. Revisionism has been able to use to armed struggle - and the whole Nicaragua model is precisely an illustration of this, especially as raised to the level of theory by Villalobos of the CP of the Philippines with the argument that the goal should be "partial power". Partial power means accepting a commitment to not thoroughly destroy the old state apparatus, to not fundamentally change the economic and social structure of the country, and to not establish the dictatorship of the proletariat (in whatever form and alliances are historically evolved in a given country). Sometimes revisionists and opportunists openly proclaim the goal of "fighting to negotiate" but whether the principle being applied is "fight to negotiate" or "negotiating in order to fight" is not only

a question of the subjective intention of the leadership. It is inseparable from the ideological and political line being practiced by the party.

A Questionable Proposal

In issue number 9 of The Worker there is the following statement, "In the given context of the existence of two ideologies, two armies and two states in the country, the Party is agreeable to demobilization of both the armies and carrying out of elections to the Constituent Assembly under the supervision of United Nations organization and international human rights organizations." In our view this "tactic" is one that is antagonistic to the goal of new democratic revolution. If it were to be fulfilled, that is, if the Royal Government and the "international community" were to accept this demand and if the PLA were to be demobilised and ultimately dissolved it would lead to very serious setbacks in the revolutionary struggle and quite possibly it's actually smashing at the hands of the reactionaries. (And, indeed, the reason the class enemies might accept such a proposal would be to inflict such a setback.) This is clearly an example of where a tactic is incompatible with, i.e. antagonistic to, the very revolutionary strategy itself.

Promising "full and fair elections", especially under conditions of control by the United Nations or other imperialist auspices and with the proletariat shelving or "soft peddling" its demand for a people's republic, could lead to an unfavorable alignment of class forces and strengthen the possibility of a negative, even quite possibly a disastrous, outcome, which would amount to the Party, and the masses of people it has for 10 years led in people's war, losing through this process of elections what it has won, at the cost of heroic struggle and great sacrifice, on the battlefield – losing this at a time when the possibility of advancing this struggle toward the goal, and great leap, of seizing power nationwide has come more clearly into view and closer within reach, precisely because of the advance of the people's war.

And what would be the case if the party refused to recognize the results of such imperialist "supervised" elections? The very classes and strata you were hoping to attract to your banner would feel betrayed. Your tactic would boomerang.

Does the fact that this tactic is unlikely to be adopted – that is, that for the time being the ruling classes are not inclined to accept such a proposal – justify it? Do communists have the right to say or promise anything if they are convinced they will not be required to fulfill these promises? No, there is the basic obligation of communists to speak and represent the truth. (For example, we cannot say that if a socialist state is

established there will be no more poverty in Nepal – but we can say that under socialism the social barriers preventing the people from using their efforts and energy to step by step solve the problems of the masses will be eliminated in a qualitative way.) Furthermore, making promises that communists should not keep and should not want to keep can leave the door open to possible setbacks with potentially disastrous consequences.

There is the danger that what seems impossible today may become necessary for the reactionaries to grant tomorrow, in which case the earlier calls would greatly undermine the Party's ability to unite the masses against the kind of "solution" that is now being put forward in words at least. The reactionaries in your country and their international masters are clearly convinced that any durable "settlement" passes through and must involve the destruction of your vanguard Party (and only then might the militarily, politically and ideologically weakened elements of your Party be permitted a "legitimate" place in the reactionary led "political process." But they may be forced to conclude that the only way to avoid their own crushing defeat is to accept some kind of solution along the lines proposed in the statement cited from The Worker, issue number 9 above. And, it must be pointed out, if the enemies were to accept such a "political solution", it could well be coupled with, or be a prelude to, relying on military means to enforce a military solution, as we have seen far too often in history (Indonesia, Chile, Iraq in 1965).

And, in line with the point we emphasized above about the danger of setting the revolution up for a crushing defeat we would like to stress that even if nothing ever comes of this "tactic" it still has negative consequences in so far as it promotes an erroneous understanding of the nature of the state (both the existing reactionary state and the future dictatorship of the proletariat in whatever form the latter is created in Nepal). The history of our movement from its beginning is full of numerous distortions or attacks on the basic Marxist understanding of democracy and dictatorship and there are material and ideological reasons why this will be a protracted struggle that will recur again and again including in new forms. It has also been shown that it is not so easy to defeat opportunist and revisionist lines on this point. If, through our tactics, the communist revolutionaries themselves spread unclarity, eclectics, or even outright erroneous views on this vital point it will be all the more difficult to win victory when the inevitable revisionist and opportunist distortions arise.

On The "International Community"

There can be no doubt that the "international community" means, in essence, world imperialism, the reactionary states under its domination

and influence, and those statesmen, public figures, journalists, and intellectuals attached to the world imperialist system. Does this mean that the "international community" is without contradiction, that it is a monolithic reactionary bloc? No, there are important and growing contradictions among the imperialists and there are significant sections of the intelligentsia and others who criticize and oppose different aspects of the imperialist system

– contradictions that make it correct and necessary for the proletarian party to make use of the contradictions in the enemy ranks and to win over some of those "opinion makers" normally attached to the ruling class. But here, as in all things, it is necessary to be clear on the principal aspect – the defining feature of the "international community" – not only in general but specifically in relation to the People's War in Nepal.

An article appeared in the Indian press in the summer of 2005 saying that there was "an unwritten consensus in the international community that the Maoists must not be allowed to come to power." Is that an accurate summation of the attitude of the various reactionary states who in essence and as the defining aspect comprise the "international community"? We think it is very accurate. Among the imperialist powers, as the revolutionary Chinese comrades used to emphasize, there is both contention and collusion. But in relation to the People's War in Nepal collusion is principal over contention – the contradictions among them have not sharpened to the degree that, nor has the overall international situation intensified to the point where, major imperialist countries will "break ranks" in any fundamental way over policy in Nepal.

It is true that different actors on the international scene play different roles, give different speeches, etc., including India, China, Britain and the United States. In the case of the US and the UK it has been proven over and over again that their imperialist interests are very much intertwined with one another and that the whole imperialist strategy of the UK is based on accepting and serving US world hegemony. Tony Blair's shameless vassalage to George Bush in the Iraq war was only the latest evidence of this "special relationship". What is different between the US and the UK is that, even when they are completely united in their imperialist marauding, they have different specific roles, particularly in the realm of public opinion. The UK continues to embellish imperialism with more honey coated phrases about democracy and human rights, while the US, which also uses these words, is also able and required to openly flaunt its biggest "argument"

– its huge economic and especially military strength. This is nothing new – even on the eve of the victory of the Chinese revolution Mao

talked about the division of labour of these two predators. It is clear to see that in certain situations in the world today the UK and the US are playing a "good cop, bad cop" routine.

What about countries such as France and Germany whose opposition to the Iraq war illustrated growing conflict with US imperialism? Yes, these contradictions are real and growing. But they do not mean that these countries will, in any fundamental way, oppose the dominant Nepal policy of the imperialists and reactionaries.

And we all know the nature of India and what role it is playing in relation to the People's War, even turning in comrades to the Royal Nepalese torturers.

To call on these forces and others like them – and this is exactly what the UN means – to "supervise elections" in Nepal is a dangerous ploy that will have no positive benefit but has plenty of potential for harm and could even lead to a devastating defeat.

We can learn lessons from the invasion of Iraq. Even in that case, when the imperialist countries really were sharply divided and when the Saddam Hussein regime had long and extensive relations with different imperialist countries, the UN helped set the stage for the US aggression. When, at the last minute, the UN Security Council refused to give its approval for the war, it did nothing to condemn it, let alone struggle against it. At this moment in history, and especially in relation to a genuine people's revolutionary struggle, there is no possibility of the UN playing any role that fundamentally opposes the interests and objectives of US imperialism.

Even the current positions of France and Germany in relation to Iraq are revealing. Yes, the invasion was wrong, perhaps even illegal or unjust, they say, but now that it has happened "we have no choice" but to hope that the US "succeeds" since the alternative scenario, that the US is driven out, would leave that important area of the world unstable and "unpoliced".

If there is any thought that the "international community" will be more tolerant of the Maoists than, say, of Saddam Hussein, this is a dangerous illusion that should be quickly abandoned. Who is a democrat, who is violating human rights, who is a tyrant or a terrorist and who is a saint in the eyes of "the international community" is not based on whether political forces or regimes are "democratic" or not, but whether a force is considered harmful to the interests of the world imperialist system. Witness the recent promotion of Colonel Gadafy of Libya from terrorist to responsible statesman, or the demotion of Robert Mugabe from reasonable ex revolutionary to bloody tyrant after six (yes, six!) white

farmers were killed in the land reform process, etc. The fact that your Party has deep and close ties with the masses, enjoys their support and relies on them, the fact that you have built a broad united front involving the great majority of society – none of this will mean that you are granted a status of legitimacy by the "international community". Mao and the Chinese communists were derided as "totalitarian" during the GPCR at the very time they were engaged in what remains the most massive political mobilization of masses in any society and the most widespread democracy ever seen on earth – real democracy in the sense of the right to criticize, struggle and transform society.

Nepal And The Imperialist World Order

In reality, appealing for the assistance of the "international community" amounts objectively to a declaration that the revolution will not "disturb" the existing set up in the world, that the kind of state that the revolutionaries are striving for, to replace the monarchy in Nepal can "settle into" the network of international

relations as it now exists. While it is certainly true that new democratic revolution in Nepal cannot, by itself, abolish the existing world order, it is equally true that the existing world order will not tolerate a genuine people's revolutionary state. And, of course, this has particular and direct relevance in the case of India.

If the revolution is to do what it must, that is embark on transforming the existing social conditions and building an economic system not based on "integration into" and in fact subordination to the imperialist world order, if it will fulfill its obligation of supporting the revolutionary struggle around the world, then there can be no doubt that the imperialists and the reactionary states – the "international community" – will bitterly oppose you and do everything they can to prevent you from coming to power in the first place, and to overthrow your rule, if you do succeed in coming to power, and this will very likely involve different types of military aggression as well as economic sabotage and blockade, espionage activities and the financing and training of counter revolutionaries all of which is "business as usual" for the imperialist states, and India as well, for that matter.

Any election "supervised" by these imperialist marauders and their client states will never allow a genuine revolutionary state to emerge. Just consider what they consider a "fair" election. The elections in Iraq, under conditions of US occupation, are considered very fair

– even by those powers such as France and Germany who did not support the invasion in the first place. The recent re election of

Mubarak in Egypt is considered "exemplary" even though only 16 percent of the population thought it was worthwhile going to the polls. But when an election does not give the desired results, such as in Zimbabwe or Venezuela it is considered "flawed" or "unacceptable" even though, in those cases, the heads of state who were elected were not even consistently or thoroughly anti imperialist, to say nothing of real revolutionaries and communists. In Nepal only an election that will block the emergence of a people's republic will be acceptable to the "international community".

The above is only the immediate and more overt way in which the international community supervises the actual process of the election itself. There are other deeper and more important ways in which the "international community" controls ("supervises") the supposed sovereign will of the people by using its economic, diplomatic and political and military strength to "mould" the opinion and votes of the people. For example, in the 1980s "free elections" were forced on the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. This meant that the US was free to funnel huge amounts of money to the opposition candidates. And it also meant that the elections took place in circumstances where to vote in favour of the regime meant to vote in favour of extreme economic deprivation, continued counter revolutionary incursions and violence and the threat of even more massive and destructive military intervention by imperialists and reactionaries and so forth, while a vote against the regime meant the end to the blockade and the promise of "peace" and improvement in living standards. Under these conditions it is not surprising that large numbers of people, and not only among the most backward, voted "freely" against the Sandinista regime.

Our point is not that the party or the new state that it brings into being should passively accept this

– certainly there is a very important role to be played by struggle in Nepal and internationally against imperialist and reactionary intervention against the People's War – "Hands Off People's Nepal" must become a cry of the revolutionary masses and growing numbers of people more broadly the world over, especially in the US, India and other countries most directly intervening. But the Party must never harbor illusions in this sphere or fail to explain the real situation clearly to the Party members and the masses. Whether or not you are "democrats" or "terrorists" in the eyes of the "international community" is overwhelmingly a question not of your nature but of their nature – which is why Mao stressed, correctly, that to be attacked by the enemy, to be painted without a single virtue, is a sign that our work is good and that if we were not

attacked in this way, if the enemy we were to praise our "democratic" side, it should be considered cause for alarm. Articles and appeals misrepresenting the nature of the United Nations and the "international community" spread confusion as to the true nature of these forces and undermine the capacity of the revolutionary forces and masses to stand firm in the face of them.

Democracy And The Middle Strata

It is very clear that one of the important tasks of the new democratic revolution, especially in order to take nationwide political power, is winning over the national bourgeoisie in the cities and those classes and strata who are under its influence. It is these sections in the oppressed countries who historically are most infatuated with the trappings of formal democracy while the basic masses, especially in the countryside, whose life goes on pretty much the same with or without a parliament, are much less susceptible to these illusions.

Because of the bourgeois democratic nature of the new democratic revolution it is both possible and necessary to win these strata over and guarantee that their interests will be protected for a substantial period of time (and even after the revolution moves ahead to its socialist stage the basis is laid to transform and lead the individuals of that class in remolding and finding a full place in the future society.)

But it is also clear that there many features of the national bourgeoisie which make it difficult for it to unite with the proletariat: 1) it lives by capitalist exploitation 2) it has connections to the world imperialist system on which it depends for supplies, technology, sometimes even markets 3) it has connections to landed property as well. All this means that the national bourgeoisie will continue to vacillate up to and beyond the completion of the new democratic revolution.

This dual character of the national bourgeoisie is determined by its class character and not fundamentally by the policy of the communists. Of course, what the communists do will has a significant influence on whether and to what degree the national bourgeoisie and those sectors attached to it ideologically and practically will unite with the revolution, but their attitude toward the revolution will mainly depend on the concrete strength of the contending camps and their own class nature and interests.

It is also quite natural that now as the possibility of the defeat of the monarchy is looming large, the national bourgeoisie will be in turmoil. Some of them may now sense that it is now possible to actually achieve a bourgeois republic, even some reactionaries may believe that the

monarchy has now become a liability that must be liquidated. Many are no doubt happy to see the revolution on the verge of seizing power, others may not be so sure.

The idea of a bourgeois democratic republic in a Nepal free of imperialism and feudalism is an illusion to dangle in front of the masses. But the national bourgeoisie and even some sections of the petite bourgeoisie and intellectuals attached to it actually believe in this illusion. No matter how often history in Nepal and the world hammers at this possibility, the class position of these strata coupled with the ideological influences of imperialism means that this illusion will be continually generated.

* * * * *

Because the illusion of a pure (bourgeois) democracy in the oppressed countries really is just an illusion, reality keeps intruding on these strata, forcing them to define their position in terms of the actually existing state power and the contending class forces. This means that, however much some of the national bourgeoisie and those sectors attached to or influenced by it may oppose the reactionary ruling circles, there will continue to be a strong tendency for these sectors to seek accommodation with reaction and imperialism. But when a real and concrete alternative state power is posed, things can change dramatically. In Nepal we have seen that the parliamentary parties objectively aligned themselves with the reactionary system, through their participation in the parliament and government and in other ways, most fundamentally through their opposition to the people's war. Now that the revolution is showing a clear possibility of taking nationwide power, there is a solid base for many of the former doubters and vacillators from the middle strata to be won to support revolution and for the doubt and vacillation to sweep over those sectors who had previously been firm in opposing the revolution. All this is important and a good advantage for the revolution.

But the key to this is the strength of the people's forces, the firmness of the proletariat's determination to continue the revolution through to the end, and, on the other hand, the increasing bankruptcy of the old order. All of this forces the whole society to choose with which future, with which state power, it will ally. Without that compulsion to choose one destiny or another, all of the illusions of the national bourgeoisie and the urban petite bourgeoisie will return and these illusions will be transformed into political programs and policies.

Revolution is an act of force by which one section of society seeks to overthrow another. Even though the revolution is in the interests of the

people, and even in the interests of the national bourgeoisie to a large degree, it still does, and indeed must, create compulsion on various forces in society, even among the people themselves. For example, when the armed struggle begins in the country or starts in a new area it inevitably is responded to by vicious counter attack by the reactionary ruling class. Even those sections of the masses not initially mobilized in the revolution will soon be compelled to "choose their camp", and because of their class nature and interests, as well as the political, ideological and educational work of communists, the vast majority of the workers and peasants will side with the revolution. But the intermediate strata, such as the national bourgeoisie, will hesitate between the two camps and will continually seek some illusory escape from the basic choice confronting society.

Can there be any doubt how most of the middle classes would have voted if they had been given a "free choice" in 1996: should the CPN(M) launch a People's War or should it pursue its goal by more "reasonable" means? Today a great portion of these strata has been won to the revolution, has chosen to support the new state power in the countryside over the old state power in the capital. But if these strata are given a different choice – the opportunity to vote their illusions – there is a strong possibility that hesitating support could turn into opposition.

We fear that the policies your Party is adopting toward the national bourgeoisie, as reflected, for example, in calls for elections to a constituent assembly, tends to overlook this basic reality. Instead of calling on the national bourgeoisie to join a state apparatus that will clearly be under the leadership of the proletariat there is too much of a tendency to promise that the proletariat will respect a form of state, a bourgeois republic, which, objectively, corresponds to the interests and outlook of the bourgeoisie.

Not only would such a bourgeois republic fail to solve the fundamental problems of the masses, it would also miserably fail to resolve even the bourgeois democratic tasks of the first stage of the revolution, of thoroughly destroying feudalism and breaking the hold of imperialism on the country. Even if the leaders of such a bourgeois republic wanted to truly liberate the country from imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism, they cannot do so precisely because a bourgeois state will reflect and enforce the relations of production in the old society and the relations between Nepal and the world imperialist system. Haven't we seen this time and again in the world? Nor should we delude ourselves into thinking that if communists were to lead, or a play a role in leading, a bourgeois republic the results would be fundamentally different.

"Communist Allendes", or "communist Aristides" would be trapped by the very nature of the republic they were presiding over, unable to fundamentally change the relations in society, unable to break from the smothering grip of imperialism and forced to either become themselves representatives of reactionary relations of production and/or crushed.

A bourgeois republic in Nepal would not be a "stepping stone" to a people's republic. All we have to do is look around the world at the scores of reactionary republics to see what the essential features of such a state would be or would soon become and what it would mean for the vast majority of people.

In our opinion, the erroneous understanding about the relationship between the dictatorship of the proletariat and democracy most sharply expressed in "New State" goes hand in hand with the idea that the revolution must pass through a stage of establishing a bourgeois republic. In both cases democracy is treated as unconnected to the problem of class rule, something that somehow stands above the cleavage of society into antagonistic classes. This is reflection of a bourgeois democratic outlook, not the communist dialectical materialist world view.

There is much of importance to be learned in how Mao handled similar contradictions in the final months of the civil war with Chiang Kai Shek.⁴ Once the imperialists concluded that the old KMT regime was soon to be finished, they placed their hopes on precisely those sections of the national bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia who were hesitating between the two camps.

"Part of the intellectuals still want to wait and see. They think: the Kuomintang is no good and the Communist Party is not necessarily good either, so we had better wait and see. Some support the Communist Party in words but in their hearts they are waiting to see. They are the very people who have illusions about the United States...They are easily duped by the honeyed words of the US imperialists, as though these imperialists would deal with People's China on a basis of equality and mutual benefit without a stern, long struggle. They still have many reactionary, that is to say, anti popular, ideas in their heads, but they are not Kuomintang reactionaries. They are the middle of the roaders of the right wingers in People's China. They are the supporters of what Acheson calls "democratic individualism". The deceptive manoeuvres of the Achesons still have a flimsy social base in China." ("Cast Away Illusions, Prepare for Struggle", Selected Works, Vol.. IV, p 427).

Isn't this similar in some important ways to the situation in Nepal today? The important thing to note is that in the above passage and

many others like it from that period only months before the final victory of the Chinese revolution Mao is recognizing that these middle forces need to be won over, that they cannot be treated like "Kuomintang reactionaries" but at the same time they are very much capable of becoming tools in the hands of international imperialism, especially because of their bourgeois democratic illusions. Mao sought to win these forces over, but he did not let these kinds of forces set the terms. Rather, by advancing the revolution he continued to compel these forces to choose whether or not to accept the terms of the people, of the new-democratic revolution, and then did everything in his power to encourage these forces to choose in the correct way.

Mao also was clear that, once the Kuomintang reactionaries were defeated, international imperialism would seek to rely on the supporters of "democratic individualism" as Acheson called them. We have seen the same pattern in our own times as well, where imperialism seeks out and props up forces who, on their own, may have played a positive social role under certain conditions. This is the case today, for example, in Iraq, Zimbabwe, and Venezuela, as well as in the example of Nicaragua cited earlier — in all of these cases imperialism finds some national bourgeois and other strata (we are leaving aside the case of outright reactionaries), which it can build up and transform in a negative direction. Haven't we seen in country after country, for example, how the whole NGO apparatus has been used precisely to transform and channel what are often the genuine progressive sentiments of some sections of the middle strata into programs that objectively accommodate to the domination of imperialism? The very class position of these forces, their dominant ideology, and their political program makes the supporters of "democratic individualism" susceptible to the sugar coated bullets of the bourgeoisie. In fact, we must clearly recognize and educate the masses that "democracy" and "human rights" are the ideological battering rams of world imperialism even when the imperialists themselves are promoting measures against democracy at home and abroad. Yes, we must expose the contradiction between the words of the imperialists and their evil deeds, but we cannot avoid the fact that the ideology of bourgeois democracy corresponds to their mode of production internationally, not the one that we are fighting to bring about. While we oppose their undemocratic institutions, policies and actions we must not willingly or unwilling extol the bourgeois democracy and bourgeois democratic political structures of the old type, that is those which have been built up and incorporated by the world capitalist system. We must be clear ourselves and help others to understand that the bourgeois democratic ideology cannot lead the revolution in the direction it must go if it is really

to liberate the masses and advance as part of the worldwide process toward communism. We will never succeed if we claim their banner as our own, that is, arguing that the communists, not the imperialists and the bourgeoisie, are the "real, consistent bourgeois democrats". Rather, any attempt to do so will lead to confusing our own ranks as well as the people more broadly and make it difficult to correctly struggle and unite with those whose class orientation and ideology remain in the bourgeois democratic framework.

We are offering this letter as part of what we believe to be our proletarian internationalist responsibility to support, in the best and most appropriate way we can, your Party and the People's War you are waging. Our parties are linked together in the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement and we have both an opportunity and a responsibility to struggle over the vital questions of revolution in each of our countries and in the world as a whole. Not only are we linked in striving for the common goal of communism, the advance of the internationalist communist movement and the class struggle at this juncture makes it necessary and urgent that our parties vigorously pursue our efforts to understand the world more completely in order to meet the challenges before us. We are sure that you will consider the observations and criticisms raised in this letter in that spirit.

Our sincere communist greetings,
The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA
October 2005

References :

1. In speaking of the dictatorship of the proletariat we are also including forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat involving different class alliances, particularly the new democratic, or people's democratic dictatorship, under the leadership of the proletariat that Mao describes.
2. Our point is not that revolution cannot advance beyond the heights achieved during the GPCR. Both the weaknesses as well as the great accomplishments of the Cultural Revolution must be examined critically. But the basic point is that democracy for the masses is dialectically related to advancing the proletarian dictatorship.
3. Although it should also be pointed out that Iran has a vigorous and functioning Parliament, competing political parties, and so forth, within the framework of its theocracy.
4. See in particular "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship" and the following four articles in Volume IV of Mao's Selected Works addressing the "White Paper" prepared by Dean Acheson, a leading representative of US imperialism, about the Chinese revolution.

Part -2

- 1 -

Extracts from 'Revolution'

Here are given extracts from the 'Revolution' organ of the RCP, USA]

1. Outline of Views on the Historical Experience of the International Communist Movement and the Lessons for Today by Bob Avakian, Chairman of RCP, U.S.A., Revolution, June 1981 (This article is an excerpt from Decades to Come on a World Scale, Report adopted by the Central Committee of the RCP, USA in the end of 1980)

- (i) Within the international communist movement (before as well as after Stalin's influence became dominant in the Comintern) there were already developing economist, reformist and bourgeois democratic deviations. [p-5]
- (ii) Especially after the crushing defeat of the communist in Germany with the rise of the fascist from of bourgeois dictatorship (1933), heavy defensive and defeatist tendencies grew in the leadership of Soviet Union and the Comintern. Together with the growing danger of world war, especially of attack on the Soviet Union, openly rightist deviation of a fundamental nature, became predominant - the promotion of nationalism reformism and bourgeois democracy, the subordination of everything to the defence of the Soviet Union, etc., in a qualitatively greater way than before All this was concentrated in the Dimitroff Report to the 7th World Congress of the Comintern (1935) and the implementation and further development of this line— which, as we know, involved, among other things, as one of its key ingredients, the basic repudiation of the Leninist position on "defence of the fatherland." This whole line was in its essence erroneous [p-5]
- (iii) More essentially, it must be summed up that the analysis which our party has upheld, that with the invasion of the Soviet Union the nature (the principle aspect) of the war changed—from an

inter-imperialist war to one whose main aspect was that between socialism and imperialism is not correct..... I believe, that its nature remained mainly an Inter-Imperialist war. [p-6]

- (iv) And generally in the contradiction between defending the Soviet Union on the one hand and supporting and advancing revolutionary struggle elsewhere and on the international level as a whole on the other hand, not only was the first aspect (incorrectly) treated as the principal one but the other aspect (which should have been treated as principal) was liquidated insofar as it conflicted with the (narrowly, one-sidedly conceived) defense of the Soviet Union (The dissolution of the Comintern itself during the war, and especially the explanation given for this, is a sharp expression of this). The fundamental deviations during this war concentrated in Stalin's speeches. "On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union" where the erroneous, anti-Leninist positions consistently put forward are so thoroughly (and extremely) incorrect that they cannot be explained merely by the necessity Stalin faced but must be taken as the expression of fundamental departures from Marxism-Leninism. [p-6]
- (v) When a new historic conjuncture was shaping up, when that major spiral was reaching its concentration point and resolution—raising qualitatively greater possibilities for revolutionary advance on a world scale, which the Soviet and Comintern leadership's line largely worked against. [p-6]
- (vi) I am struck by the superficiality of the arguments. To cite a flagrant example, in the original Party Programme, in the section "The present Situation," it merely says that since the end of WWI the Soviet Union had been established as a socialist state and "So with the German invasion of the USSR in 1941, WWII changed It became a battle for the defence of the future, as it was already being realized by the Soviet working people in building socialism." "Similarly, in the article "On the Character of world War 2" (The communist, V1, N1) at one point it is simply stated that "Everything described above changed with drastic swiftness on June 22, 1941..... This changed the nature of the war and required a totally new orientation." [p-8]
- (vii) That the character of the war did change has represented in fact a rationalization for—and an attempt to give the best interpretation to—the overall erroneous line of the leadership of the USSR (and the Comintern as long as it existed) on WW2. This was actually a

line of incorrectly subordinating everything to the defence of the Soviet Union and along with that downplaying or even denying the need to advance revolutionary struggles elsewhere that conflicted with this narrowly (and overall erroneously) conceived defence of the USSR, and it seriously deviated from the correct, Leninist analysis of imperialism and imperialist war and from the Marxist-Leninist stand on the nature of the state as opposed to bourgeois democratic camouflage of this nature) and other cardinal questions. In short while we have criticized a number of the particular deviations associated with this overall line, we have not (up until now) made a deep-going analysis of this - nor fully broken with the overall erroneous orientation of Stalin et.al. on this question, which represents a concentration of much of what constitutes the roots of revisionism in the international communist movement (p-8)

- (viii) In sum : the second world war, from beginning to end, was the second world inter-imperialist war- this was its principal aspect and overall character even after the Soviet Union was invaded and became involved in the war (p-9)

Some notes on military and Diplomatic History of WW2 by a comrade of RCP,USA., Revolution June, 1981

- (ix) Stalin went so far as to imply that in the whole period before the outbreak of the war, the U.S.-British bloc of imperialists had been real peace lovers. "It is a fact that the aggressor nations in the present war had an army of invasion ready even before the war broke out, whereas the peaceful nations did not even have a fully satisfactory covering army for mobilization. Unpleasant facts such as the Pearl Harbor "incident" the loss of the Philippines and other islands in the Pacific, the loss of Hong Kong and Singapore, when Japan, as an aggressor nation proved to be better prepared for war than Great Britain and the United States who pursued a peace policy, cannot be regarded as accidents. (Stalin's italics) what is really a fact here is that this is fundamental departure from Marxism-Leninism on the nature of the state and imperialism and represents in fact the subordination of Marxism to nationalism in the form of the defence of the Soviet Union (p. 14-15)

We cannot Beat the Enemy while Raising this Flag. Revolution, June 1981.

- (x) Imperialist countries were classified into "aggressor" (i.e., fascist) and "non-aggressor" (bourgeois-democratic imperialist) states.

In the first category, the fascist bourgeoisie was accused of being "destroyers of the nation" and upholders of "barbarism" (something different from capitalism). In the second "non aggressor" camp the bourgeoisie was (At least for a while the 1930s) also accused of betraying the nation, but here the charge was that it was doing so by giving, in appeasing, surrendering to the fascist aggressors. In common between these analyses was the idea that the proletariat should "oppose" the bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries on the basis of being the "true defenders of the nation." Increasingly, and especially after the Soviet Union was attacked the mask of "opposing" was thrown aside and the open line taken up of uniting with... bourgeoisie..... increasingly under the bourgeois and chauvinist banner of defending the (imperialist) nation. (p-25)

- (xi) In Imperialism Lenin saw and analyzed all the essential decadent and reactionary tendencies of the imperialist countries and showed why they were due to the features common to all capitalism in its highest stage-and to nothing else. He analyzed why imperialism tends toward repression and violation of bourgeois democracy, and why it aggressively seeks world domination and redivision of the world through war even noted that leading up to World War 1. Germany was the openly lusting up and coming imperialist which had been largely cut out from the imperialist feast, so it was the more openly aggressive. But all this didn't lead him to talk about "aggressor" and "non aggressor" states or to take sides. (p-25)

4. The line of Comintern on the Civil War in Spain, Revolution, June 1981

- (xii) In Spain, to be blunt, the possibilities for big revolutionary advances in that country and worldwide were sacrificed to the defence-on a state to-state level of the Soviet Union (p-34)

- (xiii) Stalin and the Comintern opposed revolution in Spain (p 53)

5. Conquer the world— The International Proletariat must and Will by Bob Avaikian special issue No. 50 of Revolution,

- (xiv) We can see some confusion in Marx and Engels, again especially viewed the perspective we have from history and the lessons summed up from history, on this question of the nation and on whether or not it is correct to view the working class as being the inheritors & those best carrying forward the tradition, the best tradition of the nation. This question is not needs saying but should

be said, just in case what erarguing might lead to any confusion, that Marx and Engels, both in their summation of the Commune as well as in their practice around the Commune itself, were obviously outstanding supporters and promoters of proletarian internationalism : that's clear all the way through the summation of the Commune. Their is not a summation done form the narrow point of view of the French nation, but there is that confusion. (p-3)

(xv) Now just in passing one thing that should be said is that in Lenin himself, and not simply later in the Soviet Party and the international movement there is a wrong view, a view contrary to a certian degree to Leninism in fact, on the question of the Versailles Treaty and how to deal with it in Germany, which is not totally unconnected with these things I've been discussing. Earlier Lenin took and fought for a basically correct position, for example in Left-Wing Communism, on that question of the Versailles Treaty where he said that on the basis of internationalism German Communists should not put themselves in a position of allowing the bourgeoisie to corner them into coming out and saying they're against the Versailles Treaty and should determine their attitude toward the Versailles Treaty on the basis of interests of the international proletariat and the world revolution . But then there begins to creep in the view, even somewhat appearing in Lenin and certainly carried forward after him, of pushing the communists in Germany a little bit—and this is not accidental and ties in somewhat with his sort of early and partial analysis of the three parts of the world, if you will to raise the national banner in Germany against the Versailles Treaty and against the victors flast at the expense of Germany. (p.16)

(xvi) Stalin's position is a muddle, whereas Khrushchev resolved the muddle; and in that contradiction Stalin's muddle is infinitely preferable to Khrushchev's resolution but it's still a muddle and not very good. (p-28)

(xvii) Stalin did what he could do (and in some cases it was n't insignificant) to kill the revolutionary struggle of the masses in order not to bring down the wrath of U.S. Imperialism. (p-28)

(xviii) Returning to the question of Mao : also linked to the general erroneous tendencies in Mao—too much of a country by country perspective, the tendency to see things too much in terms of nations and national struggle— something else that should be reviewed here briefly is confusion and some of Mao's errors on

the question of internal and external, and in particular the internal basis of change and the external condition of change and how this applies in the relationship between revolutions in particular countries, on the one hand, and the overall world struggle and the world situation, on the other. Even in Mao despite and in contradiction to his contributions, to and development of materialist dialectics there were some metaphysical tendencies which interpenetrated with nationalist tendencies on this question. (p. 34)

- (xix) "On Contradiction" the way it's presented is that China is the internal and the rest of the world is the external. And what we've emphasized in opposition to this is viewing the process of the world's historic advance from the bourgeois epoch to the communist epoch as something which in fact takes place in an overall sense on a world scale, is a world process and both arises out of and is ultimately determined by the fundamental contradiction of capitalism which, with the advent of imperialism, has become the fundamental contradiction of this process on a world scale. This was something that Lenin began to stress with his analysis of imperialism but was not fully developed by Lenin, at least in an all-around way and specifically in a philosophical sense; and it was gotten away from very sharply by the international communist movement after Lenin. And here again it was a case where there was not a radical rupture in a through-going way on the part of Mao. (p-35)
- (xx) All this, in turn, is linked with a wrong view of, or a wrong method of dealing with, the question of the development of conjunctures. It's not that Mao totally failed to grasp the question and the importance of conjunctures shaping up; certainly he grasped this in a certain way in relationship to World War 2, for example and how that interpenetrated with the Chinese revolution. But we have to understand how Mao's approach to such historic situations reflected certain errors that go along with what I said earlier about this orientation as set forth in "On Policy", of attempting to line up all the progressive forces or all the forces that can be lined up, against one main enemy, especially in the face of a developing conjuncture line that and in particular of a world war.
- (xxi) We also have to guard against a view that can develop spontaneously in the movement of presenting the course of the Chinese revolution as a "model" in the incorrect, metaphysical sense. In the main although there are, very secondarily, some tendencies toward this in Mao-he overwhelmingly struggled

against just such an error. But still it crops up and it goes alone with the kind of error (p- 35)

(xxii) In particular, there is a tendency toward a kind of absolute, mechanical, metaphysical view that there are two types of countries in the world and one of them has one-stage revolutions and the other has two-stage revolutions and the way you make revolution in a country that has a two stage revolution is the way they did it in China, more or less, with some concrete application to conditions in your country; that is, you put forward new democracy as your programme, you go to the country side surround the cities from the country side, wage protracted people's war and eventually capture power. (P- 35)

(xxiii) There is the specific criticism to be made of Mao on the question of nations, national struggle and the world revolution: not only in the Anna Louise Strong interview and in "On Policy" but also in the General Line polemic the tendency shows up to see things too much country-by-country separated from each other, too much in terms of nations and national struggle and too much in terms of identifying one enemy and rallying everybody against it. In the case of the General Line polemic, U.S. imperialism was seen as the main enemy at the stage and the other imperialist countries that advice³ was to struggle against the monopoly capitalist and reactionary forces who betrayed the national interest, in other words who were allying with U.S. imperialism; overall this was not correct (p- 35)



Extpert from Resolution on ICM

[Here are given extpert from the "Resolution or International Communist Movement (ICM)" of the NCP (Mashal) presented to the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations of world in 1984 and later adopted by 5th Congress of NCP (Mashal in 1990]

Principal World Contradiction

Mao's analysis of principal contradiction in the world holds true for the present too. The contradiction between the oppressed nations and imperialism is the principal contradiction even today [p-8]

Emerging Danger of New-Trotskyism

Today, while evaluation the history and experience of ICM, the tendency of attacking upon Stalin on the part of many Marxist-Leninist parties of the world is on the increasing Stalin is particularly criticized for his policies of building-up of socialism in one country and his various policies during second world war specially those concerning anti-Fascist united front & Spain, dissolution of Comintern etc. On the basis of all these criticisms they declare that in many questions, Stalin had fundamentally deviated from Marxism-Leninism, had no dialectical outlook, was opponent of proletarian internationalism and chauvinist, reformist and rightist. Some of Stalin's analyses and conclusion have been proven wrong and it also cannot be denied that he made some tactical mistake too. But such mistakes and weaknesses of Stalin are secondary aspects of his life. The principal aspects of him is that basically he was a great Marxist-Leninist, a proletarian internationalist and he had made unvaluable historical contributions for the advancement of communist movement and world socialist revolution. It will not be possible to lead the party and revolution on right direction in future by negating the great revolutionary aspects of Stalin, but will lead to another erroneous deviation, clearly towards Trotskyism prove wrong by history. I of we can not lead the party and revolution to the right direction by correctly evaluating history we will be victim of noe-Trotskyism again. It is necessary to be alert about it well in time. [p-13-15]

Mistakes of Stalin

Mao has criticized Stalin by saying "Stalin had a fair amount of metaphysics in him and taught many people to follow metaphysics, basing on that criticism some quarters in the International Marxist-Leninist movement today are accusing of Stalin's views as not being dialectical to significant extent and of him as not being able to see and comprehend correctly the struggle and unity between the opposites.....Several mistakes have been committed by Stalin in different fields and some of them are of a serious nature. Stalin's erroneous conceptions on the inevitability of class struggle in the socialist period and the restoration of capitalism have been talked about already. Similarly several serious mistakes had been committed by Stalin during the Second World War about the revolutionary struggles in China and Western Europe. The possibility of his committing some mistake in other field as well cannot be ruled out. However, some mistakes have been committed by Marx, Engels, Lenin or even Mao during the course of practice. It would be a mistake to accuse on that basis that their views were metaphysical. The same is true about Stalin too. Some mistakes were committed by him in the context of the analysis of the situation, policy formulation or their implementation. Thus it would not be correct to accuse his view itself was metaphysical just because of such mistakes. [p-24-25]

Mistakes of Mao-Tse-Tung

Mao learned from the experience of restoration of capitalism in Russia and the Great proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) was started to mobilize people in massive scale in the class struggle that is indispensable in whole period of socialist construction and against the possibility of restoration of capitalism there inCertainly capitalism has at last been restored in China despite that struggle. Yet we should try to understand that failure not in mechanical form, but in dialectical way. Firstly, failure of GPCR does not refute its relevance. But the fact that restoration had taken place in China underlines the necessity of conducting of Cultural Revolution, or the class struggle more clearly, in more effective and extreme form, secondly, some serious kinds of weaknesses have had way in the Chinese party and GPCR. In this context the mistakes of Mao towards Lin Piao and Hua Ko-Feng in general and towards Chou-En-Lai in particular, are worthy of mention..... A weakness of GPCR was that it could not persistently wage the struggle against Chau-En-Lai who was clearly a right wing opportunist in disguise. It was the result of that very weakness that the campaign started against Chau-En-Lai during the course of GPCR could not successfully advance and his position remained basically unshaken. Not only that Mao, because of influence of Chou, supported the rehabilitation of Teng and others thrown

out in the course of Cultural Revolution and in that way declaration crept in the motion of Cultural Revolution to some extent. After the death of Chou, the role of Teng immediately reindicated that the decision regarding rehabilitation of Teng was in fact, wrong. The act of promotion in the leadership the Centrist opportunist like Hua-Ko-Feng, who was once removed from the party leadership of Hunan during cultural revolution, instead of Chang-Chun-Chiao, Chiang-Ching and other, who were on the fore front in struggle against right wing forces during the course of GPCR, also was a mistake of Mao. Latter (Hua) became a source of Chinese counter revolution and thereby, history proved right the contention that the act of raising him in that way into leadership was wrong. But these mistakes should not imply to mean that Mao's understanding itself towards right wingers of "centrist" elements was unduly compromising. Mao had got to be compelled to make risk that compromises with in "Centrist" opportunists only because of united pressure of right wingers or "centrist" opportunists and relatively weaker position of revolutionary Marxist-Leninists. Therefore, those mistakes of Mao were chiefly born of situation. However mistakes of Mao are his minor and secondary aspects and the trend of adjudging wrong the fundamental relevance of Mao Tse-Tung thought and his great revolutionary struggle, which are his principal aspect because, of these (weaknesses) should be fought back with determination. (p. 25-28)

Possibility of New Trotskyite Trend

What are the objective and subjective factors behind the degeneration of socialist systems in all the world including Soviet Union & China? Numerous fallacious conceptions have emerged in the ICM while probing into this question. Amongst many of the communist parties of the world today there is an increasing tendency to draw wrong conclusions from the history and experiences of the ICM and to discard many of the fundamental principles of proven veracity through the long revolutionary struggle and experiences. Such erroneous conceptions are the consequences of practicing grossly subject wise, crudely, academic and static methods rather than adopting an historical materialist outlook on the study of history and experiences of the ICM. After all why did the socialist system fall of from all the socialist countries of the world? How can such a possibility be forestalled now? Communist all over the world are impatient and anxious for answer to these questions. At this juncture there is an increasing danger of Marxist-Leninist parties of different countries getting swayed by the falsified propositions without attempting to ascertain the correct side of the picture on history and experiences of the ICM and on many of the fundamental principles and thus plunging the ICM once again into a new kind of deviation or a Trotskyite deviation. In this contest, the heavy responsibility of clearing out the roots of all

such deviations and defending proposition of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tse-Tung thought has descended on the shoulders of true Marxist-Leninists of the world.

The other serious objectionable aspect of this dispute is that some of the parties have publicly discussing the issues of ICM history and other fundamental questions without proper debate and consultations at the international level. In the course of their open polemics they have not only branded Stalin as reformist, rightist and chauvinist, but also not hesitated to denounce him on certain issues as person sinfully divorced from the tenets of Marxism-Leninism. A serious rift and controversy within the ICM had been generated by Khrushchev's censure of Stalin during the Congress of Soviet Party, though in the closed session, without prior consultation with the fraternal parties. Today, the new land of such public controversy on Stalin amongst the communists tempered by the long struggle against Khrushchevite revisionism to Teng's renegation is bound too exert unfathomable negative impacts on the communists who are in the process of forging a new international solidarity after counter revolution in China. Nevertheless, we have to make a correct assessment of this neo-Trotskyite danger in the new guise and strengthen the unity and organization of true Marxist-Leninist at the international level by waging two-line struggle against the numerous erroneous conceptions surfacing in the ICM. [p. 29-31]

Socialism in One country

The severest accusation of the Trotskyites against Stalin concerns the question of building socialism in one country-in Russia. According to their exposition such a proposition was in principle anti-Marxist-Leninist, consequently, Russian Party fell prey to chauvinism and many other deviations and ultimately turned into revisionist and non-revolutionary during Stalin's time itself. In the present ICM these Trotskyite accusations are being presented in new forms. [p. 31]

Defense of USSR

It is also contended that Stalin's emphasis on defence of Soviet Union was against proletarian internationalism. Priority he bestowed on defense of Soviet Union during fascist aggression against it, is being particularly branded as an act of outright renegation vis-vis the interests of world revolution. This is a state invective of Trotskyites against Stalin, which is now being hurled with a new 'fresh' make up. Though Trotskyites, accusations have been repeatedly debated within the ICM as they are now presented in new forms they have demanded further dissection. Those who are hurling these charges on Stalin now have presented defense of Soviet Union and world proletarian revolution then as two contradictory aspects. This formulation is fundamentally wrong. [p. 33]

The question of Spain

Stalin has been vigorously denounced on the question of Spain too.....the same Trotskyites propositions are once again forwarded in new guise. After all how far are these conceptions independent of Trotskyite perversion and vindictive postures? This question should attract more attention than the question on Spain. [p-35]

Character of Second World War

Today, the character of Second World War is controverted on the ground that it was like the first one, inter imperialist war from the beginning to end. This is a fallacious argument.....The conception that fails to discern the clear, important basic differences between the two stages of Second World War can not claim the remotest relations with Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tse-Tung thought, and is in fact, a dangerous deviation. [p-36]

Anti-Fascist Unite Front

At a time when Fascism was living menace to the whole world and specially Soviet Union and when Soviet Union and the revolutionary forces were not in a position to counter it single handedly, formation of the Anti-Fascist United front was not only indispensable and timely, but an act of extreme brilliance repudiating all such great and historical achievements of the Anti-Fascist United front, Stalin's united front policy as such is now being subjected to outright condemnation. [p. 36]

Dissolution of Comintern

Dissolution of Comintern during the world war was also the consequence of the peculiar specificities of the Second World War. To decipher correctness or otherwise of the policies followed then the basic issues ought to be taken note of : first, survival of Soviet Union was threatened by fascist aggression. Second, the prime international obligation of the moment in the interest of the world proletariat and the revolution, was the defence of Soviet Union, at that time as the strength of Soviet Union alone was not enough to counter fascist aggression and defend Soviet Union. It was a pre-requisite to forge tactical alliance with Anti-Fascist imperialist forces for the purpose. Even Trotsky has conceded that in the absence of such alliances extermination of Soviet Union was an objective reality. Still he maintains that even then such alliances or united front should have been concluded. On his own admission, that would have meant obliteration of the Soviet Union. But Stalin did not fulfill their pious wishes, instead, he forged alliances with the USA, the Great Britain, France and other to raise a second front against Hitler, Mussolini and company. In such a war-born situation and objective necessity that Comintern was dissolved. [p-36] □

Note of Dissent

[Presented by Com. M.B. Singh to the International Conference of the Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations held in 1984]

I, on behalf of the Nepal Communist Party (Mashal) seriously take note of the fact that tendency of a kind of deviation on the question of nationalism and national revolutionary movements, to some extent on the question of New Democratic Revolution too, has taken place in a series of articles, documents of the RCP, USA and in its draft document presented here to this second International conference of Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations of the world.

First of all it seems that RCP is trying to weaken the very ideological foundations of nationalism and national revolutionary movement. For this propose Marx, Engels, and Lenin are interpreted in a confusing way, Stalin is opposed in a antagonistic way, Mao criticized in a friendly way and the history of the during WW II period is evaluated in a wrong way.

In the articles published in Revolution, organ of the RCP, it is claimed that on the question of nationalism Marx and Engels were in "some confusion"¹, Lenin "went against Leninism"², Stalin's policies "were fundamental departure from Marxism-Leninism"³, and Mao showed up the tendency of seeing things "in terms of nationalism and national struggle"⁴

That criticism of Marx, Engles, Lenin, Stalin and Mao is an example of seeing things in metaphysical way. It is because of such metaphysical outlook that they are seeing only absolute, but not relative; only general, but not particular; only external; but not internal; only whole, but not part; only subjective, but not objective, only world, but not country; only world revolution, but not national revolution; only internationalism, but not nationalism. Their metaphysical approach is manifested on many ideological and political questions and because of anti-Marxist outlook of seeing the world they have not been able to grasp the dialectical relationship existing between internationalism and nationalism and concluded that on this question "Marx did not fully grasp the meaning and implications of even what he himself had commented on earlier."⁵ And they RCP "fully" grasp "the meaning and implications" that Marx himself did not; ok!

Their mechanical understanding of proletarian internationalism based upon what Marx "commented earlier" overlooks the creative development of Marxism- Leninism made by Marx, Engels and Lenin. Their inability of taking into consideration the historical experience of later period and looking upon some particular questions separating them from the whole, has made the RCP to evaluate the history of the ICM during WW II in a wrong way. RCP has concluded that "the Line (s) of the Soviet and Comintern to WW II was basically wrong" and a deviation in the line of the Communist International had taken place.⁶ According to them, the principal aspect of WW II even after the attack upon the USSR was inter-imperialist and united front against fascism a "departure in significant aspect from Leninism".⁷ They (RCP) even go to such an extent as to see a kind of antagonistic contradiction between the defense of the USSR and the interests of the world proletarian revolution. Their attack against Stalin has taken such an antagonistic turn that they have no hesitation even to say: "Stalin did what he could so (and in some cases it was not insignificant) to kill the revolutionary struggle of the masses in order not to bring down the wrath of U.S. imperialism".⁸

At a time when there was a serious danger to the first socialist Republic of the world which was a great historical achievement of the whole world, it had become a primary duty of the proletariat and oppressed people of the world to fight to defend it, the base of the world at that time. The concept of taking such an international duty as "a line of incorrectly subordinating everything to the defense of the Soviet Union"⁹ is nothing but to see things from the point of view of narrow and bourgeois nationalism. By adopting such a proletarian internationalist policy toward the question of the defense of the USSR, the Comintern and Stalin in fact promoted world socialist revolution and safeguarded it. To separate the defense of a socialist country and world revolution from each other and even to see an antagonistic contradiction between them is a fundamental departure from Marxism and Mao Tse-Tung Thought and proletarian internationalism. It is because of this that the RCP, USA has not been able correctly to evaluate the history of the ICM during WWII period and after wards. We are not against evaluating the history of the ICM during WWII and after wards and drawing lessons from that. We also hold view that Stalin has made many mistakes, such mistakes were in the analysis of objective situation and in implementation of policies. But basically his approach was correct, dialectical materialist, and he was a great Marxist- Leninist and promoter of proletarian internationalism.

RCP negates nationalism totally in imperialist countries. From the reference that Lenin has made about the "pride" of language of "our country" and "progressive cultural heritage and revolutionary movement

of the toiling masses in Russia"¹⁰ for which the RCP has accused of "going against Leninism", it is not difficult to conceive that by negating patriotism and nationalism in totality in imperialist countries RCP in fact has gone against Leninism. As with nationalism in oppressed nations where the national chauvinism representing reactionary interests cannot be supported, similarly in the imperialist countries too as long as it (nationalism) represents the sentiments, interests and movement of the working class it cannot and must not be opposed. Such nationalism is always part of internationalism and world revolution and always must be.

CRC (CPI-ML), India in its draft document states: "National question has been generally solved in all the imperialist countries and nationalism as such generally does not have progressive role in them."¹¹ "Generally" means that even in these countries nationalism can have a progressive role to some extent. This stand is correct.

The incorrect approach of RCP to this question caused them to criticize the Dimitroff report to the 7th congress for reducing the proletariat to "supporters of the bourgeoisie:"¹² It also criticized "General line" for seeing national interests in imperialist countries and Mao and the CPC for "never fundamentally" breaking with the view that "has been an accepted principle of the international communist movement" since "the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1935"¹³ For RCP what Marx and Engels said is "confusion" and what Lenin said is "against Leninism". The credit for "fundamentally" breaking with the "accepted principles of the international communist movement" goes to RCP.

The logical consequence of this absolute and metaphysical understanding of nationalism and evaluation of the history of the ICM during WWII period and afterward in a mechanical 'proletarian internationalist way' has become such that their approach to the question of national revolutionary movements in colonial and neo-colonial countries has become basically misleading. While analyzing the present world situation they have drawn the conclusion that at present in the international situation the inter-imperialist contradiction particularly contradiction between two superpowers has become principal and war has become main trend in the world. This conclusion is quite different than that of the General Line of CPC in 1963, which maintained that the contradiction between oppressed nations and imperialism is principal one and revolution is the main trend of the world. It clearly said that the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America are main revolutionary centers.

Document of the RCP states that, as the situation has changed, the conclusion of the General Line is no longer valid. So the national revolutionary movement of the world has become secondary, the inter

imperialist rivalry being principal which determines all other fundamental contradictions and affair of the present world. To prove propriety of the conclusion they refer to the concept of territorial division of the world among the imperialist powers as describe in Imperialism : the Higher Stage of Capitalism by Lenin RCP points out that in the present world situation too "Division of the world" has reached to such an extent that war has been necessary for the redivision of the world. The inter-imperialist rivalry is increasing and the danger of world war is also increasing. But this factor has not reached such an extent as to make the contradiction between oppressed nations and imperialism and national revolution a secondary one in the present world.

Their conclusion that inter-imperialist contradiction has become main contradiction is based upon the mechanical understanding of the world and anarchist nature of capitalist production and they have not been able to give any concrete analysis to justify that the objective situation of the "general Line" period has basically changed.

The RCP supports the new democratic revolution in its document presented to the Conference. It states that the view opposing the principle of new democratic revolution is "promoted by Trotskyites, social democrats and petty bourgeois critics of revolutionary Marxism".¹⁴ This is true. But the problem is that by the Chairman of the RCP, Mao is criticized for his "tendency toward a kind of absolute mechanical, metaphysical view of "two-stage revolution"¹⁵. It is a tendency toward a kind of "refutation of new democratic revolution in colonial and semi-colonial countries. In the light of what RCP comrades themselves have mentioned their document presented in the conference, there is ground to think that in opposition to "two-stage revolution" is in direct or indirect way the view of "Trotskyites, social democrats and petty bourgeois critics" has been reflected. This view has not been self-criticized or criticized by the RCP. So in spite of what stand they have taken in their draft document, in one form or another that view still holds good and its appearance in a new context in future cannot be ruled out. So this aspect should be taken seriously.

On the whole we conclude that understanding of RCP about the question of revolution in colonial, neocolonial or semi-colonial countries is not correct and is misleading. There are many other questions, too where we differ, which will be elaborated in the course of two-line struggle in future. We also differ with stand taken by the CRC (CPI-ML), India on the question of Stalin, mainly that of criticizing him for his "basically metaphysical approach."¹⁶ We do not differ with the criticism that it (CRC) has made Stalin concerning his misunderstanding of the class struggle and development of the productive forces. But while criticizing him (Stalin)

they have overlooked the historical Limits and objective conditions which made him unable to understand correctly the nature of class struggle in the USSR. It is because of their (CRC's) one sided approach that they have not been able to understand his weaknesses correctly.

I would like to cite the following paragraph from the "Resolution on international communist Movement" of NCP (Mashal) presented to this international conference:

"A serious rift and controversy within the ICM had been generated by Khrushchev's censure of Stalin during the Congress of Soviet party, though in the closed session, without prior consultation with the fraternal parties. Today now the new brand of such public controversy on Stalin among the communists tempered against Khrushchyvite revisionism to Deng's renegeation is bound to exert unfathomable negative impact onward the process of forging a new international solidarity after counter revolution in China. Nevertheless, we have to make correct assessment of this neo-Trotskyite danger in the new guise and strengthen the unity and organization of the true Marxist- Leninist at the international level by waging two-Line struggle against the numerous erroneous conceptions surfacing in ICM."¹⁷

Not only the numerous erroneous conclusions of RCP, but also the wrong method that it has adopted by denouncing Stalin as pointed out above has done much harm to the unity and organization of true Marxist- Leninists at the international level and in the process of forging new internationalist solidarity after counter- revolution in china. However, NCP (M) hopes that a healthy and friendly two line struggle will be able to pull down the confusion prevailing in the international communist movement at present and the process of international unity and organization will be strengthened.

As it is quiet clear, NCP (M) has serious difference with RCP, USA and to some extent with CRC (CPI-ML) , India and other parties and groups too. But we believe in the dynamic nature of two-line struggle. The Dynamics of two-line struggle is such that the different and unanimous views have the tendency of being changed into opposites, the courses having unity today many differ later, and vice-versa. The comrades having different views on a question may agree with each other on a different question. Not only that, the party taking a particular stand in the conference may have struggle within its own party in future they might take the opposite stand than what they have taken today. So the opinion and views expressed are not final and should not be taken as settled for ever.

We must never compromise on the question of principles and cause of revolution. But at the same time as long as differences are within the limit of Marxism- Leninism and Mao Tse- tung Thought and the cause of communism, we should try to resolve them through two-line struggle and to strengthen unity on higher level. We should try to avoid any possibility of our international revolutionary solidarity being broken because of misunderstanding and inability to grasp the theory and apply it correctly.

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Letter of CORIM to N.C.P. (Mashal)

[This is a letter written by the RIM to NCP (Mashal) warning either to accept Maoism or to resign voluntarily from the RIM]

Central Committee
Nepal Communist Party (Mashal)

21 August 1996

Dear Comrades,

On December 26, 1993 on the occasion of the Mao Tsetung Centenary the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement took the historic step of adopting Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as its ideology. The decision was taken after a long and vigorous debate within RIM which had gone on over a number of years. In the course of these discussions your party has repeatedly and vociferously argued against this position of our Movement.

The dispute between RIM and the NCP (Mashal) is by on means limited to a question of terminology. The debate has revealed that the dispute over Marxism-Leninism-Maoism concentrates a whole series of political and ideological questions. These questions involve but are not limited to the applicability of Mao Tse-tung's teachings on the path protracted people's war in the oppressed countries, Mao's summation of the experience of building socialism in the Soviet Union, the lessons of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and other vital questions.

Our Movement adopted the document long live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism ! to serve, together with the Declaration of RIM as its ideological and political foundation. The opposition of NCP (Mashal) to this document and to this very ideology, has resulted in the untenable situation in which one of the participating parties of our movement has publicly rejected the very foundation of our movement.

At the time of the adoption of the document Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the problem of NCP (Mashal)'s continuing participation in Rim was discussed. Having been assured that your party would review its position and discuss the position adopted by the movement it was decided to allow ample time for this review of position

and further discussion to take place. For our part, a letter was submitted to your Congress developing our views on some of the questions involved.

Rather than carry out a constructive debate and struggle with the Committee and RIM as a whole, your representatives have made public statements and interviews attacking our movement as "Ultra-left extremism"

In our view, it is necessary to be concluded this period of clarification and debate between your party and our movement which has lasted over two year now. This is all the more important and urgent given that your opposition to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism has led to the most serious political consequences, including denunciation of the launching of the people's war in your country.

The participating parties and organizations of RIM as well as its committee, treasure the ideological and political unity of RIM which has been achieved through ideological struggle and in the course of revolutionary practice. If your party continues to maintain its opposition to the ideological foundation of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement the correct and principled response on your part would be your voluntary resignation from our movement. We hope that you will give urgent attention to this matter and respond within three months.

Our Communist Greetings,

Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

Copies : Participating Parties and Organizations of RIM.



Resolution on the Letter of CORIM

[Adopted by Meeting of Central Committee of Nepal Communist Party (Mashal) held on 24 Oct. 1996]

1. The Central Committee (CC) of NCP (Mashal) (hereafter CC or Mashal only) in its meeting held on 24th Oct., 1996 has concluded that the letter of CORIM (Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement) (hereafter CORIM or Committee only) to the former (Mashal) dated 21 Aug., 1996 is unjustified, arbitrary, unprincipled, splittist, sectarian and even against the norms and tradition of RIM itself. The CC meeting specially called to discuss over the letter of CORIM decided unanimously, unlike requested by committee, to continue its stand on Mao Tse-Tung thought and not respond with "voluntary" (forced ?) Resignation "within three months" from RIM and continue to maintain opposition to "Maoism"

2. Before CORIM amended, or in a way gave up, the Declaration of RIM adopted by the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and organizations of the world in 1984, replacing Mao Testung Thought by "Maoism" two year back, some parties, chiefly Peruvian Communist Party (PCP) and Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), USA had taken up "Maoism" as their guiding principle and had 'publicly' (emphasis ours-CC) rejected Mao Tse-Tung Thought. The word "publicly" is worth mention here for it is mainly because of rejection of "Maoism" by our party "publicly" that Committee has suggested us to render "voluntary" resignation from RIM. Not only that, in a way or another they (PCP and RCP) had publicly criticized Mao Tse-tung Thought, the official ideology of RIM. But none of these parties were questioned for their opposition to the ideological foundation of RIM, not any "voluntary" resignation were demanded from them or any disciplinary action was taken against them by the Committee for that. Considering upon such a tradition of RIM what is demanded from Mashal, it is quite evident, is an unjustified and sectarian action on the part of the Committee. What Committee speaks of "voluntary" resignation outwardly is in fact "forced" resignation, meaning a threat to expel Mashal from RIM in case it does not bow down before the arbitrary and despotic directive of Committee.

3. RIM is not an authorative organization as Communist International was. It is only a platform or forum for exchange of views, experiences and

for consultation. According to the Declaration, RIM is an "embryonic political center" of international communist movement. But it is still to come out of the embryo as a leading centre. So, for the time being, it is no more than a platform or forum as mentioned before. So, Committee has no power more than consultative one any policy or decision of Committee being subject to approval of respective parties. There are ample proofs in the history of RIM to justify our position regarding such a nature of RIM. It was due to such nature of RIM that PCP or RCP were never questioned for their stand on "Maoism" against the basic ideology of the Declaration of RIM, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, nor any participating parties or organizations of RIM had made any objection for their decisions to adopt "Maoism" and rejection of Mao Tsetung Thought publicly. This single fact is enough to indicate that the letter of Committee to Mashal threatening to expel in case if it continues to support Mao Tsetung Thought is palpable violation of the norms and practice of RIM.

4. The way in which the decision of the RIM was made to replace Mao Tsetung Thought by "Maoism" and to put forth it as the very ideological foundation of the movement also deserves examination. The Declaration of RIM was adopted by the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and organizations of the world. So only next international conference has right to make any change in the very fundamental ideology of the Declaration. So the decision of Committee to make any amendment in it is beyond its power. As it is well known to all, such an amendment in ideology of RIM was made by the extended meeting of Committee, an unauthorized body for such a task of fundamental nature. What makes matter worse is that committee itself is not an elected one by the International Conference, meaning conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and organizations of the world. It is only organizing committee, majority members of it being co-opted ones. After resignations of CRC, CPI (ML) and TKP (ML) from it, the three members committee elected in the Conference was dissolved many years back. Such an extended meeting of an organizing committee has amended the very fundamental ideology of The RIM!

5. It is well-established convention of the Marxist-Leninist Parties of the world that extended meeting of a committee is a body of less powerful than committee itself. It is because of it that the latter has right to strike out decision of the former. As the decision of that (extended meeting) is subject to approval by the concerned committee, in a round way the decision of the extended meeting means no more than that of the committee itself. So it is clear as day-light that the value of the decision of the extended meeting of the CORIM is not more than that of the

committee itself. So the attempt on the part of the CORIM, an co-opted and organizing committee itself, to replace Mao Tse-Tung Thought by "Maoism" is an action unfounded and illegitimate. It was on the basis of it that the representative of Mashal on the occasion of extended meeting of CORIM had challenged validity of the extended meeting to amend the fundamental ideology of the RIM. Our objection was based upon Marxist-Leninist organizational principles. Our objection was voted down. But as the question is concerned with the principle, the single vote cast in opposition to the attempt of the Committee to do away with the fundamental ideology of the RIM adopted by the International Conference is more important than the unlawful and illegitimate majority of extended meeting of CORIM, as mentioned before, a co-opted committee. Such committee has no right to question propriety of our determination to stick on ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung thought endorsed by the International Conference.

6. RCP, has been a leading member of the CORIM from the very beginning. When it adopted "Maoism" against the official ideology of RIM, it (RCP) was not even questioned by Committee. After a change has taken place in ideological position of the RIM, although in an unfair way, similar to that of RCP, Committee is threatening our party to expel it from RIM if it does not change its ideology according to that of RIM. Can we humbly ask to comrades of CORIM, why they had not shown such promptness to take action against RCP and PCP too, when they "publicly rejected" Mao Tse-Tung Thought, the then official ideology of RIM? It clearly shows that their threat for any action against Mashal is not based upon principles, but is bare opportunism. Needless to mention, a party such as Mashal, which has a long and glorious history of two-line struggle based upon principle both within the country and in international level, which maintains that relation among the fraternal parties and organizations must be based upon principle, equality and proletarian internationalism can not bow down before such a despotic and whimsical directive of the CORIM.

7. The letter rightly points out the very essence of difference we have with Committee, when it states that "the dispute between RIM and NCP (Mashal) is by no means limited to a question of terminology, but concentrates a whole series of political and ideological questions "Yes, it is exactly so. The dispute is not limited to terminology, but represents two basically diversified views regarding interpretation and understanding of Marxist-Leninist ideology, one defending it and another deviating from it. For many Marxist Leninists of the world the two terms, Mao Tse-Tung Thought and "Maoism" mean the same thing-creative development made

in Marxim-Leninism by Mao Tse-Tung. As the meaning of words change and develop according to their usage in different historical contexts, interpretations given to them in various circumstances, we do not flag, deny possibility of these two terms, Mao Tse-Tung Thought and "Maoism" too basically being used to indicate the same revolutionary sense by various parties, organizations or individuals within RIM or outside it. We do not want to involve ourselves in a dispute with those who in the name of "Maoism" do not intend to lead communist movement to non Marxist-Leninist path in general or to distort Mao in particular, although not denying necessity of criticising such trends in a friendly way to the extent we differ. But in the context of RIM, specialty in the hands of RCP and CORIM, "Maoism" -in the present resolution "Maoism" should be understood only in this particular context-represents a trend alike to Marxist-Leninist ideology. It ("Maoism") not only intends to undervalue Leninism and throw out Lenin era from the scene, in the same time in the name of uplifting Mao Tse-Tung Thought to qualitatively new, higher and third stage of Mao, destroys very essence of revolutionary contributions made by Mao in Marxim-Leninism in the present stage of Lenin era. Thus in the RIM "Maoism" in general with exception of PCP on which we shall deal later, Means nothing but "Left" revisionism and deviation from Marxist-Leninist ideology. Both CORIM and RCP have been trying to turn it into a means to lead ICM to the line of Trotskyism.

8. The objective mentioned above can not be achieved without knocking down Leninism, which was claimed as "the theoretical basis guiding our thinking "in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution in the Declaration of the RIM itself. That is why the CORIM has tried to push on "Maoism" as the Marxism-Leninism in the present stage of ICM in place of Leninism which was regarded as the Marxism of the era of the imperialism and proletarian revolution by both Stalin and Mao. Their conception of taking present era as the third stage of Mao in the development of Marxism also is a calculated Move to revise the ideological foundation of Stalin and Mao who had interpreted present era as Lenin era. The declaration states: Stalin said, "Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution. This is entirely correct. Since Lenin's death the world situation has undergone great changes. But the era has not changed. The fundamental principles of Leninism are not outdated, they remain the theoretical basis guiding our thinking today" This view fully conforms with that of Stalin and Mao. CORIM has fundamentally departed from this stand of Declaration. Such a deviation from the "theoretical basis" of present era has made their (meaning both CORIM and RCP) views on many political and ideological questions, such as era, principal contradiction of the world, armed struggle, mass

struggle, parliamentary election, organizational principles, style of work, mass and class organizations etc. go against Leninist principles. So to justify their ideological position, which is nearer Trotskyism rather than to Leninism, they have been trying their best to undervalue Leninism and Lenin era.

Without doubting sincerity of committee or party concerned, Mashal conceives that such a wrong and non-Marxist-Leninist approach of CORIM and RCP on many problems and issues are mainly manifestations of their meta physical and subjective thinking in general, or in other words, lacking of dialectical approach to the problems concerning communist movement. Prevalence of such non-Marxist-Leninist notions in the leadership of RIM has done much harm to the world communist movement, including that of Nepal too. That is why Mashal has taken up it as its international duty of fighting against such "left" opportunist trend preponderating RIM.

9. The splittist and opportunist policy of the CORIM has also done much harm in the task of strengthening the unity of the RIM on the basis of Marxist-Leninist principles. Peruvian Communist Party had vociferously raised voice against the policy of CORIM recognizing a splitter group of TKP (ML) bypassing TKP(ML), a genuine Communist Party of Turkey with a long and glorious history. As it had sharp difference with the CORIM on many issues, the later, adopted a policy splitting former and bringing a small group of it into RIM. The policy of recognizing "Maoist" group of Nepal also reveals the opportunist character of the Committee. It was known to all and even to Committee also that the so called Maoist group of Nepal was participant in Pyongyang gathering of revisionist parties and organizations of the world held on the occasion of 81st birth ceremony of Kim ILL Sung in 1991 But as "Maoist" group of Nepal blindly sided with Committee in opposition to Mashal, it (Committee) quickend its pace of admission of that into RIM. Such an inclination of CORIM to bring such an opportunist group within RIM again manifests the inherent opportunist character of it (Committee) itself.

10. RCP has much influence upon the formation and setup of RIM. But as RCP and its leader com. Bob Avaikin held many ideas opposed or even diametrically opposed to Marxist-Leninist ideology, Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations from the very beginning had to go through a diffecult and through struggle to safeguard it (RIM) from such wrong and non-Marxist-Leninist influence of RCP. At the time of the founding Conference of RIM, RCP had proposed to organize it on the lines of Communist International making it a leading centre of the world communist movement. Needless to mention, such a proposal was a

calculated move to bring all the participating parties and organizations under "authority" of RCP. In spite of unanimity in principle about necessity of an international organization on the lines of former Communist International, the view prevailed among the participation parties and organization that the condition was still premature for such a step. So such a proposal put forth by RCP had to face strong opposition from the participants of International Conference, which compelled RCP to withdraw that proposal. In later years too, repeated attempts on the part of RCP to turn that (RIM) into such a leading centre of the world communist movement, whose decisions would be binding upon all participating parties and organization, were turned down again and again. The opposition from the party of Peru is worth mention herewith. It always denied even to send a representative with voting power in the founding Conference or in the extended meetings held in later years. PCP has always been turning down request of CORIM to join the committee of RIM. Many other efforts by RCP to impose its misleading conceptions, such as decry and devaluation of Stalin too had been set aside due to resistance by participating parties and organizations. However such a struggle on the part of participating parties and organizations, gradually turned out to be weak and feeble giving the way for wrong and non-Marxist-Leninist policies and activities of CORIM only Mashal taking a firm principled stand constantly.

11. The role of RCP, a leading member of the Committee, to frame policy of RIM as a whole has been very important. So, it will be difficult to understand the RIM in proper prospective without an evaluation of the RCP, at least in nutshell.

As the wrong ideological and political thinking of RCP has much influence negatively upon the ideological, political and organizational make up of the RIM, our party from the very beginning paid much attention to a principled struggle against both RCP and thinking of com. Bob Aviaikin himself. After com. Bob Aviaikin was recognized as an "authority" of RCP, our party had criticized such a move as a non-Marxist-Leninist notion of personal cult eight years ago Com Bob Aviaikin and RCP at the time of the 2nd international conference held the view that the contradiction among the imperialist countries, particularly between Soveit Union and USA, was principal one. So a third war was inevitable in near future. After such a conclusion was proved wrong by history, RCP jumped to the view that there is not any principal contradiction in the world and all of fundamental contradictions of the world are more or less equal, a concept concillating to the theory of equilibriums criticized by Mao in his work "On Contradiction".

However, without going into whole series of their wrong ideological

and political conceptions and history of our struggle against them, we would like to conclude herewith: the main source of their wrong conceptions lies in their subjective and metaphysical way of thinking, which prevents them from taking an account of the concrete analysis of the concrete situation and grasping and following Marxist-Leninist principles. Isolation of com. Bob Avaikin from the movement and people for a long time and his confinement to purely intellectual activities too has made him unable to study the philosophical, ideological and organizational questions dialectically. Under the leadership of such an "authority", RCP is certain to commit blunders after blunders. It is really unfortunate that such a party is in the helm of the RIM and is trying its best to turn it into a really leading center of ICM equal to Communist International under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin!

12. Mashal had been taking firm and principal stand against all of these wrong policies and moves of RCP from the very beginning. Before the founding Conference of RIM in 1984, Mashal had taken clear stand against the Trotskyite type of attack against Stalin and evaluation of world history by RCP. In the draft Proposal concerning "International Communist Movement" presented to the International Conference by NCP (Mashal) manifested that our position on almost all these questions concerning communist movement was diametrically opposed to that of RCP.

In the Conference itself, together with many other fraternal parties and organization of the countries such as Shree Lanka, India, Turkey, Peru and Greece etc. Mashal had fought vigorously against various wrong policies of RCP and many other organizations blindly following it. We had many differences with the Declaration adopted in the conference. The "Note of dissent" presented by the representative of our party denotes seriousness of two-line struggle and our differences with RCP and CORIM. In many other proposals and documents sent to CORIM, our stands at the various meeting of South Asian Region, bilateral talk with the representatives of Committee, on many proposals of amendments presented at the time of extended meeting of CORIM, in numerous articles, seminar papers, booklets, party organ and other party publications published in the country in the later years, we in one or another way, continued our two lines struggle against both CORIM and RCP. Our motive behind such a principled two-lines struggle has been to check retrogressive role of the CORIM to Make RIM as a whole to deviate from the Marxist-Leninist principles, to lead it to the path of opportunism and Trotskyism. Besides it, the violation of the Marxist-Leninist organizational principles by the CORIM and its arbitrary, splitist and opportunist style of work also have been opposed by our party. There are many other factors to be

described, but at present we refrain from going into detail reserving our right to put forth all facts in truer whenever necessary.

13. PCP also, as it is well-known all, takes the same stand like that of CORIM or RCP on the question of "Maoism". But in spite of it, Mashal has never underrated the Marxist-Leninist and revolutionary character of that (PCP). Besides our differences on the issue of "Maoism", our party in an extended meeting of the COC held about 8 years back had also criticized PCP for its decision to replace Mao Tse-Tung Thought by Gonzalo Thought upgrading the former (Mao Tse-Tung Thought) to "Maoism". As a fraternal party we put forth the view in friendly manner that such a decision to place Gonzalo Thought equivalent to Marxism-Leninism-"Maoism" by PCP was an attempt to promote personal cult. But not withstanding our differences with it (PCP) on this and some other issues following those differences, our party has been holding the view that PCP, when considered upon its character and role as a whole, has not degraded from Marxist-Leninist ideology as CORIM, RCP and some other participants of RIM. So it (PCP) has succeeded to take correct stand on many issues concerning party and revolution. PCP. Unlike CORIM and RCP, has been sustaining the view from the beginning that the contradiction between the oppressed nations and imperialism is principal one. Its stand on the question of Stalin too is basically different and more positive than that of RCP. It takes election as a tactical question maintaining that it should be boycotted or utilised according to particular condition of a country at a particular time. It again, unlike CORIM and RCP, adopts Marxist-Leninist attitudes on the question concerning mass struggle and mass and class organizations. PCP started the revolutionary war in Peru after having a detailed and concrete analysis of objective and subjective conditions of the country and after preparation of that for many years. Such a line of action confirms with the laws of armed struggle propounded by Lenin, Stalin and Mao. It is because of such correct, revolutionary and Marxist-Leninist approach and line of action of PCP that in spite of our difference with PCP on some of the ideological questions as mentioned above, Mashal takes PCP as a true Marxist-Leninist party, its people's war as a genuine revolutionary war and supports it without any reservation. Mashal also concludes that in spite of their wrong stand on the question of "Maoism" and Gonzalo thought subjectively, in practice they have not departed from Marxist-Leninist ideology in the main. In spite of their unanimity with CORIM and RCP on question of taking "Maoism" as the Marxism-Leninism in the present stage, replacing Lenin era by third stage of Mao, latter (PCP) does not intend to strike out very essence of Leninism or distort Mao. For PCP "Maoism" does not mean the same thing, what it does for CORIM and

RCP. In the hands of latter it ("Maoism") has been tuned into a means to lead ICM to the lines of Trotskyism, While for PCP "Maoism" is an ideology within the framework of Marxism–Leninism. To put the matter in other words, in practice PCP has not cut down Leninism from the position of leading "theoretical basis" of the party and revolution. But such a high regards of the Marxist-Leninist character and role of that, (PCP) on various issues. However we also maintain that in spite of their wrong position on various ideological questions, it is because of their correct understanding and applying Marxist–Leninist ideology in practice that they have been able to base their policies, programme and tactics on concrete analysis of the concrete situation and take correct stand concerning communist movement in world level and people's war in Peru. Their success lies in it that, while acception "Maoism" as a guiding Principle replacing Mao Tse-Tung Thought, they have been able to a large extent to avoid many of non–Marxist–Leninist misgivings in deeds that RCP and CORIM under the influence of that (RCP) have been trying to put in "Maoism."

14. The letter mentions, "At the time of adaptation of the document long live Marxism–Leninism–Maoism, the problems of NCP (Mashal)'s continuing participation in the RIM was discussed. Having been assured that your party would review its position and discuss the position adopted by the movement, it was decided to allow ample time for review of position and further discussion to take place "This statement is both true and false in the same time. In principle, our party is always prepared to review or discuss various issues related with our party or communist movement. At the time of extended meeting of CORIM, our 6th congress was going to take place soon The document "On Maoism" together with many other documents, was open for discussion within the party. So the representative of our party present in the extended meeting made our position clear regarding consideration, review or discussion on the position adopted by extended meeting of CORIM. Accordingly, a through discussion took place in our 6th Congress on "Maoism" and unanimously decided to continue its stand on Mao Tse-Tung Thought. Even today we do not claim that we have closed door for such discussion for time indefinite. But in the same we had never hidden our firm stand on the question of Mao Tse-Tung Thought. In a letter sent to RIM after 6th Congress too we had informed about our firm stand on Mao Tsetung Thought. What is not true in the letter is that our continuing participating in the RIM was never subject to review or change of our stand on Mao Tse-Tung Thought, nor any such discusslon had taken place in the extending meeting; nor we had given any assurance to that sense, nor had we requested continuing in the RIM on that condition.

15. CORIM has warned us: It is necessary to be concluded this period of clarification and debate" between Mashal and RIM. It is all the more important and urgent because of Mashal's denunciation the launching of people's war" in Nepal. The so-called people's war in Nepal in fact is an ultra "left" deviation, which has done much harm to the movement of Nepal. It is after a comprehensive and detailed study of the subjective and objective conditions of the country that we have reached to such a conclusion. However, we do not want elaborate the subject in detail here, which we have done extensively in numerous articles, booklets, statements or interviews or in the documents and organ of the party published in the country. In the same time our party has been in forefront in organizing many agitational movement against the suppressive and white terror of the govern against "Maoists" and their supporters. The situation in the country is that there does not exist any people's war in the country in fact, only the police launching one-sided war against the innocent people in the name of "people's war." Thus not any people's war, but "police war" exists in the country. Following the Marxist-Leninist tradition of world communist's movement fighting against both right and "left" opportunism, our party has adopted correct Marxist-Leninist policy of criticizing it, the ultra "left" trend of "Maoists" of Nepal.

We are convinced that the so-called Maoists of Nepal have, under the cover of "Ultra-left-extremism", like Lin Piao, rightist character and motives in essence. Their eagerness to enter into dialogue with government and to request latter to prepare atmosphere for that, which has been publicly made known in their authoritative interviews and articles also palpably show that their 'revolutionary' character is made of opportunist elements rather than that of revolutionary ones. Besides an opportunist character and motives, subjective and metaphysical outlook also has lead them into ultra "Left" -extremism. Declaration of RIM states. "In oppressed countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America a continuous revolutionary situation generally exists. But it is important to understand this correctly : the revolutionary situation does not follow a straight line; it has its ebbs and flows. The communist parties should keep this dynamic in mind. They should not fall into one sidedness in the form of asserting that the commencement and the final victory of people's war depends totally on the subjective factor (the communists), a view often associated with 'Lin Piaoism' Violation of this warning by "Maoists" of Nepal has made them to take one sided or subjective outlook towards "people's war" of Nepal, and fall into ultra-Left-extremism. CORIM also is not exception to violation of such a clear-cut understanding of Declaration. It is because of such Non-Marxist-Leninist and subject approach of CORIM that they have not been able to analyze correctly and adopt

correct policy towards the objective condition of Nepal, rightist character of Nepalese "Maoist" and so-called people's war in Nepal : Such wrong conclusions and policies of the CORIM are misleading and have done much harm to the movement of Nepal .

16. The CORIM has written to us that if our party continues to maintain its opposition to the ideological foundation of the RIM, "the correct and principled response" on our party would be "Voluntary" resignation from the movement (RIM). But unlike the suggestion given to us by the CORIM, the CC of our party has decided that the correct and principled response on our party would be not "Voluntary resignation", but continual struggle against the non-Marxist-Leninist principles, policies and style of work of CORIM .

17. In a bilateral talk that we had with the representative of the CORIM about one year before, all these questions mentioned above had arisen. It will be evident from the Notes containing the details of that bilateral talk. In that talk the representative of CORIM had expressed the view that in case our party continues opposing "Maoism", only alternate left before Mashal would be to get out of RIM. But even at that time we had made our position clear that in spite of our difference on the question of "Maoism", NCP (Mashal) like PCP and RCP before, had right to remain in the RIM and to continue its principled two-line struggle against the attempt of CORIM to lead it as a whole to the path alien to Marxist-Leninist ideology and proletarian internationalism. We have not changed our stand even in the least since then

18. CORIM and RCP have cut off the heads of Engels and Stalin by pulling down photos from all the documents and posters of RIM. After Engles and Stalin, now they are trying to put down Leninism and strike out revolutionary sprit of Mao Tsetung Thought, although in the name of flying high the banner of Marx, Lenin and Mao, NCP (Mashal) is convinced that history will not always give green signal to such anti-Leninist line.

At last NCP (Mashal) sincerely longs for fraternal relation and solidarity with all Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations of the world within and outside RIM on the basis of revolutionary proletarian ideology, equality, proletarian antinationalism and principled two line struggle.

Workers of the World Unite!

Central Committee
Nepal Communist Party (Mashal)

24/10/1996



On the 'Expulsion' of the Nepal Communist Party (Mashal) from RIM

[The article was published in the A World to Win, organ of the RIM in the winter of 1998]

"On December 26, 1993, on the occasion of the Mao Tse-tung Centenary, the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement took the historic step of adopting Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as its ideology. This decision was taken after a long, vigorous debate within RIM, which had gone on over a number of years. In the course of this discussion, the Nepal Communist Party (Mashal) has repeatedly and vociferously argued against this position of our Movement." [CoRIM Letter to NCP (Mashal), 1996] "At the time of the adoption of the document Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism! (LLMLM!), the problem of the continuing participation of the NCP (Mashal) in RIM was discussed. Having been assured that your party would review its position and discuss the position adopted by the Movement, it was decided to allow ample time for this review of position and further discussion to take place." [ibid.] More than three years had gone by since the adoption of MLM, years of vital importance for the communist movement in Nepal. A struggle that came to a head in December 1993 started to bear fruit in the form of the initiation of the People's War by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) [CPN (Maoist)]. The NCP (Mashal), however, have persisted in their refusal to regard Maoism as the third and highest stage of development of our science, and opposed the People's War. The differences of our Movement with the NCP (Mashal) are not, however, reducible to their opposition to the People's War; rather, their opposition is a symptom and the inevitable result of the opportunist trajectory they have been on for some time. In the context of today, where the People's War is helping clarify the political landscape in Nepal, it is important that this period of struggle between our Movement and the NCP (Mashal) comes to a conclusion.

On the Era

A key argument the NCP (Mashal) raises against Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM) is that Leninism is the Marxism of the era of imperialism and that, since the era has not changed, speaking of MLM as a new and higher stage of our science means negating Leninism. As they say, "All political parties supporting the misleading concept of Maoism admit that the present era is an era of imperialism and socialist revolution. But none of them touches the sensitive issue of the Lenin era". Also: "their concept of a third stage of Maoism clearly presupposes that Leninism... has been replaced or substituted by Maoism." [On "Maoism", Resolution of the NCP (Mashal) COC, 09/92].

The NCP (Mashal) confuses the issues of the era of social development and the stages of development of our science. MLM is the science of revolution, a living and developing science. In the process of wielding it, communists learn more and more about society and classes and their dynamics; and if they care to stay at the forefront of revolutionary struggle, they have to develop their theory to correspond to new understanding acquired through practice. Moreover, situations change and new contradictions arise that previous leaders could not know about, and thus were unable to develop methods for handling. Any attempt to negate the need for continuous advance in the science (which, as any development, goes through leaps and bounds) will reduce it from a sharp weapon into a dogma that is useless or even a hindrance in dealing with the complexities of the class struggle.

To maintain that Leninism covers all the contradictions of the era of imperialism and the building of socialism is to ignore reality and replace it with some preconceived idea in one's brain. It proceeds from formal definitions, not material developments, and as a result earth-shaking events are treated as trivial and not requiring major efforts to develop our understanding. This is subjective idealism, not Leninism.

As Mao put it in On Practice: "In feudal society it was impossible to know the laws of capitalist society in advance because capitalism had not yet emerged, the relevant practice was lacking. Marxism could be the product only of capitalist society. Marx, in the era of laissez-faire capitalism, could not concretely know certain laws peculiar to the era of imperialism beforehand, because imperialism, the last stage of capitalism, had not yet emerged and the relevant practice was lacking; only Lenin and Stalin could undertake this task. Leaving aside their genius, the reason why Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin could work out their theories was mainly that they personally took part in the practice of the class struggle and the scientific experimentation of their time; lacking this

condition, no genius could have succeeded." Since the death of Lenin, the world has seen many historic events, including the New Democratic Revolution and the People's War in China, decades of socialist construction in the USSR and China, the restoration of capitalism in the USSR, the battle to prevent it in China, the Cultural Revolution, and finally the restoration of capitalism in China too. All of these posed new problems and unleashed unprecedented battles in theory and practice. And all of these provided fertile ground for the development of our ideology to a qualitatively higher stage, which was MLM. It also raised the revolutionaries' ability to fight for a world without imperialism and oppression to a qualitatively higher level. Maoism represents the highest level of understanding on all these fronts. Without Maoism, the era of imperialism would be here to stay.

The NCP (Mashal) claims that Maoism is the negation of Leninism. But by negating the dialectical relationship between being and knowing, by looking at the world from the prism of subjective idealism, the NCP (Mashal) adopts a philosophy different not only to that of Mao, but also Lenin and Marx.

The differences between our Movement and the NCP (Mashal) over this question of terminology thus reflect important differences in the overall approach to the science of revolution. They also reflect opposing views on the content of Mao's contributions to the body of revolutionary knowledge and practice.

Two Views On Mao's Contributions

In the context of the ideological debate with the NCP (Mashal), in 1993 CoRIM prepared a Letter addressing an upcoming Mashal Congress. This Letter, referring to the previously cited NCP(Mashal) document On "Maoism", states, "You say that Mao made great contributions in the fields of philosophy, political economy, and scientific socialism of historic importance and in a few paragraphs you list some of these contributions. In every case this list is followed by statements of how this was already accomplished by Lenin, or Stalin had done it better. Your document says Lenin was the basis for Mao's theory on New democratic revolution. Taking your document as a whole, you mainly give lip service to Mao's contributions, downgrading them and rationalising how they are only the consequence of Marx, Lenin and mainly Stalin before him... Your arguments are based on ... wrong pernicious concepts that Mao added nothing qualitatively new to what had already been worked out by Lenin... [and] Mao's contributions are equal to those of Stalin." Let's look at some of the major points of this debate.

New Democratic Revolution and the Seizure of Political Power

In the NCP (Mashal) document On "Maoism", under a section headed New Democratic Revolution, while giving lip service to the extraordinary contribution of Mao", the NCP (Mashal) downgrade this by extensively quoting Lenin, Stalin and the Comintern and saying, "Lenin's Report [to the Congress of the 3rd International] bears a great theoretical significance and eventually became the fundamental basis of Mao's New Democratic Revolution". As our aforementioned Letter to the NCP (Mashal) Congress points out, "the road Lenin established for imperialist Russia could not be a model for countries such as China.... Stalin firmly grasped that the revolution in China could not go directly to socialism but rather had to first go through a stage where national and democratic tasks were primary. Yet as Stalin himself later acknowledged, Mao had to oppose some errors in Stalin's thinking in order to lead the Chinese revolution to victory. What Mao achieved with the theory of New democratic revolution and the practice of the Chinese revolution had never been done." One of Mao's greatest contributions during the course of the Chinese revolution was "developing the theory and practice of people's war, giving the proletariat, for the very first time, its own complete military doctrine, superior to that of any other class." [CoRIM Letter to NCP (Mashal) Congress]

This point is completely missed by the NCP (Mashal), who in the process of sharpening line struggle and especially with the initiation of the People's War in Nepal, develop some of their thinking on revolutionary war: "The Marxist-Leninist philosophy demands that we always analyse the situation correctly and concretely and examine historically, whenever we are determining policy, program or forms of struggle", and "anarchism considers the idea of taking into account the situation or circumstance as 'anti-revolutionary' and lays emphasis on the need to pursue revolutionary [struggle] in every situation. The ML method stresses the need whether to make revolutionary preparation or advance revolutionary struggle. Accordingly, the Marxist-Leninists pursue various forms of struggle such as legal or illegal, peaceful or armed, parliamentary or non-parliamentary, use or boycott of election, while evaluating the subjective and objective situation. But anarchism rules out such Marxist-Leninist method and stresses the need to follow the policy of revolutionary struggle at every situation...." ["On RIM's Support to the So-called 'People's War' of the Maoists," by NCP (Mashal) leader M.B. Singh]. Of course Maoists analyse concrete situations, and their initiation and support of People's war is also based on understanding the objective situation. But

Maoists analyse the situation with the understanding that without state power all is illusion, and "the seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution" [Quotations from Mao Tse-tung, "On War and Peace"]. It is those in the NCP (Mashal) leadership who eclectically mix up all forms of struggle and do away with the revolutionaries' unswerving focus on the need for the armed overthrow of the reactionary state. They fail to sum up the experience of the struggle against the Nepalese state itself including its repeated repression of the people's struggle, and the Mashal leadership today finds itself in the pathetic situation of adding its voice to the anti-People's War chorus.

Negating the "omnipotence of war" and reducing people's war to a tactic in the oppressed countries that can be used "depending on conditions" is the logical conclusion of refusing to adopt Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the highest stage of the science of revolution achieved so far. This effectively makes the new democratic revolution irrelevant, as it cannot be achieved through the peaceful means the NCP (Mashal) has undertaken. The NCP (Mashal) is on the fast track to pure opportunism, if not already at the finish line.

Recently, a Right Opportunist Line (ROL) broke out from the Communist Party of Peru (PCP) calling for an end to the People's War there. This ROL has been condemned and rejected by the PCP. In one of their first and basic documents, known as Asumir, the ROL equates different forms of struggle, asserting that war is only one form of struggle and can be used depending on the situation. Asumir says, "The class struggle is a great and constant class war directed by political leaders. It has two forms: bloodless... and bloody. Both are forms of the great political war"; "politics is war without bloodshed, just as war is politics with bloodshed"; "war is initiated and develops according to concrete conditions, and as these change, the forms of struggle must change". Doesn't the logic of Asumir strongly resemble that of the NCP (Mashal), with its "legal or illegal, peaceful or armed, parliamentary or non-parliamentary, use or boycott of election"?! Both negate Mao's teaching that war is the highest form of struggle and that seizing power through revolutionary violence is the central task of communists everywhere.

In denying the universality of Mao's theory of people's war and reducing it to a mere tactic among a myriad of other peaceful and electoral options, the NCP (Mashal), once again, tries to hypocritically wrap itself in Leninism: "Leninism views the question of armed struggle in relation to the objective and subjective conditions and the revolutionary situation and accepts that armed struggle too is an art.... But the anarchist thinking

regards all these Leninist principles of armed struggle as non-revolutionary. The anarchist thinking assumes that the ripening of the objective and subjective conditions is not necessary for the armed struggle... the ultra-leftists the world over have been harboring such conceptions. The same conceptions are found to be harboured by most of the parties supporting 'Maoism'." [Foreword to "Critique of the Ultra-Leftist Thought", by NCP (Mashal) leader M.B. Singh] Also: "Lenin has said that armed insurrection is a grave question and one should never play with it. But the UC [referring to the NCP Unity Center, which later became the CPN(Maoist)] has made the question of armed struggle just a matter of toys". [ibid.]

There is a two-fold problem here. First of all, the application of people's war in semi-feudal countries dominated by imperialism and its application in imperialist countries (with armed insurrection followed by revolutionary civil war) are different processes. Lenin's approach to this question is based on the dynamics of the latter, where revolutionary situations do not exist generally, and on those rare opportunities when they come seizing them is a matter of life and death. In the oppressed countries like Nepal, on the other hand, as the RIM Declaration correctly states, "a continuous revolutionary situation generally exists", and a people's war can usually be initiated as soon as the subjective forces are in a position to launch it. Secondly, and very importantly, Lenin's outlook was not that of avoiding revolutionary violence, quite the contrary. He actively led the Bolshevik Party to leap to the fore of the 1905 (armed) revolution, even though he could see the possibility of victory was bleak. And in October 1917 it was Lenin who fearlessly charged forward in the face of all sorts of opportunist and vacillating elements who wanted to wait for the Soviet to vote on whether or not to go over to insurrection. He led the party and the proletariat to launch the insurrection that changed the face of earth for decades to come. Lenin pointed out that in such situations there is no guarantee of success, and indeed that waiting for such a guarantee would in fact doom the revolution to failure. As RIM says in Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!: "Lenin raised the theory and practice of proletarian revolution to a whole new level as he led the proletariat in seizing and consolidating its political power, its revolutionary dictatorship, for the first time with the victory of the October Revolution in formerly Tsarist Russia in 1917."

The NCP (Mashal) is objectively acting to discourage people from going over to armed revolution, and shamelessly trying to implicate Comrade Lenin, who worked all his life for just such a revolution, in this treachery. Isn't Lenin's approach completely clear, when he defiantly

proclaimed the 1905 revolution "a dress-rehearsal" for the coming armed revolution? And what about Mao, who called on revolutionaries to plunge boldly ahead and "learn warfare through warfare"? Revolutionary war is an art we will never master while only practicing other forms of struggle.

It is important to note that the opposition of the NCP (Mashal) to revolutionary war (under the pretext of "concrete conditions") is based in part on parliamentary pretensions. In a press statement "On the Parliamentary Elections" they say, "NCP (Mashal) has decided to utilize the forthcoming parliamentary elections through ANNPF.... In this connection our party wants to express its disillusionment for the problem in electoral seat adjustments resulting from the policies of the United Nepal Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) [UML] in particular — but our party will with due honesty make all efforts to make a success of the [electoral] adjustments, wherever and however possible with any of the parties" [Mashal Vol. 37]. And: "In spite of the anti-communist and compromising character of the UML, it is still a patriotic and democratic and an allied force... (our party) has decided to continue with the previously announced policy of supporting the UML government" [April 1995 press statement of the CC of NCP (Mashal)].

The NCP (Mashal) has ceaselessly attacked the Maoists, labeling us "ultra-left" and "anarchist". Yet at the same time, it supports the revisionists of the so-called United Marxist-Leninists who have even led the very state responsible for sucking the blood of the Nepalese masses and who since the start of the People's War have had a hand in massacring the revolutionaries. Mashal's denigration of People's War goes hand in hand with their quibbling over the rules of parliaments "with due honesty". But the line the revolutionary party takes on elections is important not only in the imperialist countries, but also in the oppressed countries, where the revolutionaries cannot lose from sight the overall goal of overthrowing the entire imperialist-dominated semi-feudal set-up, at the heart of which is the reactionary state. It must never be forgotten that whether this state is a constitutional monarchy, a one-person or one-party dictatorship, or a Western-style parliamentary democracy, these are all ultimately different forms of the same reactionary dictatorship.

In sharply defining the approach of communists to the seizure of power, Mao said, "Before the outbreak of war all organisation and struggle are in preparation for the war.... After war breaks out, all organisation and struggle are coordinated with the war either directly or indirectly...." ["Problems of War and Strategy"]

Very clearly, the NCP (Mashal) is not preparing for war to overthrow imperialism and feudalism; their approach to war, as well as

to parliamentary elections, at best reflects illusions about the nature of the state. In the absence of a better line, this could have been likened to the situation in Indonesia where the cooperation of communists with the bourgeoisie and their failure to organise for people's war led to the massacre of many hundreds of thousands. But with the sharpening of the two-line struggle in the Nepalese movement and the emergence of the CPN (Maoist), who have embarked on the glorious path of people's war, this has led the NCP (Mashal) into outright opposition to revolution. Attempts to cover this with Leninism are in vain. The NCP (Mashal) are hypocritically accusing our Movement of degrading Lenin, but it is they who will never succeed in turning Lenin, whose writings ceaselessly train the revolutionaries in the need for violent revolution, into a commonplace reformist. It is the leaders of Mashal who are refusing to lead the masses in advancing towards the armed overthrow of the old reactionary system and who are standing to the side decrying the bravery and courage of the comrades and masses who have taken to arms.

The Struggle against Modern Revisionism and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution

"Beginning immediately after the coup d'état of Khrushchev, Mao Tse-tung and the Marxist-Leninists in the Chinese Communist Party began to analyse the developments in the Soviet Union and in the international communist movement and to struggle against modern revisionism. In 1963 the publication of A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement (the 25-point letter) was an all-round and public condemnation of revisionism and a call to the genuine Marxist-Leninists of all countries." [RIM Declaration] Amidst the confusion caused by the rise of revisionism to power in the Soviet Union, this salvo by the Chinese comrades represented such a breakthrough that, as RIM's Declaration continues: "The contemporary Marxist-Leninist movement has as its origin this historic appeal and the polemics that accompanied it."

But with characteristic contempt for Mao, the NCP (Mashal) not only undercuts the importance of these polemics by reducing them to simply extensions of Lenin's understanding; they continue: "We should not overlook the mistake Mao has made during the course of struggle against opportunism. He was keen enough to take a correct stand against right opportunism, but was unable to understand properly the importance of the struggle against centrist opportunism upon which Lenin has sufficiently thrown light in his theoretical as well as practical works. The mistake made by Chairman Mao on the question of centrism has definitely caused no less damage to the socialist system in China." [On "Maoism"].

In this utterly irresponsible and opportunist manner, the NCP (Mashal) thus accuses one of the great leaders of the international proletariat of centrism, and holds him responsible for damage to the socialist system in China without even bothering to elaborate. Furthermore, in the context here of dealing with Khrushchev revisionism, just who exactly are the NCP (Mashal) comparing Mao to when they say he caused "no less damage" to the socialist system? This outrageous and arrogant attitude towards a great communist leader who guided humanity to heights never achieved before, and coming from people who are so willing to support revisionists like the UML, clearly does not stem from a desire to deepen our understanding for future advance. More-over, this unexplained — and wrong — criticism echoes the unfounded criticism leveled at Mao by Albania's Enver Hoxha, who tried to vilify the great significance of Mao Tse-tung's battle against revisionism on the international level. These charges against Mao appearing in the 1992 NCP (Mashal) document, and in the context of the struggle and debate in our Movement over how to evaluate Mao's contributions, reflected a real step backward by the NCP (Mashal) at the very time the Movement was preparing to take an important leap forward.

As the CoRIM Letter to the Mashal Congress continues: "the history of the international communist movement is replete with organisations who took very wrong turns when their leaders did not deeply grasp the principles and contributions, the actual content of Mao's teachings and the struggle against modern revisionism." The struggle over important ideological questions such as this has helped genuine revolutionaries in Nepal to make the advances necessary to be able to lead a real revolution. The NCP (Mashal) leadership, on the other hand, have chosen to slide down into the swamp of revisionism.

Comrade Mao's qualitative contribution to Marxism-Leninism is devalued by the NCP (Mashal) on the basis that Lenin had already struggled against revisionism. This, once again, shows Mashal's lack of understanding of the Marxist theory of knowledge and the law of dialectics. The struggle with the bourgeoisie is a protracted one, constantly bringing new elements to the fore, and capitalism itself brings about changes in the world. All this gives rise to new contradictions, including new forms of revisionism, which in turn require new analysis. Marx's struggle against Proudhon or Bakunin no more negates the importance of Lenin's struggle against Kautsky than does Lenin's struggle against revisionism negate Mao's fight against modern revisionism. It is also important to note that phenomena develop through struggle; and as the RIM Declaration puts it, "History has shown that real creative developments of Marxism (and

not phoney revisionist distortions) have always been inseparably linked with a fierce struggle to defend and uphold basic principles of Marxism-Leninism. Lenin's two-fold struggle against the open revisionists and against those, like Kautsky, who opposed revolution under the guise of 'Marxist orthodoxy' and Mao Tse-tung's great battle to oppose the modern revisionists and their negation of the experience of building socialism in the USSR under Lenin and Stalin while carrying out a thorough and scientific criticism of the roots of revisionism are evidence of this."

Mao's struggle against modern revisionism was a prelude to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR). The NCP (Mashal) says, "The question of continuing class struggle or revolution in the socialist period under the dictatorship of proletariat is a fundamental principle of Marxism-Leninism. Mao, in the form of the GPCR, has further developed it to a new height. At the same time, we should not forget that the GPCR is a continuation of this principle propounded by Marx, developed by Lenin, and practiced by Stalin." [On "Maoism"] First of all, Mao's summation was based on experience previous leaders simply did not have. Marx had no experience building socialism, and Lenin's own experience was very short-lived. How could they have possibly understood and drawn out the laws and contradictions of socialist society? The idealism at the heart of this claim is anti-Marxist. Secondly, the core of the GPCR cannot be reduced to just continuing the class struggle, but involves the nature of this struggle, including especially who the bourgeoisie in socialist society are, their roots, the locus of their power, and how to fight and uproot them. Understanding all this required not only the historical experience of the USSR and China, but also Mao's dialectical materialist analysis of this. And third, for anybody really determined to bring about a classless society, a good look at socialism in the USSR and China would clearly reveal stark differences. The way the class struggle was continued in China in the GPCR involved the development of forms of struggle involving the masses in every sphere in a way that simply did not happen in Soviet society under Lenin and Stalin. This itself reflected the great leap in understanding achieved by Mao and the Chinese revolutionaries.

The NCP (Mashal) tries to devalue the GPCR by saying it was a continuation of what was practiced by Stalin. Of course it was a continuation, in that China too was building socialism; but it was not merely a continuation, it was also a rupture. Mao not only built on Stalin's achievements, he also had to criticise and refute a lot of what had been done in the Soviet Union.

As the RIM Declaration says, "While waging a fierce struggle

against the old exploiting classes, Stalin denied in theory the emergence of a new bourgeoisie from within the socialist society itself, reflected and concentrated by the revisionists within the ruling communist party, hence his erroneous claim that 'antagonistic class contradictions' had been eliminated in the Soviet Union as a result of the basic establishment of socialist ownership in industry and agriculture. Similarly, a failure to thoroughly apply dialectics to the analysis of socialist society led the Soviet leadership to conclude that there was no longer a contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production under socialism.

"This incorrect understanding of the nature of socialist society also contributed to Stalin's failure to adequately distinguish the contradictions between the people and the enemy and the contradictions among the people themselves. This in turn contributed to a marked tendency to resort to bureaucratic methods of handling these contradictions and gave more openings to the enemy."

These are great lessons without which it is impossible to keep on the path of socialism and march towards communism. And even though Mao was at a historical advantage, theoretical and political errors on Stalin's part hampered him in analysing the contradictions and solving them. The RIM Declaration aptly quotes Mao, "Stalin had a fair amount of metaphysics in him and he taught many people to follow metaphysics...." However, as presented in On "Maoism": "The NCP (Mashal) fundamentally differs from a criticism made against Stalin by Chairman Mao.... The Declaration has not put forward any convincing argument in this connection."

Despite their claim to uphold the RIM Declaration and their accusations that our Movement has deviated from the Declaration by adopting Maoism, by rejecting Mao's advances over Stalin and insisting on upholding Stalin's mistakes, the NCP (Mashal) ultimately winds up even rejecting Stalin's correct side, which was principal. Moreover, by devaluing the significance of the GPCR, and therefore of Maoism, the NCP (Mashal) goes against a fundamental point of unity of our Movement that separates us from all sorts of revisionists.

Particularities of Nepal

As we said before, the NCP (Mashal) ties the possibility of armed struggle to "concrete conditions". A brief examination of the objective situation in Nepal in the light of Mao's teachings will help clarify the debate.

Nepal is a semi-feudal country long dominated by imperialism. As is said in The Worker no. 1, the organ of the CPN (Maoist), "The

present Nepalese state was created about two hundred years ago and is presided over by a small clique of moribund feudal and comprador and bureaucratic capitalist classes. These exploiting classes have made life hell on earth for the masses of peasants and workers and have driven the country to the verge of collapse. Nepal is now the second poorest country in the world after Ethiopia; there is economic inequality, the richest 10% gobbling up 46.5% of the national income while 71% of the population is forced to live below the absolute poverty line. 90% of the population lives in rural areas in primitive conditions and 81% of the work-force is engaged in backward agriculture...." A backward economy and localised agriculture implies the existence of a peasantry crushed under the yoke of semi-feudal relations and burning with the desire for land. This is one of the conditions for the emergence and survival of red political power in the oppressed countries. This element is of course only visible to revolutionaries who believe that the masses are the makers of history. In the equations of revisionists and opportunists, the masses never count except as a bargaining chip in their dealings with reaction.

Furthermore, the ruling classes, being the bloodsucking tyrants they are, cannot count on the strategic and long-term support of most of the population of Nepal, and on top of that they are mired in contradictions amongst themselves. An example of this was their inability to decide what to do in the face of the initiation of the People's War. The objective situation in Nepal is not fundamentally different from that in other oppressed countries, and it is on this basis that the RIM Declaration [which the NCP (Mashal) demagogically claims to uphold!] says, "In the oppressed countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America a continuous revolutionary situation generally exists."

The NCP (Mashal) saw only the difficulties facing the revolutionaries there, and not the favourable aspects. Thus their leadership considered that it was impossible for a people's war to be successfully conducted in Nepal unless one were to break out in India first. They saw Nepal's land-locked situation (with the Himalayas/China in the north and India surrounding the rest of the country) as another impediment to the possibility of carrying a people's war to victory. This approach was indicative of whether the NCP (Mashal) was trying to apply revolutionary theory in order to hasten preparations for revolution, or instead inventing and distorting the "objective situation" in order to justify not applying MLM.

Mao taught that everything divides into two, and in any situation, however bad, a good aspect exists too. But when one has given up on making revolution, even positive aspects will come to seem negative.

The infrastructure of Nepal is very underdeveloped, and most of the country's population is only accessible by foot. The Himalayas, where the masses of Nepal know the ground like the palm of their hand and foreign (Indian) soldiers can hardly breathe in the thin air, can be very favourable ground for waging a people's war. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have been fighting a guerrilla war for many years in Sri Lanka in geographical conditions less favourable than those of Nepal. (It is true that the fact that the LTTE is a nationalist force creates some advantages for them, because of their ability to unite larger forces to start with, but their bourgeois politics has turned that into its opposite as they are not able to fully unleash the masses.) Just how much being landlocked influences the continuity of the People's War in Nepal remains to be seen, but it is obvious that what has sustained the LTTE is not the ability of their fighters to swim!

India is a big country with a strong army. An Indian invasion would cost a lot of lives to the revolution. But the strength of the Indian army is relative. And by looking a little harder, we can see that it has major and strategic weaknesses, for India is a country wracked by contradictions. As Comrade Bhattarai, a Nepalese revolutionary leader, has remarked, "The majority of the population in India suffers from hunger, illiteracy and deprivation, and the ethnic and national issues have remained unresolved or rather aggravated over the years"; and, "the factors that compel poor peasants and tribals in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh to revolt under the banner of Naxalism or compel various nationalities like Punjab, Kashmir, Assami, Naga and others to fight for their national rights" are those that unite them with the masses of Nepal and against the Indian state. India cannot even clean its own house. If India attacks Nepal to help crush the revolution, the revolutionaries can rely on many elements to turn this into its opposite. Sentiments against Indian domination are so strong in Nepal that such an invasion would inevitably unite even a lot of middle forces against it and against any reactionaries who support it. This dynamic can be used to forge a strong united front and wage a true war of liberation. A correct policy towards the Indian nationality peoples in the Terai region will also unite them against India, if they are awakened to their class interests and are mobilised to fight against the common oppressors of the labouring masses of Nepal. The masses of India also have sharp contradictions with the Indian state and will not go along with such an invasion. Indeed, the reality that people in Nepal have risen up to take their destiny into their hands will come to inspire the masses in India, thus weakening the Indian state. Since the arrival of the British in Asia, India has always determined the fate of Nepal; this time let it be the masses of Nepal who help ignite the fires of liberation throughout South Asia.

Moreover, imperialist intervention does not come only through neighbouring countries or in the form of direct military intervention. The experience of the Communist Party of Peru (PCP), where its Chairman and a large part of its leading members were arrested through a CIA-backed intelligence operation, is testimony to that. We are living in an increasingly internationalised world. A revolution in any part of the globe affects the rule not only of that particular state but also of world imperialism – and is viewed accordingly. It is with the knowledge of these dangers that the comrades of the CPN (Maoist) set forth on the glorious path of People's War.

In addition to the general criteria for the start of the people's war, the present, particularly sharp, contradictions among the ruling classes and the fact that Nepal has been in a state of tremendous turmoil since 1990 created an especially favourable situation for the launching of the revolutionary war. M.B. Singh's allegations that the Maoists consider the concrete conditions irrelevant and are thus "anarchists", etc., call to mind the Peruvian United Left attacks against the PCP at the initial stages of the People's War there. They called the PCP comrades "roaming bands" with no connection to the masses and accused them of not taking the objective situation into account. (Indeed, here Mashal's false support for the People's War in Peru must be exposed. The PCP have long upheld Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and are thus in Mashal's eyes inevitably guilty of "anarchism", etc. But because of the popularity of the Peruvian People's War the NCP (Mashal) prefer not to make a direct attack.)

The objective reality of Nepal shows that the initiation of the People's War had long been overdue and the only reason it had not started, as in most countries, was the opportunism dominating its left movement. From the time of Vim Dutta Panmtha in the early 1950s, to the Naxalbari-inspired struggles in the 1970s and down until recent years, the main impediment to launching a people's war had been the dominant lines that paid lip-service to the need for people's war but in actuality reconciled themselves to peaceful forms of struggle in practice. [For a more detailed account of this history, see AWTW 1996/22] As the leadership of the CPN (Maoist) summed up: "There are specific weaknesses in the understanding of communists in Nepal. Mostly we have been influenced by gradualism. This means mass struggle, and that some time in the distant future the mass struggle will itself transition to armed struggle. This is wrong and goes against Marxist dialectics....

"Basically we see that philosophy and ideology and organisation are crucial to initiating people's war to break out of the vicious circle of reformism — the school of revolution in words and reformism in deeds that marked the old NCP (Mashal). There needed to be radical rupture in

thinking, deeds, and style of organisation. Otherwise we cannot initiate people's war." [AWTW 1996/22]

In an article entitled "On Ultra-left deviation in Nepalese Communist Movement", NCP (Mashal) supporters say, "The Marxist-Leninists have the experience of the present NCP(UML) which went to the other extreme from the ultra-'left' line adopted by the Marxist-Leninist movement of the 1960s and 1970s. The ultra-left line put forward by the present NCP[sic](Maoist) is only a means to pave its way for scoring success in rightist politics". [from Red Star, October 1996]. Isn't there consistency in the way the NCP (Mashal) reduces the people's war to a mere question of tactics, engages the party and the masses in reformist politics, defends the reactionary UML-led government, and warns that the initiators of the People's War will become rightist? We don't have to wait for some imaginary future, we can see who is setting their sights on "scoring success in rightist politics" right now!

The comrades of the CPN (Maoist) have fought against revisionism and courageously picked up the gun and pledged to bring imperialism and reaction down in Nepal. By doing this, they have brought hope not only to the masses of Nepal but to the oppressed all over the world, including our comrades in Peru who have rejoiced in the initiation of the People's War in Nepal. As was said in El Diario, the revolutionary underground newspaper in Lima, in June 1996, "We salute proletarian internationalism and the launching of the People's War in Nepal by the CPN (Maoist), brandishing the invincible ideology of MLM. 13 Feb 1996 ripped through the black night of oppression and set forth amidst tumultuous people's war... The organised violence of the oppressed in Nepal exposes the revisionism of UML who practice parliamentary cretinism and demand respect for the legal and constitutional road." The NCP (Mashal) tries to separate line from action by defending the People's War in Peru but directly attacking PCP's ideology. This is idealism. In fact, Mashal's own experience is testimony to how ideology bears on practice; their opposition to people's war and their gradualist politics has everything to do with their abandoning of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the third and highest stage of our science.

The NCP (Mashal) also demagogically muddles the difference between the necessary situation for starting a people's war and the conditions of victory. As said before, the objective situation is generally ripe for the initiation of people's war in the oppressed countries. This does not, however, mean that a people's war is automatically going to be victorious, or that victory will come within any given time. The advance of revolution is not a straightforward process and will go through twists and turns. It is always possible that the reactionaries can drown a revolution in blood, but the oppressed will always rise up against reaction. MLM is the

only guarantee that these uprisings will lead to the demise of imperialism. When talking about the initiation of the People's War in Peru, the PCP said it was like throwing oneself into the void, and Lenin said that if you waited for a guarantee of victory, you'd never start an insurrection.

Instead of being elated by the initiation of the People's War, the NCP (Mashal) has shown nothing but contempt for the masses who have risen up in arms. The NCP (Mashal) has prophesied the defeat of this People's War as if wishing for its defeat. This People's War will indeed go through twists and turns, but Mashal's prophecy of its failure is its own straight-line plunge into the quagmire of revisionism.

Support the People's War in Nepal!

As was said at the beginning of this article, after the struggles leading to the adoption of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, it was decided that there would be a period of struggle with the NCP (Mashal). A Letter was submitted to the NCP (Mashal) Congress developing CoRIM's views on some of the questions involved. In the meantime, however, not a single document, not even a page, has been sent by the NCP (Mashal) attempting to engage in constructive, principled struggle over these crucial differences. Instead, their representatives have made public statements and interviews attacking our Movement as "ultra-left extremism".

"Although for many Marxist-Leninists of the world the difference between Mao Tse-tung Thought and 'Maoism' seems that of terminology, only in the context of RIM 'Maoism' represents an opportunist trend to drag the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement as a whole to the path of opportunism and Trotskyism. The Committee is doing its best pulling down Leninism from the position of leading ideology of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution and distorting Mao..." [Resolution of the NCP (Mashal) CC of 1996]. As we say in our Letter of August 1996 and we attempt to show here, "The dispute between RIM and the NCP (Mashal) is by no means limited to a question of terminology. The debate concentrates a whole series of political and ideological questions." These questions include important teachings of Mao Tse-tung on the question of the path of protracted people's war in the oppressed countries, Mao's summation of the experience of building socialism in the Soviet Union and China, the lessons of the GPCR, and more. Despite their hypocritical assertion that they are, as opposed to RIM, the true upholders of Leninism, the recent struggle also shows that by discarding Mao the NCP (Mashal) are also discarding Lenin, including very importantly on the question of political power and the state.

Mashal's opposition to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism has resulted

in the untenable situation where one of the participating parties of RIM has publicly, fixedly and repeatedly rejected the very foundation of our Movement itself.

In its August 1996 Letter, CoRIM demanded that, "If your party continues to maintain its opposition to the ideological foundation of RIM, the correct and principled response on your part would be your voluntary resignation from our Movement." In response, the above-mentioned NCP (Mashal) CC Resolution calls this a threat to expel it from RIM, and continues: "However, CC unanimously decided to continue its position on Mao Tse-tung Thought or 'Maoism', not to render resignation from RIM and continues to defend Marxist- Leninist ideology against 'leftist', opportunist, sectarian, splittist, despotic, illegitimate and arbitrary, left opportunist unprincipled policies and style of work of CoRIM."

They continue: "The consequence of the Maoist People's War has proved the policies of both Maoists and RIM wrong." ["On RIM's Support"] The opposite is indeed the case: the initiation of the People's War was a great development in the class struggle in Nepal, and a great material force helping polarise and clarify the political field in Nepal and further exposing the seriously wrong nature of the NCP (Mashal) line, and opportunism more generally. On the other hand, it has also proved the strength and vitality of Maoism. To reiterate, RIM's decision on the NCP (Mashal) is not simply based on its opposition to the People's War; rather, the opposition by the NCP (Mashal) to the People's War is a symptom and the inevitable result of the opportunist trajectory it has been on for many years.

Furthermore, in relation to their divergence from RIM the NCP (Mashal) leadership says: "What is needed to be clear about is the fact that RIM is not an authoritative organisation to issue certificates of revolution, instead, it is merely an international forum of Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations for exchanging ideas and experiences." And any party has the "right to enjoy a view different and free from that of RIM". "Moreover at a time when RIM is itself deviating from ML principles and/or thoughts of Mao there is no doubt that CoRIM cannot play any guiding or leading role in the communist Movements... Nevertheless, we cannot rule out its utility for exchanging the ideas and the experiences of the parties and organisations in various countries of the world, but RIM encroaches the border or circle. Its utility is more likely negative."

Here the NCP (Mashal) is reducing the role of our Movement to that of an international forum or a debating society. RIM's tasks, however, are defined quite differently in the RIM Declaration the NCP (Mashal) so hypocritically pretends to uphold: "At the present juncture of world history,

the international proletariat has to take up the challenge of forming its own organisation, an International of a new type." "The function of such a new International will be to continue and deepen the summation of experiences, develop the general line on which it is founded, and serve as an overall guiding political centre." It is in the spirit of moving towards such an organisation to lead our international fight for communism that the RIM Founding Conference called for setting up "An interim committee – an embryonic political centre" to further the ideological, political and organisational unity of the communists.... a task that is being successfully and proudly carried out, as is reflected in the document Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism! and the leap it represents. Any attempt to reduce our Movement to a debating society will rob the proletariat of our fighting unity and our international centre and inevitably hinder the worldwide march to -communism.

Another task conferred on the Committee by RIM is as follows: "helping the formation of new MLM parties and the strengthening of existing ones is the common task of the international communist movement."

After seriously evaluating the situation in Nepal, the RIM Committee has come to the conclusion that the continued participation of the NCP (Mashal) in our Movement no longer helps the advance of the vanguard in Nepal. Rather, allowing RIM's prestige to be used by a party that has chosen to depart from the ideological foundations of our Movement and the cause of communism would be creating confusion among the masses. It harms the revolutionary cause, and lowers the combativity of our Movement as a whole. Therefore, in accordance with the organisational principles of our Movement and the duties and authority conferred on it, the Committee has come to the grave decision to propose to the participating parties and organisations the expulsion of the NCP (Mashal) from the ranks of our Movement.

The initiation of the People's War has changed the political landscape in Nepal. The masses of Nepal have embarked on a glorious path that will inevitably be tortuous, but it is the only path that will lead to true liberation. It is vital that all the revolutionary and progressive forces support this cause and defend it against the ever-mounting attacks of reaction. The ideological stand of the NCP (Mashal) makes it impossible for them to be in RIM, but to support the just war of the Nepalese masses against imperialism and feudalism one need not be a Maoist. We call on the rank-and-file of the NCP (Mashal) to dissociate themselves from M.B. Singh's attacks against the revolution and join the proud ranks of the People's War in Nepal in the advancing battle for a world free of exploitation and oppression.



On "MAOISM"

[A Resolution Adopted by the Extended Meeting of the Central Organization Committee (COC) of the Nepal Communist Party (Mashal) held from September 17-19, 1992]

Although Mao Tse-Tung, a great Marxist-Leninist of the Lenin's era, has contributed greatly in the fields of philosophy, political economy, scientific socialism, military science, party organization, united front and two-line struggle under the rubric of socialism and the revolution in colonial and semi (neo) colonial countries are of great historical importance. However, we should clearly understand that the present era, as defined by Stalin is still an era of imperialism, socialist revolution, and Leninism. Although in Maoist Thought, the science of Marxism-Leninism has reached its highest stage of development, it should not be taken as something outside of the Lenin era but within it.

The declaration adopted by the second International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations in 1984 holds a quite correct stand on the question of the Lenin era, Leninism, and Mao Tse-Tung Thought. Quoting Stalin, the declaration asserts that Leninism represents Marxism in an era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution. This declaration is absolutely correct. With the demise of Lenin, the world situation has undergone great changes. But the era has not yet changed. The fundamental principles of Leninism are not outdated. They still remain the theoretical basis guiding our thinking today. We admit that Mao Tse-Tung Thought on is a new stage in the development of Marxism-Leninism. Without upholding and building Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung Thought, it is impossible to defeat revisionism, imperialism, and racialism in general.

The Nepal Communist Party (NCP-Mashal) holds the view that the stand of the declaration is correct even today. The question of Maoism does not substantiate the characteristics of an era of Leninism as defined by Stalin. Instead, it distorts Mao Tse-Tung Thought, devaluates Leninism, and deviates the world communist movement from the right track of Marxism Leninism. Therefore; the extended meeting of the COC of the NCP (Mashal) unanimously decides to reject the proposal on Maoism move by the committee.

The Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), USA in its resolution adopted in 1988 writes: "It is an era of imperialism and socialist revolution" and "we are not living in any new era." This is also a correct conclusion. Unlike the RCP, USA, and Peruvian Communist Party (PCP) and the Committee put forward a proposal on Maoism without commenting anything on an ideologically important question of an era of Leninism and that of imperialism and socialist revolution. The declaration mentions: "Fundamental principles of Leninism remain the theoretical basis of our thinking today." Moreover, the declaration states "In evolving and implementing a revolutionary mass line, the tactics and style of work developed by the Bolshevik party summed up by Lenin remain the basic guide line." Regardless of the intention of the parties and organizations insisting on Maoism and the third stage of Maoism in one or another way, it makes the fundamental principles of Leninism outdated and degrades the role of Leninism that provides the theoretical basis guiding our thinking today.

According to the RCP, USA, the concept of the world having reached to the new era of Mao Tse-Tung Thought belonged to Lin-Piao, and the RCP was careful enough to oppose it in the past. But the RCP does not seem to be consistent in its stand against the Lin-Piaoist conception. Has the idea of Lin-Piao really reappeared in the concept of the third stage of Maoism in its new form? It is clear that the controversy regarding the concept of a new stage of Mao Tse-Tung Thought is not a stage at all, but a position. The declaration takes Mao Tse-Tung Thought as a new and higher stage in the development of the science of Marxism-Leninism. But the declaration emphasizes a stage that falls within the era of Leninism that provides the theoretical basis of understanding the present era. Those who insist on Maoism assert that Maoism exists outside the Lenin's era and Leninism is a bygone stage that has secondary importance as compared to the concept of Mao Tse-Tung Thought.

The concept of Maoism was first propounded by the Communist Party of Peru (PCP). Comrade Gonzalo, Chairman of the PCP, in his famous interviews of 1988 elaborately asserts the concept of Maoism ignoring Leninism as the theoretical basis guiding our present-day thinking. He told the interviewers that today's era is an era of "Marxism-Leninism and principally Maoism." According to him, Leninism no longer remains the theoretical basis to guide our thinking today. The committee of the RCP, USA has not used such rhetoric even though they have identical approach towards Leninism.

All political parties supporting the misleading concept of Maoism admit that the present era of is an era imperialism and socialist revolution.

But none of them touches the sensitive issue of the Lenin era. . They have also not made it clear that, like Marxism-Leninism, whether or not the concept of Leninism still occupies a significant place in the whole period of imperialism and socialist revolution. It indicates that their concept of a third stage of Maoism clearly presupposes that Leninism has become a part of the second stage, and it has been replaced or substituted by Maoism. The period of imperialism and socialist revolution still continues, but the period of Leninism has already passed away!!

The conclusion made by the PCP and their supporters contravenes the definition of Leninism, given by Stalin. They have refuted Stalin and tried to prove his analysis and definition as unscientific without convincing arguments. It is our assertion that they have ambiguous views about Stalin. To keep one's views ambiguous is not a correct methodology to be adopted by a Marxist-Leninist party.

The RCP, USA, in its resolution adopted in 1988, has made a self criticism of its mistakes committed in the past. The mistake was made by simultaneously taking both the question of an era and various stages of the development of science together. The mistake has been corrected now. Yet we can draw a logical conclusion from their correction that it simply delimits Lenin's era into a particular stage within an era of imperialism and socialist revolution. This divides Lenin's era in two parts; (1) second stage of Leninism and (2) the third stage of Maoism. Moreover, the correction made by the RCP, USA and supported by other Maoist parties and organizations paved the way for more than one independent stage within an era of imperialism and socialist revolution.

Unlike the RCP, USA and PCP, Nepal Communist Party (Mashal) upholds Stalin's view of imperialism and socialist revolution as correct one. Mao Tse-Tung himself has recognized the theoretical contributions of Stalin. This is an obvious evaluation made by the Communist Party of China (CPC) under the leadership of Comrade Mao Tse-Tung on the contribution of Stalin. The CPC has lauded the role of Stalin who defended and developed Marxism-Leninism in the struggle against the enemies of Leninism, namely, Trotskyites, Zinovites, Bukharinists, and other bourgeois agents. Stalin made an undeniable contribution to the International Communist Movement (ICM) in a number of theoretical writings which are immortal Marxist-Leninist works (on the question of Stalin, second comment on the open letter of the central committee of the CPSU). Mao strongly recognized the contribution of Stalin in various fields of Marxism-Leninism, but he never proposed the concept of Stalinism.

Furthermore, what distinguishes Stalin from founders of Marxism-Leninism is that, he, for the first time in the history of mankind, resolved the problems of building socialism, and it was under his leadership that the world socialist system came into existence. Stalin, besides building socialism, developed principles of Lenin to a higher stage. He demonstrated greater skill in translating them into practice as well. In the course of building socialism in the USSR and leading the world revolution, he had to go through fierce and continued struggle against various types of opportunists and reactionaries both within and outside the USSR. It is needless to mention that the contributions of Stalin both in theoretical and practical fields are of no lesser importance than those of Mao Tse-Tung. Despite this fact, we are unable to understand why the adherents of Maoism have refrained from accepting Stalinism as a new and higher stage in the development of the science of Marxism-Leninism. This indicates that the stand taken by them does not confirm the basis laid down by themselves.

The RCP, USA has raised the question in a slightly different way. According to it, the use of the term Mao Tse-Tung Thought degrades the position of Mao Tse-Tung and it indicates that the contributions of Mao Tse-Tung are less important than those of Marx and Lenin. If such a measurement is adopted, one will have to draw a conclusion that the contributions of Stalin are of less importance than that of Mao Tse-Tung for his contributions are not taken in the form of Stalinism or even as Stalin Thought. Similarly, the contributions of Engel would be evaluated as of lesser importance, for his contributions are not recognized as Engelism. This is not the correct way of putting the matter.

In fact all the founders of communism, Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao, have contributed in their particular way to the history of the ICM. To exalt or demote one against another is not a correct Marxist-Leninist way. Comrade Gonzalo says: "Not all leaders can be viewed in exactly the same way. Marx is Marx, Lenin is Lenin, and Chairman Mao is Chairman Mao. Each individual is unique, no one is identical to each other" (EL Diario Interview 1988). we agree with him to the extent that he elaborates the greatness of Marx, Lenin, and Mao. But what about Engels and Stalin? Here he takes quite a wrong stand. At the beginning, he recognizes that the ideology of the proletariat... is the product of ...the extraordinary historical figures like Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Chairman Mao Tse-Tung/ But later he concludes....."But among them we give special emphasis to three: Marx, Lenin, and Chairman Mao Tse-Tung (ibid: 40)." we differ with com. Gonzalo.

In the draft proposal of the committee, it has been written that to negate Maoism means to negate Marxism-Leninism itself. This statement

is a slander against those who deny accepting the concept of Maoism. Com. Gonzalo says, "In order to be a Marxist or communist one must be a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist, and principally Maoist. Without becoming Maoist we cannot be a genuine communist." We are firmly convinced that this statement is certainly wrong and it is against the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung Thought.

To oppose Maoism does not necessarily mean or deny or devalue the contributions that Mao has made for the ICM. In the same manner, to oppose Maoism also does not mean to devalue the contributions of Engels and Stalin. Our emphasis is that, firstly, the contributions of com. Mao Tse Tung are based upon Marxism-Leninism and secondary, in spite of it the theoretical contribution of Mao Tse-Tung cannot and should not be discounted.

After the death of Stalin, Mao was the leader of the world communist movement. He contributed much in the development of Marxism-Leninism. In sum, the major contributions of Mao Tse-Tung could be summarized under three headings:

- A. New Democratic Revolution
- B. Struggle against Modern Revisionism
- C. Continuing Revolution in Socialist Period and GPCR

A. New Democratic Revolution

After the transformation of capitalism into imperialism an era of old-fashioned bourgeois revolution ended. The October Revolution gave birth to the global revolutions in the colonial and semi (neo) colonial countries. These revolutions became inseparable parts of the world socialist revolution and anti-imperialist revolution. As Stalin has rightly stated: "... the October Revolution has ushered a new era of proletarian revolutions to the ...of imperialism. With the beginning of the new era, the tranquil exploitation and oppression of the colonial countries have passed away, It is an era of liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries ...an era of awakening of the proletariat in those countries...an era of its hegemony in the revolution" (Problems of Leninism, International character of October Revolution: 268-72).

According to Stalin, the world-wide significance of the October Revolution chiefly consists in the fact that:

- i. It has widened the scope of the national question and converted it to the general question of emancipating the oppressed people, colonies, and semi-colonies from imperialism;

ii. It has opened up wide possibilities of their emancipation and right path towards it, and thereby it has greatly facilitated the cause of emancipation of the oppressed people of the west and the east, and has drawn them into the main stream of the victorious struggle against imperialism; and

iii. It has also erected a bridge between the socialist west and the enslaver east and contributed to create a new form of revolution, through the Russian revolution, of the oppressed people of the east (October Revolution and the National Question).

The question, then, was how to advance the revolution in colonial and semi-colonial countries. In order to achieve the objective soon, first of all its theoretical formulation was essential, because there was a difference of opinion on the national question within the ICM. The second International Congress took a totally different stand on this subject. The national question was confined to a narrow circle by them. They failed to understand the changed character of the national question during the period of Leninism.

Under the leadership of Lenin, the Third International Congress aimed to find out a correct answer to the national question. Lenin presented a report in which the basic question raised was: Is it a correct assertion that the capitalist stage of economic development is inevitable for backward nations now on the road to emancipation and among whom certain advances towards progress are already seen since the period of Great War? The Congress replied in the negative. The Congress argued that if the victorious revolutionary proletariat conducted systematic propaganda among them, and the Soviet movement comes with their aid, by all the means at their disposal, it would be mistaken to assume that the backward people must necessarily go through the capitalist stages of development. In order to change the socio-economic conditions of the proletariat, not only should we create independent contingents of fighters and party organization in the colonies and backward countries, but we should simultaneously launch propaganda for the organization of peasants and they should strive to adapt them to pre-capitalist conditions. But the communist international should advance the proposition, with the appropriate theoretical grounding, that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system through certain stages of development to communism without having passed through the capitalist stages (LCW, Vol.31:244). Lenin's report bears a great theoretical significance, and eventually became the fundamental basis of Mao's New Democratic Revolution (NDR).

After the death of Lenin, Stalin and COMINTERN stressed that

the revolutions arising in colonial and semi-colonial countries must be directed against feudalism and imperialism simultaneously. According to Mao, Stalin has again and again expounded this theory (selected works, vol. II: 345). Mao, basing himself on the above views of Lenin and Stalin and the study of the complex contradiction of the Chinese society, formulated the practical and theoretical basis of NDR. It is Mao who first converted Lenin's view into complete theory. This is a very important contribution in the treasury of Marxism-Leninism.

During the course of resolving the complex contradictions of semi-colonial and semi feudal China, Mao developed and implemented these methods and the protracted people's war encircling the city by the country side. He mobilized the whole peasantry to carry out the agrarian revolution. He built a broad united front of the patriotic and democratic forces under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party to fulfill the task of NDR. The policy adopted by Mao in the Chinese revolution is not valid only for China, but is replicable among other oppressed nations and people of Asia, Africa and Latin America. It is an extraordinary contribution of Mao and has world-wide significance.

B. Mao's Struggle against Modern Revisionism (MR)

Mao's struggle against modern revisionism occupies an equally important historical and ideological place in the history of ICM. Mao has not only defended Marxism-Leninism, but also pushed it to a new and higher stage of development.

In the context of struggle against modern revisionism under the leadership of Mao, CPC has frequently pointed out that.

"Like the old-line revisionist, the modern revisionist answers to the question given by Lenin. Objectively, they are the political detachment of the bourgeois...they are transmitters of its influence and its agents in the labor movement. Modern revisionism is the product of the policies of imperialism and international monopoly capitalism. The eighth comment, quoting Lenin, further elaborates the character of revisionism. It describes, in the word of Lenin, the economic basis of the emergence of modern revisionism is an insignificant section of the top of the labor movement. The old-line revisionism is the product of imperialist policy. It arose as a result of the imperialist policy of buying over and fostering a labor aristocracy. Modern revisionism has arisen in the same way."

We have quoted Khrushchev as well Bernstein, and K and Lenin's criticisms to some extent in order to show that Khrushchev's revisionism is modern Bernsteinism and Kautskyism.

Lenin's criticism of Kautsky is an apt portrayal of the present leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. (CPSU) According to the eighth comment of the CPSU, Khrushchev's revisionism, represents and serves the interests of capitalist forces. Therefore, it will never bring communism to the Soviet people. On the contrary, it is seriously jeopardizing the fruits of socialism by opening the flood gates for the restoration of capitalism. At last, the result of the past, particularly the collapse of the world socialist system, has proved that the mission of Maoism or struggle against revisionism was correct. However, we should not overlook the mistake Mao has made during the course of struggle against opportunism. He was keen enough to take a correct stand against the right opportunism, but was unable to understand properly the importance of the struggle against centrist opportunism upon what Lenin has sufficiently thrown light in his theoretical as well as practical works. The mistake made by Chairman Mao or the question of centrism has definitely caused no less damage to the socialist system in China.

C. Continuing the Revolution under the Dictatorship of proletariat and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR)

The question of continuing class struggle of revolution in the socialist period under the dictatorship of proletariat is a fundamental principle of Marxism-Leninism. Mao in the form of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR), has further developed it to a new height. At the same time, we should not forget that the GPCR is a continuation of the principle propounded by Marx, developed by Lenin, and practiced by Stalin.

Marx and Engels considered socialism the first stage toward classless society, as a transitional period from capitalism to communism. Socialism is born out of the womb of capitalism. There are carious birth-marks of the former social system residing in it. They believed that this transitional period can be completed by continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of proletariat. Referring to the class struggle in France, Marx said, "This socialism is the declaration of the permanence of the revolution, the proletariat as the necessary transit point to the abolition of class distinction generally to the abolition of all the relations of production on which they rest, to the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of productions, to the revolution of all ideas that result from these social relations."

In the course of the struggle against old revisionists, Lenin defended and developed the Marxist theory of continuing the revolution throughout the socialist period. After his profound study of the nature of

imperialism, Lenin emphasized the need of continuing the revolution in the phase of monopoly capitalism than during the period of old capitalism. According to Lenin under socialism (1) the overthrow of exploiters always try in a thousand of ways to retain their lost paradise, (2) the circumstances prevailing in the small scale production continuously give rise to new capitalist elements, (3) the existence of bourgeoisie and the circumstances continuously produce the new bourgeois and petty bourgeois resulting in the political degeneration of the laboring class and also in the government and communist party, and (4) imperialism continuously tries to degenerate socialism in any socialist country through intervention or peaceful means.

The national and international conditions created a necessity of the continuance of class struggle within a socialist country throughout the period. Socialism cannot exist and march towards communism in its absence.

Basing himself upon the basic principle of Marxism-Leninism and generalizing the historical experience of the dictatorship of proletariat, Mao developed the Marxist-Leninist theory with GPCR as a glorious chapter of it.

The GPCR is the most important theoretical part of Mao-Tse-Tung Thought, and although it was developed in the particular historical situation of China during the course of building socialism, it has universal character. Its importance lays not only for backward, colonial and semi (neo) colonial countries, but also to the whole world. Likewise, its importance lies in the question of strengthening GPCR, struggle against the danger of restoration of capitalism in a socialist country and struggle against modern revisionism and to foster revolution ahead. It has given a new light to the organizational concept of the party. It emphasizes on building proletarian outlook on all questions pertaining to life, society, family, Party organization, politics, culture and on necessity of uncompromising struggle against all kind of opportunists and breaks off relations with them.

The GPCR in a way, was a lesson learned from the negative experience of the Soviet Union where, as Mao-Tse-Tung pointed out, Stalin could not understand properly the necessity of continuing struggle even after all means of production were socialized and classes in their old form had disappeared. The declaration pointed out: "Stalin was unable to take in consideration the nature of the class struggle under socialism....while waging a fierce struggle against the old exploiting classes; Stalin denied, in theory, the emergence of a new bourgeois from within the socialist society itself." Stalin forwarded the theory, that

the antagonistic class contradiction had been eliminated in the Soviet Union as a result of the basic establishment of socialist ownership in industry and agriculture. Mao concluded that such a mistake on the part of Stalin was inevitable because he had a "fair amount of metaphysics in him" and he "taught many people to follow his metaphysics."

The NCP (Mashal) fundamentally differs from a criticism made against Stalin by Chairman Mao. We hold the view that the main cause behind Stalin's mistake, i.e. Stalin's inability to grasp the nature of class struggle within socialism, was not due to his fair amount of metaphysics in him or his failure to apply dialectics in all spheres of life and his failure to analyze socialist society as pointed out by Mao, but it was due to a particular historical situation of the Soviet Union. Lenin waged a fierce struggle against the exploiting classes, but he failed to visualize the emergence of a new bourgeois within the socialist sockets itself that was quite a new phenomena not only in the history of Soviet society, but also in the entire history of mankind. The declaration has not put forward any convincing argument in this connection. The Resolution on the International Communist Movement adopted by the Fifth National congress of the Nepal Communist party (Mashal) clearly states: "Several mistakes have been made by Stalin in different fields and some of them are of a serious nature. Stalin's erroneous conceptions on the inevitability of class struggle in the socialist period and the restoration of capitalism have already been talked about. Several serious mistakes have been made by Stalin during the Second World War about the revolutionary struggles in China and Western Europe. The possibility of his committing such mistakes in other fields cannot be ruled out. It is, however, not unnatural to make such mistakes by others as well. For example, Marx, Engels, Lenin, and even Mao-Tse-Tung himself made such mistakes during the course of their translating theories into practices."

Marx was unable to understand the necessity of armed struggle in North America and England, or a dictatorship of the proletariat after proletarian revolution. Mao failed to understand properly the importance of struggle against centrists. Did this mistake of Marx and Mao result from their fair amount of metaphysics? Certainly not. Mao was fortunate enough, for he had the historical experience of building socialism and restoration of capitalism in the USSR which helped him avoid the mistakes of Stalin. It would be a mistake to label their views as metaphysics on the basis of their mistakes. The same is true with Stalin.

In brief, the contributions of Mao-Tse-Tung are of great historical importance. However, his contributions fall within Lenin's era. They do not create an independent era of Maoism. Such attitudes do not minimize

the importance of his contributions. There is even a tendency to accuse the political parties as opportunists and revisionists which support Mao-Tse-Tung Thought. If it is the case, one can easily accuse Mao himself as being opportunist, for it was under his leadership that the CPC first of all propounded the Mao-Tse-Tung Thought. The fact is that whether a party is revolutionary or opportunist depends not upon what phraseology it adopts in connection with the contributions of Mao, but upon how far it has been able to grasp the revolutionary spirit of his contributions. In practice, we have been observing quite an opportunist line of some of the political parties and organizations in Nepal which support Maoism. Despite their high sound of Maoism, they have violated the Marxist-Leninist norms and killed the revolutionary spirit of Mao-Tse-Tung Thought and the GPCR. It is our assertion that their adherence to Maoism is like a evil that covers their opportunistic character. This tendency of overlooking the basic question of the revolutionary spirit will make us to accept Marxism and Leninism irrespective of the political character of a party. To some extent, we see similar tendency in the committee as well. But we are hopeful that the committee will timely correct its mistake; if not it will deviate itself from the correct Marxist-Leninist path and liquidate it as well.

Generally, it is supposed that the term Maoism has no ideological difference worth mentioning with that of Mao-Tse-Tung Thought. But it is not the case. We have already made it clear that how Maoist devaluates Leninist and distorts Mao and Mao-Tse-Tung Thought. Moreover, it will have, regardless of the intention of parties and organizations advocating Maoist, a negative impact and the whole revolutionary movement on our own thinking that would cause the communist movement to deviate from the basic principle of Leninist.

Lenin has thrown sufficient light on the questions of armed struggle and laws governing it. According to Lenin, armed struggle is both art and sciences having its own laws and violation of such laws will lead the movement either of right or left deviation. Therefore, our attitude towards armed struggle should not be guided by our own subjective thinking or arbitrary way of thinking, but it should be based upon the concrete analysis to the subjective as well as objective condition. For various parties and organizations who support Maoist, such a line of Leninist is outdated and even right deviation in the present world context. So far as the military line developed by Mao-Tse-Tung is concerned, it basically confirms with the military line of Lenin. Such a correct thinking of Mao-Tse-Tung based upon Leninist is often distorted to accommodate their arbitrary way of thinking. The example of the Peruvian revolution is often cited to

demonstrate how the achievement of armed struggle can be gained on the basis of Maoism. However, detailed and a minute studies of Peruvian revolution apparently substantiate the fact that the achievements of the PCP are strongly based upon the concrete analysis of both subjective and objective conditions and adopting the military line of Mao based upon Leninism. It again clearly teaches us that no political party could succeed to promote armed revolution violating the laws laid down by Lenin. Many changes have occurred in the world, and many developments have been made in the science of revolutionary struggle. Accordingly, Mao has significantly developed Leninism, but he has not developed any new theory of armed struggle to replace the basic laws laid down by Lenin. Practically, the CPC has applied these laws of armed struggle based upon Leninism. In spite of its correct approach in the practical field, the CPC has taken quite a wrong stand in its ideological field by sticking on Maoism and pushing the Leninism to wards the back side. Furthermore, some other political parties and organizations which are not evolved practically in the armed struggle, or even the mass struggle, have adopted either purely subjective or arbitrary way of thinking on the question of armed struggle. This thinking dose not confirm with Leninism and Mao-Tse-Tung Thought.

To Lenin, the question of election was a matter of tactic to be used or boycotted according to the particular situation of the movement of the country. But the parties and organizations that support Maoism have a tendency to take it as a strategically boycott without providing any acceptable argument. Why the Lenin's line has been replaced by the policy of strategically boycott? Neither have we got any evidence of such a boycott policy in Mao-Tse-Tung Thought nor in any theory expounded by him. This again shows how Maoists are playing with the principles of Mao-Tse-Tung to accommodate their arbitrary thought in the name of Maoism.

The above examples are only a few manifestations of how Maoism is making them deviate from Leninism or Mao-Tse-Tung Thought. Needless to mention, such a tendency agrees more with anarchism than with Leninism and Mao-Tse-Tung Thought. Once Leninism is devaluated and pushed back to a secondary position, they will have free hand to lead to the whole of communist movement by passing not only basic principle of Marxism-Leninism but those of Mao-Tse-Tung Thought as well. As stated earlier, even though Mao-Tse-Tung has enriched much the treasury of Marxism-Leninism, there are many spheres untouched by him. Therefore, Maoism, based upon the devaluation of Leninism, will open vast areas for their arbitrary way of thinking and activities for themselves.

Those parties and organizations which support Maoism have vigorously attacked Stalin on the eve of the second international conference of Marxist and Leninist parties and organizations. Can not these be taken as new attempts to push back Leninism to secondary position in the name of Maoism? We do think that such a tendency is not a healthy Marxist-Leninist way of thinking and doing. In such a background we can easily raise a question of who will be the next victim of such a process? Mao-Tse-Tung himself?

At the end, it is worthwhile to mention a few more words on Mao-Tse-Tung. Though and the question of a new era. Imperialism is the highest morbid and final stage of capitalism. The history of capitalism suggests that there is no universal ladder of capitalism to imperialism though many new stages or sub-stages may emerge within it. Because Leninism is the Marxism during the whole period of imperialism and socialist revolution, the idea of having the third stage within Marxism-Leninism or any is parallel to Leninism is simply a misnomer. Therefore, Mao-Tse-Tung does not represent a new era or stage outside Lenin's era but he represents a stage within it. Because Leninism represents Marxism during the whole period of imperialism and socialist revolution _the socialist period_, the socialist period itself is automatically included in it. It means that the principle of continuing revolution and the class struggle during the socialist period under GPCR are parts of the Lenin era. Therefore, it is a great mistake to push back Leninism to a secondary position.

Marxism is not a dogma but a creative science. It is continuously developing through various stages under different conditions. During the course of development, Marxist-Leninists will simultaneously develop many new theories to a higher stage on the one hand, defend Marxism-Leninism on the other. But their contributions in the process of protracted revolutionary movement cannot be referred as a new ism.

Mao says, "It is an era in which the world capitalist front has collapsed in one part of the globe (one sixth of the world) and has fully revealed its decadence everywhere else in which the remaining capitalist parts can not survive without relying more than ever on the colonies and semi colonies in which a socialist state has been established and has proclaimed readiness to give active support to the liberation movement of all colonies and semi-colonies and in which the proletariat of the capitalist countries are steamily freeing itself from the social imperialism influence of the social democratic party and has proclaimed in its support for the liberation movement in the colonies and semi colonies that is directed against imperialism, i.e. against the international bourgeois of international capitalism" (Selected Works on New Democracy, vol-II: 342).

In sum, what Mao has spoken for the new era is nothing but an era of imperialism and socialist revolution. It is an era of Lenin. We do not have any evidence that Mao ever amended his views on the new era, but there is enough evidence to suppute the application of a new era of Mao-Tse-Tung during the perod of GPCR in China. China Reconstructs (April, 1968, pp10-11) proclaimed that the world enters into a new era. As referred earlier, the RCP, USA has also correctly pointed out in ins resolution of 1988 that the concept of third stags of Maoism was that o LIm-Piao. Such thinking is conducive to weaken, knowingly or unknowingly, the very basis of Marxism-Leninist,-Mao-Tse-Tung Thought in particular and the world communist movement in general. Therefore, the NCP (Mashal) strongly propose that the proposal of the committee on Maoism is a misnomer and there should be outright rejection of such a proposal.



Struggle against Trotskyist line within RIM

[This is a excerpt from the 'Royal place Massacre and the Maoist's Pro-King Political line, by Mohan Bikram Singh, published on the Book the 'People's War in Nepal : Left Perspectives' edited by Arjun karki and David Seddon, Adroit publishese, Delhi, 2003]

In an article published recently, one of the central committee leaders of the Maoists writes, 'It was not possible to take on the new discussion about Stalin and the Comintern, going forwards in the International Communist Movement to a qualitatively new level, without freeing ourselves from the legacy of the Mohan Bikram school. In this respect, the National Conference's (Second National Conference) Declaration of Liberation from the legacy of Mohan Bikram School, heightening the propositions established by Mao concerning the evaluation of Stalin and the Comintern, takes on an epoch-making importance' (Shital Kumar, Janadesh Weekly, June 19, 2001). The 'new discussion' of the international communist movement regarding Stalin and the Comintern is nothing new. It is in fact quite a stale one. CPN (Mashal) had rejected those stale logics about two decades ago. What they call 'the Mohan Bikram school or legacy' is nothing more than decisions accepted by the central committee two decades ago, when the Maoists also belonged to our party (and later those were also adopted by the Fifth Congress of the party). The then central committee had prepared 'a proposal on the international communist movement' (draft). It was presented at the founding conference of the RIM in 1984 by M.B. Singh. In this conference Mohan Bikram also tabled a Note of Dissent, which was later approved by the central committee. Thus, the approved views in the 'proposal on the international communist movement' were not the personal views of Mohan Bikram, but those of the whole of the party, before the split at the Party Congress. Therefore, their 'liberation' from the legacy of 'the Mohan Bikram School', is also the liberation from their own legacy too. They have called the document 'The Counter Revolution in China' the biggest ideological victory of the Fourth Congress against revisionism. The document was an 'ideological victory' over Chinese revisionism.

After a few months, a document on the international communist movement was also passed—in the same year in which there was an ideological victory over Trotskyism in the international communist movement as advocated by RCP-USA. Thus, the Maoists' freedom from the Mohan Bikram School' legacy was in essence their freedom from the legacy of Trotskyism too. In this context one more point also should be made clear. They had already at this time gone a long way from the views they held when they belonged to CPN (Mashal) and this had been following the Trotsky Line in practice. The decision of their 2nd conference relating to the Declaration of Liberation from the legacy of the Mohan Bikram School is in fact liberation from a former 'declaration' to go ahead in the path of Trotskyism. In their 'Declaration of Liberation' they have claimed to have strengthened the evaluation of Stalin and the Comintern. But, in the resolution approved by the Fifth Congress, many of Mao's views on Stalin have been criticised. At that time their (the Maoists') view on Stalin was clear. It is a known fact that using the healthy and friendly criticism by Mao, the RCP-USA campaigned in antagonistic way against Stalin's actions during the Second World War specifically and against the Comintern in general. Apart from adopting the views of Trotskyism, in order to strengthen their propositions, they have reversed their own views which they held before.

Regarding the criticism of Stalin, the resolution states: '...Our starting point should be the evaluation of comrade Stalin by Mao. Dividing Stalin's works and views into two parts Mao has declared 70% to be right and remaining 30% to be wrong' (Mahan Chhalang, p. 7). They further write, 'Mao's evaluation of Stalin is directed against those reformists who negate him totally and also against those narrow dogmatist revisionists who also justify his mistakes' (ibid, p. 9). One of their central members referred to the first as the 'reformism of Khrushchev and the latter as Hoxha-ism' (Shital Kumar, Janadesh, June 19, 2001). Here a question should be raised—are they prepared to evaluate Mao himself according to the formula of '70 and 30 percent' applied to Stalin? They do not dare to do so. For them to point out even .001 per cent of mistakes made by Mao is an anti-revolutionary act. This means that on the question of the evaluation of Mao they adopt a 'narrow dogmatism' (Hoxha-ism in another way) and justify even Mao's mistakes. So far as we are concerned, we maintain that some of Mao's criticisms of Stalin were wrong. But we also maintain that Stalin also made some mistakes. Likewise we accept that Mao was not totally correct. At the time when Maoists were with us (i.e. in the Fifth Congress), they also shared the same views as we do about Mao and Stalin. But now, declaring themselves free from 'M.B. school legacy', they have blindly followed the Trotskyites' legacy and have given up their own views.

To make the point clear, we would like to quote a passage from the 'Proposal on International Communist Movement' which was adopted by the Fifth Congress and which in 1990 was published under the title 'Revolutionary Perspectives of International Communist Movement of the Counter Revolution in China'. The Proposal of the ICM mentions 'new and disguised danger of Trotskyism'. That is directly related to the RCP-USA. In 1981, in *Revolution*, an organ of the central committee of the RCP/USA, Bob Avakian, Chairman of the RCP-USA, wrote many articles in which he criticised Stalin's views about the establishment of socialism and the second world war. In these articles he tried to prove that Stalin had fundamentally departed from Marxism-Leninism, that he was the enemy of the proletariat world revolution, that he lacked dialectic vision, and that he was a chauvinist, reformist and rightist (refer to Mashal's struggle against trotskyism within RIM, appendix D, CPN (Mashal) publication, 1996, pp. 29-32). In the above-mentioned documents, without mentioning the name of the RCP-USA, all the criticisms made against Stalin and the Comintern have been denied by our party. But in the paper presented by M. B. Singh at the founding conference of RIM in 1984, mentioning the name of the RCP-USA, all of its positions regarding Stalin and the Comintern were criticised in detail. The paper says, 'Their inability to take into consideration the historical experience of later periods and to consider some particular questions, separating them from the whole, has led the RCP to evaluate the history of the ICM during WW II in a wrong way. The RCP has concluded that 'the line of the Soviet Union and the Comintern in regard to WW II... was basically wrong' and a deviation in the line of the Communist International occurred.*

Outline of views on the Historical Experience of the International Communist Movement and the Lessons for Today, by Bob Avakian, *Revolution*, June 1985 p. 4.

According to them, the principal aspect of WW II, even after the attack upon the USSR, was interimperialist and the united front against fascism was a 'departure in significant aspect from Leninism' (Conquer the World? The international proletariat must and will, revolution, special issue no. 50, p. 3). They (RCP) even went to such an extent as to see a kind of antagonistic contradiction between the defence of the USSR and the interests of the world proletarian revolution. Their attack on Stalin has taken such an antagonistic turn that they have no hesitation even to say 'Stalin did what he could so (and in some cases it was not insignificant) to kill the revolutionary struggle of the masses in order not to bring down the wrath of U.S. imperialism' (ibid, p. 28). In this context, the Proposal of

CPN (Mashal) says, 'We are not against evaluating the history of the ICM during WW II and afterwards, and drawing lessons from that. We also hold the view that Stalin made many mistakes. Such mistakes were made both in the analysis of objective situation and in implementation of policies. But basically his approach was correct, was dialectical materialist and he was a great Marxist-Leninist and promoter of proletarian internationalism (ibid, appendix B, p. 17).

The paper says, 'as it is clear, CPN (Mashal) has serious difference with RCP-USA' (ibid, pp. 19-20). The period from 1984 to 1998 was one in which CPN (Mashal) was ousted formally from the RIM. It was a period in which the RCP-USA was trying to change RIM into a pro-Trotsky organisation, whereas the Marxist-Leninists tried to struggle against this pressure. During the conference of 1984, and after it, the communist parties of Sri Lanka, Turkey, Greece, India and Nepal struggled against this direction. But soon they resigned or left the RIM, due to their differences with the CORIM, or they were liquidated in their respective countries. Only the CPN (Mashal) continued single-handed the struggle within RIM against the attempt of RCP-USA to turn it into a Trotskyite organisation. After the RIM was formed, 'Gonzalo thought' was accepted by the Communist Party of Peru. Likewise, the RCP-USA accepted president Bob Avakian as the 'authority of the party'. CPN (Mashal) opposed both of those decisions saying that they were based upon 'personal cult'. The RCP had campaigned against Stalin. But in the founding International Conference of the RIM in 1984, because of the pressure of many other parties, they were not able to include the condemnation of Stalin in the manifesto of the RIM as they pleaded it should be in their party organs. Both Mao and Stalin, defining the present era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, have called it the 'Lenin Era', referring to Leninism as the Marxism of the present era. At the time of The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, Leninism was depicted as 'the guiding ideology' of our thinking and that motto was included in the manifesto adopted at the founding conference of RIM in 1984. But later, adopting 'Maoism' in place of 'Mao Thought', the analysis of Mao, Stalin and the Proletarian Revolution of China was revised. Behind such revisionism was clearly the intention of undermining Lenin and Leninism. Otherwise Trotskyism could not have been put forward. The attack, first against Stalin and then against Leninism as today's guiding ideology, was the result of that Trotskyite conspiracy. They proposed that the Lenin era has ended, that the third stage (that of Maoism) has begun and that Maoism is Marxism-Leninism at present. Thus 'It is clear by their behavior

that behind the objective of removing Stalin from the scene was their intention to weaken Leninism and make it passive'. After the resignation of the communist parties of India and Turkey, RIM became a plaything in the hands of RCP-USA, which made concerted efforts to change it into a Trotskyite organisation. It was CPN (Mashal) that struggled continuously against this. As a result, the committee of RIM sent a letter to the central committee of CPN (Mashal) in August 1996, saying, 'The dispute between RIM and the CPN (Mashal) is by no means limited to a question of terminology. The debate has revealed that the dispute over Marxism-Leninism-Maoism concentrates on a whole series of political and ideological questions'. It further says, 'If your party continues to maintain its opposition to the ideological foundation of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement the correct and principled response on your part would be your voluntary resignation from our movement. We hope that you will give urgent attention to this matter and respond within three months'. A meeting of the central committee of CPN (Mashal) was held and a 'Resolution on the Letter of RIM' was passed. Taking the decision

Mohan Bikram Singh, on the difference of NCP (Mashal) with RIM, Mashal, 2053, No. 42, p. 8. to continue the struggle, the 'Resolution' says, "The CORIM has written to tell us that if our party continues to maintain its opposition to the ideological n our part would be "voluntary" resignation from the movement (RIM). But contrary to the suggestion made by the CORIM, the CC of our party has decided that the correct and principled response on our part would be not "voluntary resignation", but continual struggle against the non-Marxist-Leninist principles, policies and style of work of CORIM' (Mashal's Struggle against trotskyism within RIM, p. 12). In the first half of 1998, CORIM expelled CPN (Mashal) from the RIM. Soon after they published a long article in A World to Win titled 'On the Expulsion of CPN (Mashal) from RIM'. In this article they write, 'We call all the rank and file of CPN (Mashal) to separate themselves from Mohan Bikram, who is an anti-revolutionary' (A world to win, 1998, p. 24). The Maoists in Nepal insist on a 'new discussion' in the international communist movement 'freeing themselves from the legacy of Mohan Bikram school'. But their 'new discussion' and a 'qualitative level' of it is guided by the Trotskyite views of RCF /USA. They themselves confess that 'In this context the documents and articles of the chairman of RCP / USA, Bob Avakian, have played an effective role in giving new height to the discussion' (ibid, p. 41).



Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist movement RIM

[Adopted by the delegates and observers at the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organisations which formed the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement-RIM]

Today the world is on the threshold of momentous events. The crisis of the imperialist system is rapidly bringing about the danger of the outbreak of a new, third, world war as well as the real perspective for revolution in countries throughout the world." The scientific accuracy of these words from the Joint Communique of our First International Conference in Autumn 1980 have not only been fully borne out by the recent developments in the world, but the world situation has been further accentuated and aggravated since that time.

Thus the Marxist-Leninist movement is confronted with the exceptionally serious responsibility to further unify and prepare its ranks for the tremendous challenges and momentous battles shaping up ahead. The historic mission of the proletariat calls ever more urgently for an all-out preparation for sudden changes and leaps in developments, particularly at this current conjuncture where national developments are more profoundly affected by developments on a world scale, and where unprecedented prospects for revolution are in the making. We must sharpen our revolutionary vigilance and increase our political, ideological, organisational and military readiness in order to wield these opportunities in the best possible manner for the interests of our class and to conquer the most advanced positions possible for the world proletarian revolution.

Armed with the scientific teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tsetung we are fully conscious of the tasks expected of us in the present situation and are proud to accept and act in accordance with this historic responsibility.

The Marxist-Leninist movement continues to confront a deep and serious crisis which came to a head following the reactionary coup d'etat

in China following the death of Mao Tsetung and the treacherous betrayal of Enver Hoxha. However despite these reversals there are genuine Marxist-Leninists on all continents who have refused to abandon the struggle for communism.

The international communist movement is developing through a process of further consolidated unity and advance along the scientific principles of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Since 1980 we have developed our strength and increased our ability to influence and lead developments. Our Second International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organisations which was successfully convened despite unfavourable and difficult conditions, represents a qualitative leap in the unity and maturing of our movement. The tasks that cry out to be done can and shall be accomplished by forging an invincible barricade against revisionist and all bourgeois ideology, by providing scientific leadership to and standing in the forefront of the surging revolutionary waves, by consciously applying the principles of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought to guide our practice and sum up our experience in the crucible of revolutionary class struggle.

The following Declaration has been forged through painstaking, comprehensive discussions and principled struggle by the delegates and observers at the Second International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organisations which formed the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement.

The World Situation

All the major contradictions of the world imperialist system are rapidly accentuating: the contradiction between various imperialist powers, the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed peoples and nations, and the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the imperialist countries. All of these contradictions have a common origin in the capitalist mode of production and its fundamental contradiction. The rivalry between the two blocs of imperialist powers led by the US and the USSR respectively is bound to lead to war unless revolution prevents it and this rivalry is greatly affecting world events.

The post World War II world is rapidly coming apart at the seams. The international economic and political relations the "division of the world" - established through and in the aftermath of World War II no longer correspond to the needs of the various imperialist powers to "peacefully" extend and expand their profit empires. While the post World War II world has undergone important changes as a result of conflicts between the imperialists and, especially, as a result of revolutionary

struggle, today it is this entire network of economic, political and military relations that is being called into question. The relative stability of the major imperialist powers and the relative prosperity of a handful of countries based on the blood and misery of the exploited majority of the world's people and nations is coming unraveled. The revolutionary struggles of the oppressed nations and peoples is again on the rise and delivering new blows to the imperialist world order.

It is in this context that the statement by Mao Tsetung, "Either revolution will prevent war, or war will give rise to revolution" rings out all the more clearly and takes on urgent importance. The very logic of the imperialist system and the revolutionary struggles is preparing a new situation. The contradiction between the rival bands of imperialists, between the imperialists and the oppressed nations, between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries, are all likely in the coming period to express themselves by the force of arms on an unprecedented scale. As Stalin said in regard to the First World War:

The significance of the imperialist war which broke out ten years ago lies, among other things, in the fact that it gathered all these contradictions into a single knot and threw them on to the scales, thereby accelerating and facilitating the revolutionary battles of the proletariat.

The heightening of contradictions is now drawing, and will do so even more dramatically in the future, all countries and regions of the world and sections of the masses previously lulled to sleep or oblivious to political life into the vortex of world history. And so the revolutionary communists must get prepared, and prepare the class conscious workers and revolutionary sections of the people and step up their revolutionary struggle.

Communists are resolute opponents of imperialist war and must mobilise and lead the masses in the fight against preparations for a third world war which would be the greatest crime committed in the history of mankind. But the Marxist-Leninists will never hide the truth from the masses: only revolution, revolutionary war that the Marxist-Leninists and revolutionary forces are leading or preparing to lead, can prevent this crime. Marxist-Leninists must seize hold of the revolutionary possibilities that are developing rapidly and lead the masses in stepping up the revolutionary struggle on all fronts - beginning revolutionary warfare where that is possible, stepping up preparations where the conditions for such revolutionary warfare are not yet ripe. In this way the struggle for communism will advance and it is possible that the victory of the proletariat and the oppressed peoples in the course of decisive battles will shatter the imperialists' present preparations for world war, establish the rule of the working class in a number of countries and create an overall world

situation more favourable to the advance of the revolutionary struggle. If, on the other hand, the revolutionary struggle is not capable of preventing a third world war, the communists and the revolutionary proletariat and masses must be prepared to mobilise the outrage that such a war and the inevitable suffering accompanying it will engender and direct it against the source of war - imperialism, take advantage of the weakened position of the enemy and in this way turn a reactionary imperialist war into a just war against imperialism and reaction.

Since imperialism has integrated the world into a single global system (and is increasingly doing so) the world situation increasingly influences the developments in each country; thus revolutionary forces all over the world must base themselves on a correct evaluation of the overall world situation. This does not negate the crucial task they face of evaluating the specific conditions in each country, formulating specific strategy and tactics and developing revolutionary practice. Unless this dialectical relationship between the overall situation at the global level and the concrete conditions in each country is grasped correctly by Marxist-Leninists they will not be able to utilise the extremely favourable situation at the global level in favour of revolution in each country.

Tendencies in the international movement to view the revolution in one country apart from the overall struggle for communism must be struggled against: Lenin pointed out, "There is one, and only one, kind of real internationalism, and that is - 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." Lenin stressed that proletarian revolutionaries must approach the question of their revolutionary work not from the point of view of "my" country but "from the point of view of my share in the preparation, in the propaganda, and in the acceleration of the world proletarian revolution."

On the Two Component Parts of the World Proletarian Revolution

Lenin analysed long ago the division of the world between a handful of advanced capitalist countries and the great number of oppressed nations comprising the largest part of the world's territory and population which the imperialists parasitically pillage and maintain in an enforced state of dependency and backwardness. From this reality flows the Leninist view, confirmed by history, that the world proletarian revolution is composed essentially of two streams - the proletarian-socialist

revolution waged by the proletariat and its allies in the imperialist citadels and the national liberation, or new democratic revolution waged by the nations and peoples subjugated to Imperialism. The alliance between these two revolutionary currents remains the cornerstone of revolutionary strategy in the era of imperialism.

In the period since the Second World War until now the struggle of the oppressed peoples and nations has been the storm centre of the world revolutionary struggle. Prosperity, stability and "democracy" in a number of imperialist states has been bought and paid for by the intensified exploitation and misery of the masses in the oppressed countries. Far from eliminating the national and colonial question, the development of neo-colonialism has further subjugated whole nations and peoples to the requirements of international capital and led to a whole series of revolutionary wars against imperialist domination.

The current intensification of world contradictions while bringing forth further possibilities for these movements also places new obstacles and new tasks before them. Despite efforts and even some successes of the imperialist powers in subverting or perverting the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed masses, especially in the hopes of turning them into weapons of inter-imperialist rivalry, these struggles continue to deal powerful blows to the imperialist system, and accelerate the development of revolutionary possibilities in the world as a whole.

In the imperialist countries of the Western bloc the post World War II period has been essentially marked by a non-revolutionary situation reflecting the relative stability of imperialist rule in these countries inseparably linked to the intense exploitation of the oppressed peoples by these imperialist states. Nevertheless, the revolutionary prospects in these countries are more favourable than in any time in recent memory. History has shown that revolutionary situations in these types of countries are rare and are generally connected with the acute intensification of world contradictions, such as the conjuncture taking form in the world today.

The mass revolutionary struggles that developed in most of the Western imperialist countries especially during the 1960s demonstrate forcefully the possibility of proletarian revolution in these countries, despite the fact that the conditions were not favourable for a seizure of power at that time and these movements declined along with the overall ebb in the world movement. Today the sharpening world situation is increasingly reflected in these countries as seen, for example, by important rebellions of the lower strata of the proletariat in some imperialist countries as well as the growth of a powerful movement against imperialist war preparations in a number of countries, including within it a more revolutionary section.

In the capitalist and imperialist countries of the Eastern bloc important cracks and fissures in the relative stability of the rule by the state-capitalist bourgeoisie are more and more apparent. In Poland the proletariat and other sections of the masses have risen in struggle and delivered powerful blows to the established order. In these countries, also, possibilities for proletarian revolution are developing and will be heightened by the development and intensification of world contradictions.

It is important that the revolutionary elements in both kinds of countries be educated to understand the nature of the strategic alliance between the revolutionary proletarian movement in the advanced countries and the national-democratic revolutions in the oppressed nations. The social-chauvinist position that would deny the importance of the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples or their ability, under the leadership of the proletariat and a genuine Marxist-Leninist party, to lead to the establishment of socialism is still a dangerous deviation to be combated. The modern revisionists, led by the USSR, who claim that a national liberation struggle can only be successful if bestowed by "aid" from its "natural (imperialist) ally" and the Trotskyites who negate in principle the possibility of the transformation of a national-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution are examples of this pernicious tendency. On the other hand, in the recent period a significant problem has been another deviation which ignores the possibility of revolutionary situations arising in the advanced countries or considers that such revolutionary situations could only arise as a direct result of the advances in the national liberation struggles. Both these deviations sap the strength of the revolutionary proletariat in that they fail to take account of the developing world conjuncture and the possibilities for revolutionary advances in different kinds of countries and on a world scale that flow from it.

Some Questions Regarding the History of the International Communist Movement

In the little over a century since the publication of the Communist Manifesto and its call "workers of all countries, unite!" an immense wealth of experience has been accumulated by the international proletariat. This experience comprehends the revolutionary movement in different types of countries in the great days of decisive victories and revolutionary elan and the periods of the darkest reaction and retreat. In the course of the twists and turns of the movement the science of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought has taken shape and developed through a constant

struggle against those who cut out its revolutionary heart and/or render it a stale and lifeless dogma. Important turning points in the development of world history and the class struggle have invariably been accompanied by fierce battles on the ideological front between Marxism and revisionism and dogmatism. This was the case with Lenin's struggle against the Second International (which corresponded with the outbreak of the First World War and the development of a revolutionary situation in Russia and elsewhere) and in the struggle of Mao Tsetung against modern Soviet revisionism, a great struggle which reflected world historic developments (the reestablishment of capitalism in the USSR, the intensification of the class struggle in socialist China, the development of a worldwide upsurge of revolutionary struggle aimed particularly at US imperialism). Similarly, the profound crisis that the international communist movement is now experiencing is a reflection of the reversal of proletarian rule in China and the all-round attack on the Cultural Revolution following the death of Mao Tsetung and the coup d'etat of Teng Hsiao-ping and Hua Kuo-feng, as well as the overall heightening of world contradictions accentuating the danger of world war and the prospects for revolution. Today, as in the other great struggles, the forces fighting for a revolutionary line are a small minority encircled and attacked by revisionists and bourgeois apologists of all stripes. Nevertheless, these forces represent the future, and the further advances of the international communist movement depend on their ability to forge a political line which charts the path forward for the revolutionary proletariat in the current complex situation. This is because if one's line is correct, even if one has not a single soldier at first there will be soldiers and even if there is no political power, power will be gained. This is borne out by the historical experience of the international communist movement since the time of Marx.

An extremely important element for the elaboration of such a general line for the international communist movement is the correct evaluation of the historical experience of our movement. It would be extremely irresponsible, and contrary to the Marxist theory of knowledge, to fail to attach adequate importance to experience gained and lessons learned in the course of mass revolutionary struggles of millions of people and paid for by countless martyrs.

Today, the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, together with other Maoist forces, are the inheritors of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao, and they must firmly base themselves on this heritage. But they must also, on the basis of this heritage, dare to criticise its shortcomings. There are experiences which people should praise and there are experiences which should make people grieve. Communists and revolutionaries in all countries should ponder and seriously study these

experiences of success and failure so as to draw correct conclusions and useful lessons from them.

The summation of our heritage is a collective responsibility which must be carried out by the entire international communist movement. Such a summation must be done in a ruthlessly scientific manner, basing itself on Marxist-Leninist principles and fully taking into account the concrete historical conditions which existed then and the limits they placed on the proletarian vanguard and above all in the spirit of making the past serve the present, in order to avoid metaphysical errors of measuring the past with today's yardstick, disregarding historical conditions. Such a thorough summation will undoubtedly take a fairly long time but the pressure of world events, the opening up of revolutionary possibilities, demands that certain key lessons be drawn today to better enable the vanguard forces of the proletariat to fulfill their responsibilities.

The summation of historical experience has, itself, always been a sharp arena of class struggle. Ever since the defeat of the Paris Commune, opportunists and revisionists have seized upon the defeats and shortcomings of the proletariat to reverse right and wrong, confound the secondary with the principal, and thus conclude that the proletariat "should not have taken to arms." The emergence of new conditions has often been used as an excuse to negate fundamental principles of Marxism under the signboard of its "creative development." At the same time, it is incorrect and just as damaging to abandon the Marxist critical spirit, to fail to sum up the shortcomings as well as the successes of the proletariat, and to rest content with upholding or reclaiming positions considered correct in the past. Such an approach would make Marxism-Leninism brittle and unable to withstand the attacks of the enemy and incapable of leading new advances in the class struggle - and suffocate its revolutionary essence.

In fact, history has shown that real creative developments of Marxism (and not phoney revisionist distortions) have always been inseparably linked with a fierce struggle to defend and uphold basic principles of Marxism-Leninism. Lenin's two-fold struggle against the open revisionists and against those, like Kautsky, who opposed revolution under the guise of "Marxist orthodoxy" and Mao Tsetung's great battle to oppose the modern revisionists and their negation of the experience of building socialism in the USSR under Lenin and Stalin while carrying out a thorough and scientific criticism of the roots of revisionism are evidence of this.

Today a similar approach is necessary to the thorny questions and problems of the history of the international communist movement. A

serious danger comes from those who, in the face of setbacks in the international communist movement since the death of Mao Tsetung, declare that Marxism-Leninism has failed or is outmoded and the entire experience acquired by the proletariat must be put into question. This tendency would negate the experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, eliminate Stalin from the ranks of proletarian leaders, and in fact, attack the basic Leninist thesis on the nature of the proletarian revolution, the need for a vanguard party and the dictatorship of the proletariat. As Mao powerfully expressed "I think there are two 'swords': one is Lenin and the other Stalin", once the sword of Stalin has been discarded "once this gate is opened, by and large Leninism is thrown away." This statement made by Mao Tsetung in 1956 has been shown by the experience of the international communist movement up to today to retain its validity. Similarly today the advances in the science of revolution made by Mao Tsetung are also attacked or rendered unrecognizable. In fact all this is a "new" version of very old and stale revisionism and social democracy.

This more or less open revisionism, whether it comes from the traditional pro-Moscow parties or its "Euro-communist" current from the revisionist usurpers in China, or from the Trotskyites and the petit-bourgeois critics of Leninism, remains the main danger to the international communist movement. At the same time, revisionism in its dogmatic form continues to be a bitter enemy of revolutionary Marxism. This current, most sharply expressed in the political line of Enver Hoxha and the Party of Labour of Albania, attacks Mao Tsetung Thought, the path of the Chinese Revolution and especially the experience of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Masquerading as defenders of Stalin (when in fact many of their theses are Trotskyites), these revisionists soil the genuine revolutionary heritage of Stalin. These imposters use the shortcomings and errors of the international communist movement, and not its achievements in order to buttress up their revisionist-trotskyite line, and demand that the international communist movement follow suit on the basis of a return to some mystical "doctrinal purity". The many features this Hoxhaite line shares with classical revisionism, including the ability of Soviet revisionism (as well as reaction in general) to promote and/or profit from both openly anti-Leninist "Euro-communism" and Hoxha's disguised anti-Leninism at the same time, are testimony to their common bourgeois ideological basis.

Upholding Mao Tsetung's qualitative development of the science of Marxism-Leninism represents a particularly important and pressing question in the international movement and among the class conscious

workers and other revolutionary minded people in the world today. The principle involved is nothing less than whether or not to uphold and build upon the decisive contributions to the proletarian revolution and the science of Marxism-Leninism made by Mao Tsetung. It is therefore nothing less than a question of whether or not to uphold Marxism-Leninism itself.

Stalin said, "Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution." This is entirely correct. Since Lenin's death the world situation has undergone great changes. But the era has not changed. The fundamental principles of Leninism are not outdated, they remain the theoretical basis guiding our thinking today. We affirm that Mao Tsetung Thought is a new stage in the development of Marxism-Leninism. Without upholding and building on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought it is not possible to defeat revisionism, imperialism and reaction in general.

The USSR and the Comintern

The October Revolution in Russia and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat opened a new stage in the history of the international working class movement. The October Revolution was the living confirmation of Lenin's vital development of the Marxist theory of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. For the first time in history the working class succeeded in smashing the old state apparatus, establishing its own rule, beating back the attempts of the exploiters to strangle the socialist regime in its infancy and creating the political conditions necessary for the establishment of a new, socialist, economic order. In this process the central role of a vanguard political party of a new type, the Leninist party, was demonstrated.

The international impact of the Russian Revolution, coming especially as it did in the course of the world conjuncture marked by the First World War and the upsurge of revolutionary activity that accompanied it, was immense. From the beginning the leaders and class conscious workers in the new socialist state viewed the success of the revolution there not as an end in itself but as the first major breakthrough in the worldwide struggle to defeat imperialism, uproot exploitation and establish communism throughout the world. In the wake of the Russian Revolution a new, Communist, International was formed on the basis of assimilating the vital lessons of the Bolshevik revolution and in rupturing with the reformism and social democracy that had poisoned and eventually characterised the great majority of socialist parties making up the Second International. The Russian Revolution and the Comintern

in connection with the objective developments brought about by World War I transformed the struggle for socialism and communism from an essentially European phenomenon into a truly worldwide struggle for the first time in history.

Lenin and Stalin developed the proletarian line on the national and colonial question, stressing the importance of the revolutions in oppressed countries in the overall process of the world proletarian revolution and arguing against those such as Trotsky who held that the revolution in these countries was dependent on the victory of the proletariat in the imperialist countries and denied the possibility of the proletariat carrying out a socialist revolution on the basis of having led the first, bourgeois democratic stage of the revolution in these types of countries.

The period that followed the Russian Revolution was marked by worldwide revolutionary ferment and attempts at establishing working class political power in a number of countries. Despite the unbending assistance the newly established USSR gave and the political attention by Lenin to the revolutionary movement worldwide, the temporary resolution of the crisis that World War I concentrated and the remaining strength of the imperialist powers as well as the weaknesses of the revolutionary working class movement led to the defeat of the revolution outside the borders of the USSR.

Lenin and his successor Stalin were faced with the necessity of safeguarding the gains of the revolution in the USSR and carrying through the establishment of a socialist economic system in the Soviet Union alone. Following Lenin's death an important ideological and political struggle was waged by Stalin against the Trotskyites and others who claimed that the low level of the productive forces in the USSR, the existence of an immense peasantry and the USSR's international isolation made it impossible to carry out the construction of socialism. This erroneous, capitulationist viewpoint was refuted both theoretically and, more importantly, in practice as tens of millions of workers and peasants went into battle to uproot the old capitalist system, to collectivise agriculture and create a new economic system no longer based on the exploitation of man by man.

These soul-stirring battles and the important victories won in them greatly spread the influence of Marxism-Leninism and increased the prestige of the USSR throughout the world. The class conscious workers and oppressed peoples correctly considered the socialist USSR as their own, rejoiced in the victories won by the Soviet working class and came to its defence against the menaces and attacks of the imperialists.

Nevertheless it can be seen in retrospect that the progress of the socialist revolution in the USSR, even in the period of the great socialist transformations in the late 1920s and '30s, was marked by serious weaknesses and shortcomings. Some of these weaknesses are to be explained by the lack of previous historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat (outside of the short-lived Paris Commune) and by the severe imperialist blockade and aggression aimed at the USSR. These problems were increased and supplemented, however, by some important theoretical and political errors. Mao Tsetung, while upholding Stalin from the slanders of Khrushchev, made serious and correct criticisms of these errors: Mao explained the ideological basis for Stalin's errors: "Stalin had a fair amount of metaphysics in him and he taught many people to follow metaphysics", "Stalin failed to see the connection between the struggle of opposites and the unity of opposites. Some people in the Soviet Union are so metaphysical and rigid in their thinking that they think a thing has to be either one or the other, refusing to recognise the unity of opposites. Hence, political mistakes are made." Stalin's most fundamental error was to fail to thoroughly apply dialectics in all spheres and thus draw serious wrong conclusions concerning the nature of the class struggle under socialism and the means to prevent capitalist restoration. While waging a fierce struggle against the old exploiting classes, Stalin denied in theory the emergence of a new bourgeoisie from within the socialist society itself, reflected and concentrated by the revisionists within the ruling communist party, hence his erroneous claim that "antagonistic class contradictions" had been eliminated in the Soviet Union as a result of the basic establishment of socialist ownership in industry and agriculture. Similarly a failure to thoroughly apply dialectics to the analysis of socialist society led the Soviet leadership to conclude that there was no longer a contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production under socialism and to neglect to pay adequate attention to carrying out the revolution in the superstructure and continuing to revolutionise the relations of production even after the establishment, in the main, of the socialist ownership system.

This incorrect understanding of the nature of socialist society also contributed to Stalin's failure to adequately distinguish the contradictions between the people and the enemy and the contradictions among the people themselves. This in turn contributed to a marked tendency to resort to bureaucratic methods of handling these contradictions and gave more openings to the enemy.

In the period following the death of Lenin, Stalin led the Communist International which continued to play an important role in advancing the

world revolution and developing and consolidating the newly formed Communist Parties.

In 1935 an extremely important Congress of the Communist International was held in the midst of a severe world economic crisis, the growing threat of a new world war and imperialist attacks on the Soviet Union, the coming to power of fascism in Germany and the smashing of the German Communist Party, and the establishment of fascism or menace of the same in a number of other countries. It was necessary and correct for the Communist International to try to develop a tactical line concerning all of these questions..

Because the Seventh Congress of the Comintern has had such a deep influence on the history of the international movement it is necessary to make a sober and scientific evaluation of the Report of the Congress in the light of the existing historical conditions at the time. In particular the reasons for the defeat of the German Communist Party must be deeply studied. Nevertheless certain conclusions can be drawn now, and must be in light of the present tasks of today's Marxist-Leninists and three clear deviations must be identified.

First the distinction between fascism and bourgeois democracy in the imperialist countries, while certainly of real importance for the Communist Parties, was treated in a way that tended to make an absolute of the difference between these two forms of bourgeois dictatorship and also to make a strategic stage of the struggle against fascism. Secondly, a thesis was developed, which held that the growing immiseration of the proletariat would create in the advanced countries the material basis for healing the split in the working class and its consequent polarisation that Lenin had so powerfully analysed in his works on imperialism and the collapse of the Second International. While it is certainly true that the depth of the crisis undermined the social base of the labour aristocracy in the advanced capitalist countries and led to real possibilities that the Communist Parties needed to make use of to unite with large sections of the workers previously under the hegemony of the Social Democrats, it was not correct to believe that in any kind of a strategic sense the split in the working class could be healed. Thirdly, when fascism was defined as the regime of the most reactionary section of the monopoly bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries, this left the door open to the dangerous, reformist and pacifist tendency to see a section of the monopoly bourgeoisie as progressive.

While it is necessary to sum up these errors and to learn from them it is just as necessary to recognise the Communist International,

including in this period, as part of the heritage of the revolutionary struggle for communism and to beat back liquidationist and Trotskyite attempts to seize upon real errors to draw reactionary conclusions. Even during this period the Communist International mobilised millions of workers against class enemies and led heroic struggles against reaction such as the organising of the International Brigades to fight against fascism in Spain in which many of the best sons and daughters of the working class shed their blood in an inspiring example of internationalism.

The Communist International also gave, correctly, great emphasis to the defence of the Soviet Union, the land of socialism. But when the Soviet Union made certain compromises with different imperialist countries, the leaders of the Comintern more often than not failed to understand the critical point that Mao Tsetung was to sum up in 1946 (in relation to the compromises then being made between the USSR and the United States, Britain and France): "Such compromise does not require the people in the countries of the capitalist world to follow suit and make compromises at home." Furthermore, such compromises must take into account, first and foremost, the overall development of the world revolutionary movement in which, of course, the defence of socialist states plays an important role.

In circumstances of imperialist encirclement of (a) socialist state(s) defending these revolutionary conquests is a very important task for the international proletariat. It will also be necessary for socialist states to carry out a diplomatic struggle and at times to enter into different types of agreements with one or another imperialist power. But the defence of socialist states must always be subordinate to the overall progress of the world revolution and must never been seen as the equivalent (and certainly not the substitute) for the international struggle of the proletariat. In certain situations the defence of a socialist country can be principal, but this is so precisely because its defence is decisive for the advance of the world revolution.

It is necessary to sum up the experiences of the international communist movement during the period around the Second World War in the light of these lessons. World War II cannot be considered a mere repetition of World War I, for, even if the same murderous logic of the capitalist system was responsible for it, it was a complex combination of contradictions. At its beginning in 1939 it was, as Mao then pointed out "unjust, predatory and imperialist in character." But a major change with global implications took place when Hitler's Germany turned his troops on the Soviet Union. This just war on the part of the Soviet Union drew the support and sym-path-y of the working class and oppressed peoples

the world over who were greatly inspired by the heroic resistance of the Red Army and the Soviet working class and people. This was no mere sympathy for a victim of aggression but the profound conviction that the defence of the Soviet Union was also the defence of the socialist base area of the world revolution. Similarly the war waged by the Chinese people under the leadership of the Communist Party of China against Japanese aggression also developed and was most definitely a just war and a component part of the world proletarian revolution.

Particularly with the entry of the Soviet Union into the war it took on a more complex character. It became a combination of four component parts: the war between socialism and imperialism; the war between the imperialist blocs; the wars of the oppressed people against imperialism; and the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, which in some countries developed to the level of armed struggle.

These differing aspects led on the one hand to the growth of socialist forces, the defeat of the fascist imperialist powers, the weakening of imperialism and the quickening tempo of the national liberation struggles. On the other hand they led to a recasting of the imperialist division of the world with the US assuming the role of chief bandit among the imperialists.

There were great revolutionary achievements in the course of World War II; at the same time it is impossible not to see serious errors and begin the collective process of deeply summing them up so as to be better prepared for coming storms. In particular we can note the error of eclectically combining the above mentioned contradictions. In practical political terms, the diplomatic struggle and international agreements of the Soviet Union became increasingly confounded with the activities of the Communist Parties making up the Comintern. This problem also contributed to strong tendencies to portray the non-fascist powers as something other than what they truly were - imperialists who would have to be overthrown. In the European countries occupied by German fascist troops it was not incorrect for the Communist Parties to take tactical advantage of national sentiments from the standpoint of mobilising the masses, but errors were made due to raising such tactical measures to the level of strategy. Liberation struggles in colonies under the domination of the allied imperialist powers were also held back due to such erroneous views.

While cherishing and upholding the monumental revolutionary struggles and victories that took place in this important period and the years immediately following, today's Marxist-Leninists will have to deepen their understanding of these errors and their basis.

The socialist camp that emerged from the Second World War was never solid. Little revolutionary transformation was carried out in most of the Eastern European Peoples' Democracies. In the Soviet Union itself powerful revisionist forces unleashed going into, in the course of, and in the aftermath of the Second World War grew in strength and influence. In 1956, following the death of Stalin, these revisionist forces led by Khrushchev succeeded in capturing political power, attacked Marxism-Leninism on all fronts and restored capitalism in that country.

The coup d'etat of Khrushchev and the revisionists in the Soviet Union was also, it is clear now, the coup de grace to the communist movement as it had previously existed. The widespread cancer of revisionism had already consumed many (including some of the most influential) parties that had made up the Comintern. In many others only the thinnest veneer covered parties that were fast degenerating to positions of modern revisionism while the revolutionary elements were being suffocated. In the Soviet Union itself after Stalin's death the genuine Marxist-Leninists and the Soviet proletariat, weakened by the war and disarmed by serious political and ideological errors, proved incapable of mounting any serious riposte to the revisionist betrayers.

Mao Tsetung, the Cultural Revolution and the Marxist-Leninist Movement

Beginning immediately after the coup d'etat of Khrushchev, Mao Tsetung and the Marxist-Leninists in the Chinese Communist Party began to analyse the developments in the Soviet Union and in the international communist movement and to struggle against modern revisionism. In 1963 the publication of A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement (the 25-point letter) was an all-round and public condemnation of revisionism and a call to the genuine Marxist-Leninists of all countries. The contemporary Marxist-Leninist movement has as its origin this historic appeal and the polemics that accompanied it.

In the Proposal and the polemics Mao and the Chinese Communist Party correctly

- * upheld the Leninist position on the dictatorship of the proletariat and refuted the revisionist theory of "state of the whole people";
- * upheld the necessity of armed revolution and opposed the strategy of a "peaceful transition to socialism";
- * supported and encouraged the development of the national wars of liberation of the oppressed peoples; exposing the sham independence

of "neo-colonialism" and refuting the revisionist position that the wars of liberation should be avoided because they endanger "world peace";

- * made an overall positive evaluation of Stalin and the experience of construction of socialism in the USSR and refuted the slanders directed against Stalin of being a "butcher" and a "tyrant", while making some important criticisms of Stalin's errors;

- * opposed the efforts of Khrushchev to impose a revisionist line on other parties as well as criticising Thorez, Togliatti, Tito and other modern revisionists;

- * put forward in an embryonic form the thesis Mao Tsetung was developing concerning the class nature of socialism and carrying through the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat;

- * called for a thorough study of the historical experience of the international communist movement and the roots of revisionism.

These points, as well as others contained in the Proposal and the polemics were and remain vital elements to distinguish Marxism-Leninism from revisionism. Through these polemics Mao and the Chinese Communist Party encouraged the Marxist-Leninists to split from the revisionists and form new proletarian revolutionary parties. The polemics represented a radical rupture with modern revisionism and a sufficient basis for the Marxist-Leninists to go forward into battle. Yet, on a number of questions, the criticism of revisionism was not thorough enough and some erroneous views were incorporated even while criticising others. Exactly because of the important role these polemics and Mao and the Chinese Communist Party played in giving birth to a new Marxist-Leninist movement it is correct and necessary to consider the secondary, negative aspect in the polemics and in the struggle waged by the Communist Party of China in the international communist movement.

In relation to the imperialist countries, the Proposal put forward the view that "In the capitalist countries which US imperialism controls or is trying to control, the working class and the people should direct their attacks mainly against US imperialism, but also against their own monopoly capitalists and other reactionary forces who are betraying the national interests." This view, which seriously affected the development of the Marxist-Leninist movement in these types of countries, obscures the fact that in imperialist countries the "national interests" are imperialist interests and are not betrayed, but on the contrary defended, by the ruling monopoly capitalist class despite whatever alliances it may make with other imperialist powers and despite the inevitably unequal nature of such an alliance. The proletariat of these countries is thus encouraged

to strive to outbid the imperialist bourgeoisie as the best defenders of its own interests. This view had a long history in the international communist movement and should be broken with.

While the CPC paid great attention to the development of Marxist-Leninist parties in opposition to the revisionists they did not find the necessary forms and ways to develop the international unity of the communists. Despite contributions to the ideological and political unity this was not reflected by efforts to build organisational unity on a world scale. The CPC had an exaggerated understanding of the negative aspects of the Comintern, mainly those caused by over-centralisation, which led to crushing the initiative and independence of constituent communist parties. While the CPC correctly criticised the concept of Father party, pointed out its harmful influence within the international communist movement, and stressed the principles of fraternal relations between parties, the lack of an organised forum for debating views and achieving a common viewpoint did not help resolve this problem but in fact exacerbated it.

If the theoretical struggle against modern revisionism played a vital role in the rebuilding of a Marxist-Leninist movement it was especially the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, an unprecedented new form of struggle, itself in large part a fruit of this combat against modern revisionism, that gave rise to a whole new generation of Marxist-Leninists. The tens of millions of workers, peasants and revolutionary youth who went into battle to overthrow the capitalist roaders entrenched in the party and state apparatus and to further revolutionise society struck a vibrant chord among millions of people across the world who were rising up as part of the revolutionary upsurge that swept the world in the 1960s and early 1970s.

The Cultural Revolution represents the most advanced experience of the proletarian dictatorship and the revolutionising of society. For the first time the workers and other revolutionary elements were armed with a clear understanding of the nature of the class struggle under socialism; of the necessity to rise up and overthrow the capitalist roaders who would inevitably emerge from within the socialist society and which are especially concentrated in the leadership of the party itself and to struggle to further advance the socialist transformation and thus dig away at the soil which engenders these capitalist elements. Great victories were won in the course of the Cultural Revolution which prevented the revisionist restoration in China for a decade and led to great socialist transformations in education, literature and art, scientific research and other elements of the superstructure. Millions of workers and other revolutionaries greatly

deepened their class consciousness and mastery of Marxism-Leninism in the course of fierce ideological and political struggle and their capacity to wield political power was further increased. The Cultural Revolution was waged as part of the international struggle of the proletariat and was a training ground in proletarian internationalism, manifested not only by the support given to revolutionary struggles throughout the world but also by the real sacrifices made by the Chinese people to render this support. Revolutionary leaders emerged such as Chiang Ching and Chang Chun-chiao, who stood alongside and led the masses into battle against the revisionists and who continued to defend Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought in the face of bitter defeat.

Lenin said, "Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat". In the light of the invaluable lessons and advances achieved through the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution led by Mao Tsetung, this criterion put forward by Lenin has been further sharpened. Now it can be stated that only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and to the recognition of the objective existence of classes, antagonistic class contradictions and of the continuation of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat throughout the whole period of socialism until communism. And as Mao so powerfully stated, "Lack of clarity on this question will lead to revisionism."

The Cultural Revolution was the living proof of the vitality of Marxism-Leninism. It showed that the proletarian revolution was unlike all previous revolutions which could only result in one exploiting system replacing another. It was a source of great inspiration to the revolutionaries in all countries. For all these reasons the Cultural Revolution and Mao Tsetung earned the lasting and vicious abuse of all reactionaries and revisionists and for these same reasons the Cultural Revolution remains an indispensable part of the revolutionary legacy of the international communist movement.

Despite the tremendous victories of the Cultural Revolution the revisionists in the Chinese party and state continued to maintain important positions and promoted lines and policies which did considerable harm to the still fragile efforts to rebuild a genuine international communist movement. The revisionists in China, who controlled to a large degree its diplomacy and the relations between the Chinese Communist Party and other Marxist-Leninist parties, turned their backs on the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat and the oppressed peoples or tried to subordinate these struggles to the state interests of China. Reactionary

despots were falsely labeled as "anti-imperialists" and increasingly under the banner of a worldwide struggle against "hegemonism" certain imperialist powers of the Western bloc were portrayed as intermediate or even positive forces in the world. Even during this period many of the pro-Chinese Marxist-Leninist parties supported by the revisionists in the CPC began to shamelessly tail the bourgeoisie and even support or acquiesce in imperialist adventures and war preparations aimed at the Soviet Union which was increasingly seen as the "main enemy" in the whole world. All these tendencies blossomed fully with the coup d'etat in China and the revisionists' subsequent elaboration of the "Three Worlds Theory" which they attempted to shove down the throats of the international communist movement. The Marxist-Leninists have correctly refuted the revisionist slander that the "Three Worlds Theory" was put forward by Mao Tsetung. However this is not enough. The criticism of the "Three Worlds Theory" must be deepened by criticising the concepts underlying it, and the origins must be investigated. Here it is important to note that the revisionist usurpers had to publicly condemn Mao's closest comrades in arms for opposing this counter-revolutionary theory.

One of the essential contradictions or features of the epoch of imperialism and the proletarian revolution is the contradiction between socialist states and imperialist states. While at the present time this contradiction has been temporarily eliminated as a result of the revisionist transformation of a number of formerly socialist states, it is no less true that summing up the experience of the communist movement in handling this contradiction remains an important theoretical task, for it is inevitable that the proletariat will again find itself in a position where one or a number of socialist states will be confronted with the existence of predatory imperialist enemies.

In 1976 shortly after the death of Mao Tsetung the capitalist roaders in China launched a vicious coup d'etat which reversed the verdicts of the Cultural Revolution, overthrew the revolutionaries in the leadership of the CPC, instituted an all-round revisionist programme and capitulated to imperialism.

This coup d'etat met with resistance from the revolutionaries in the Chinese Communist Party who have continued to struggle for a restoration of proletarian rule in that country. Internationally, revolutionary communists in many countries saw through the revisionist line of Hua Kuo-feng and Teng Hsiao-ping and criticised and exposed the capitalist roaders in China. This resistance, in China and internationally, to the coup d'etat is a testimony to the farsighted revolutionary leadership of Mao Tsetung who tirelessly worked to arm the proletariat and the Marxist-

Leninists with an appraisal of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat and the possibility of a capitalist restoration. The theoretical work done by the proletarian headquarters, guided by Mao Tsetung, also played a major role in equipping Marxist-Leninists with a correct understanding of the nature of the contradictions in socialist society and remains an important elaboration of Mao Tsetung Thought. This left the Marxist-Leninist movement ideologically better prepared for the tragic events in 1976 than they were on the occasion of the revisionist coup in the Soviet Union twenty years earlier, despite being forced to face this situation where there was no socialist country.

Nevertheless it was inevitable that the restoration of capitalism in a country comprising one quarter of the world's population and the revisionist capture of the Marxist-Leninist party that had been in the vanguard of the international movement would profoundly affect the world revolutionary struggle and the Marxist-Leninist movement. Many parties previously part of the international communist movement embraced the revisionists in China and their "Three Worlds Theory", and totally abandoned revolutionary struggle. As a result of this these parties spread some demoralisation and, on the other hand, lost the confidence of the revolutionary elements and have undergone a great crisis or collapsed entirely. Even among some other Marxist-Leninist forces that refused to follow the leadership of the Chinese revisionists, the loss in China led to demoralisation and the putting into question of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. This tendency was further exacerbated when Enver Hoxha and the PLA launched an all out attack on Mao Tsetung Thought.

While a certain crisis was to be expected in the international communist movement following the coup d'etat in China, the depth of this crisis and the difficulty in putting an end to it indicated that revisionism in different forms was already strong in the Marxist-Leninist movement by 1976. The Marxist-Leninists must continue to carry out investigation and study into the roots of revisionism, in both the more recent period and in previous periods in the international movement, and continue to wage struggle against the continuing revisionist influence while continuing to uphold and build upon the basic principles forged in the revolutionary advances made by the international proletariat and the communist movement throughout its history.

The Tasks of Revolutionary Communists

The task of revolutionary communists in all countries is to hasten the development of the world revolution - the overthrow of imperialism and reaction by the proletariat and the revolutionary masses; the

establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in accordance with the necessary stages and alliances in different countries; and the struggle to eliminate all the material and ideological vestiges of exploiting society and thus achieve classless society, communism, throughout the world. First and foremost communists must remember and act in accordance with their reason for being, otherwise they are of no use to the revolution, and worse, degenerate into obstacles in its path.

Experience has shown that proletarian revolution can only be achieved and carried forward by a genuine proletarian party based on the science of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, constructed on Leninist lines, capable of attracting and training the best revolutionary elements among the proletariat and other sections of the masses. Today there is no such party in most countries in the world and even where such parties exist they are generally not ideologically or organizationally strong enough to meet the requirements and the opportunities of the coming period. For these reasons the establishment and strengthening of genuine Marxist-Leninist parties is a vital task for the entire international communist movement.

In countries where no Marxist-Leninist party exists the immediate task facing the revolutionary communists there is to form such a party with the aid of the international communist movement. The key to the establishment of the party is the development of a correct political line and programme, both as regards the particularities in a given country and the overall world situation. The Marxist-Leninist party must be built in close relationship with carrying out revolutionary work among the masses, implementing a revolutionary mass line, and, in particular, addressing and resolving the pressing political questions which must be resolved in order for the revolutionary movement to advance. If this is not done the task of party building can become sterile, divorced from revolutionary practice and lead nowhere. On the other hand it is just as wrong to make the formation of the party dependent upon the rallying of a certain number of members or to insist that a certain quantitative influence among the masses be achieved before the party's formation. In most cases when the party is first formed, it will be composed of a relatively small number of members; in any event, the task of rallying the revolutionary elements to the party's banner and deepening the influence of the party among the proletariat and masses is a constant task.

The Marxist-Leninist party must be built and strengthened in the course of waging an active ideological struggle against bourgeois and petit-bourgeois influences in its ranks. In building the vanguard party, Marxist-Leninists should learn from the experience of the Cultural

revolution through which Mao fought to insure the party's proletarian character and vanguard role. Mao's understanding of the two-line struggle in the party, his criticisms of erroneous ideas of "a monolithic party" and his emphasis on the need for the ideological remoulding of party members enriched the basic concept of the vanguard party developed by Lenin. It is important to create a political situation in which there are both centralism and democracy, both discipline and freedom, both unity of will and personal ease of mind and liveliness.

Without being guided by revolutionary theory, practice gropes in the dark. The Marxist-Leninist parties, and the international communist movement as a whole, must deepen their grasp of revolutionary theory in the course of making a concrete analysis of concrete conditions in society and the world. Marxist-Leninists must not abandon the field of analysis of new phenomena to others and must actively wage the theoretical struggle concerning all the vital problems and questions of debate in the revolutionary movement and society as a whole.

The Marxist-Leninist party must be built and organised with the fundamental objective of seizing power firmly in mind and undertake the task of preparing itself and the proletariat and revolutionary masses organizationally, politically and ideologically. As the Joint Communiqué of Autumn 1980 put it, "In short, communists are advocates of revolutionary warfare." This revolutionary war and other forms of revolutionary struggle must be carried out as a key arena for training the revolutionary masses to be capable of wielding political power and transforming society. Even when conditions do not yet exist for the armed struggle of the masses, communists must carry out the necessary work in preparation for the emergence of such conditions. This principle has a whole series of implications for the Marxist-Leninist parties, regardless of the differences in tasks and stages the revolution will go through in different countries, including that the party, the backbone of which must be organised on an illegal basis, should be prepared to withstand the repression of the reactionaries who will never peacefully tolerate for long a genuine revolutionary party.

While engaging in, or preparing for, the armed struggle for power the Marxist-Leninist party should utilise different forms of legal and/or open work. History has shown that such work while important and sometimes even critical in a given period, must be coupled with exposure of the class nature of bourgeois democracy and in no circumstances should the communists drop their guard and fail to take the necessary measures to insure the continued ability of the party to carry out revolutionary work when different legal possibilities disappear. Past

experiences of handling the contradiction between utilising legal and open possibilities without falling into legalism and parliamentary cretinism should be summed up and the appropriate lessons drawn.

To carry out its revolutionary tasks, to prepare the masses for the seizure of power, the Marxist-Leninist party must be armed with a regularly appearing communist press, even though the press will have a different role in relation to the tasks posed by the path of revolution in the two types of countries. The communist press must be neither petty and narrow nor dry and dogmatic. It must strive to arm the class conscious proletariat and others with an all-round view of society and the world, principally through analysis and political exposure following close on the heel of events.

The Marxist-Leninist party in every country must be built as a contingent of the international communist movement and must carry out its struggle as part of, and subordinate to, the worldwide struggle for communism. The party must educate its own ranks, the class conscious workers and the revolutionary masses in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, recognising that internationalism is not simply the support rendered of the proletariat in one country to another but, more importantly, a reflection of the fact that the proletariat is a single class worldwide with a single class interest, faces a world system of imperialism, and has the task of liberating all of humanity.

Such internationalist education and propaganda is an indispensable part of preparing the party and proletariat to continue to carry the revolution forward after political power has been achieved in a given country. The achievement of political power, and even the establishment of a socialist system not based on exploitation, must be seen not as the end in itself but as one part of a long transition period full of twists and turns and inevitable setbacks as well as advances until the goal of worldwide communism has been achieved.

Tasks in the Colonial, Semi (or Neo) Colonial Countries

The colonial (or neo-colonial) countries subjugated by imperialism have constituted the main arena of the worldwide struggle of the proletariat in the period since World War II and up until the present day. In this period a great deal of experience has been achieved in waging revolutionary struggle, including revolutionary warfare. Imperialism has been handed extremely serious defeats and the proletariat has won imposing victories including the establishment of socialist countries. At the same time the communist movement has obtained bitter experience where the revolutionary masses in these countries have waged heroic

struggles, including wars of national liberation, which have not led to the establishment of political power by the proletariat and its allies but where the fruits of the victories of the people have been picked by new exploiters usually in league with one or another Imperialist power(s). All of this shows that the international communist movement has a very important task to critically sum up the several decades of experience in waging revolution in these kinds of countries.

The point of reference for elaborating revolutionary strategy and tactics in the colonial, semi (or neo) colonial countries remains the theory developed by Mao Tsetung in the long years of revolutionary warfare in China.

The target of the revolution in countries of this kind is foreign imperialism and the comprador-bureaucrat bourgeoisie and feudals, which are classes closely linked to and dependent on imperialism. In these countries the revolution will pass through two stages: a first, new democratic revolution which leads directly to the second, socialist revolution. The character, target and tasks of the first stage of the revolution enables and requires the proletariat to form a broad united front of all classes and strata that can be won to support the new democratic programme. It must do so, however, on the basis of developing and strengthening the independent forces of the proletariat, including in the appropriate conditions its own armed forces and establishing the hegemony of the proletariat among the other sections of the revolutionary masses, especially the poor peasants. The cornerstone of this alliance is the worker-peasant alliance and the carrying out of the agrarian revolution (i.e. the struggle against semi-feudal exploitation in the countryside and/or the fulfillment of the slogan "land to the tiller") occupies a central part of the new democratic programme.

In these countries the exploitation of the proletariat and the masses is severe, the outrages of imperialist domination constant, and the ruling classes usually exercise their dictatorship nakedly and brutally and even when they utilise the bourgeois-democratic or parliamentary form their dictatorship is only very thinly veiled. This situation leads to frequent revolutionary struggles on the part of the proletariat, the peasants and other sections of the masses which often take the form of armed struggle. For all these reasons, including the lopsided and distorted development in these countries which often makes it difficult for the reactionary classes to maintain stable rule and to consolidate their power throughout the state, it is often the case that the revolution takes the form of protracted revolutionary warfare in which the revolutionary forces are able to establish base areas of one type or another in the countryside and carry out the basic strategy of surrounding the city by the countryside.

The key to carrying out a new democratic revolution is the independent role of the proletariat and its ability, through its Marxist-Leninist party, to establish its hegemony in the revolutionary struggle. Experience has shown again and again that even when a section of the national bourgeoisie joins the revolutionary movement, it will not and cannot lead a new democratic revolution, to say nothing of carrying this revolution through to completion. Similarly, history demonstrates the bankruptcy of an "anti-imperialist front" (or similar "revolutionary front") which is not led by a Marxist-Leninist party, even when such a front or forces within it adopt a "Marxist" (actually pseudo-Marxist) colouration. While such revolutionary formations have led heroic struggles and even delivered powerful blows to the imperialists they have been proven to be ideologically and organisationally incapable of resisting imperialist and bourgeois influences. Even where such forces have seized power they have been incapable of carrying through a thoroughgoing revolutionary transformation of society and end up, sooner or later, being overthrown by the imperialists or themselves becoming a new reactionary ruling power in league with imperialists.

In conditions when the ruling classes exercise their brutal or fascist dictatorship, the communist party can utilise the contradictions this gives rise to in favour of the new democratic revolution and engage in temporary agreements or alliances with other class forces. However, this can only be carried out successfully if the party maintains its leadership, utilising such alliances within the overall and principal task of carrying the revolution to completion without making a strategic stage out of the struggle against dictatorship since the content of the anti-fascist struggle is nothing other than the content of the new democratic revolution.

The Marxist-Leninist party must arm the proletariat and the revolutionary masses not only with an understanding of the immediate task of carrying through the new democratic revolution and the role and conflicting interests of different class forces, friend and foe alike, but also of the need to prepare the transition to the socialist revolution and of the ultimate goal of worldwide communism.

For Marxist-Leninists it is a principle that the party must lead revolutionary warfare in such a way that it is a genuine war of the masses. The Marxist-Leninists must strive, even in the difficult circumstances of waging warfare, to carry out widespread political education and to raise the theoretical and ideological level of the masses. For this it is necessary to maintain and develop a regular communist press as well as to carry the revolution into the cultural sphere.

The main deviation in the recent period in the colonial, semi (or

neo) colonial countries has been and remains the tendency to deny or negate this basic orientation for the revolutionary movement in these types of countries: the negation of the leading role of the proletariat and the Marxist-Leninist party; the rejection or opportunist perversion of people's war; the abandonment of building a united front, based upon the worker-peasant alliance and under the leadership of the proletariat.

This revisionist deviation has taken on in the past both a "left" and an openly right-wing form. The modern revisionists preached, especially in the past, the "peaceful transition to socialism" and promoted the leadership of the bourgeoisie in the national liberation struggle. However this openly capitulationist, right-wing revisionism always corresponded with, and has become increasingly intermingled with, a kind of "left" armed revisionism, promoted at times by the Cuban leadership and others, which separated the armed struggle from the masses and preached a line of combining revolutionary stages into one single "socialist" revolution, which in fact meant appealing to the workers on the narrowest of bases and negating the necessity of the working class to lead the peasantry and others in thoroughly eliminating imperialism and the backward and distorted economic and social relations that foreign capital thrives on and reinforces. Today this form of revisionism is one of the major planks of the social-imperialist attempt to penetrate and control national liberation struggles.

In order for the revolutionary movement in the colonial, semi (or neo) colonial countries to develop in a correct direction it is necessary for the Marxist-Leninists to continue to step up the struggle against the revisionists in all their forms and to uphold the work of Mao Tsetung as an indispensable theoretical basis for further analysing the concrete conditions in different countries of this type and developing the appropriate political line.

At the same time it is necessary to take note of other, secondary, deviations that have appeared amongst the genuine revolutionary forces who have strived to carry out a revolutionary line in the colonial and dependent countries. First of all it must be noted that the countries comprising the oppressed nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America are not a monolithic bloc and have considerable differences in relation to their class composition, the form of imperialist domination and their position vis a vis the world situation as a whole. Tendencies to fail to carry out a thorough and scientific study of these problems, to mechanically copy the previous experience of the international proletariat or to fail to take notice of changes in the international situation and in particular countries can only harm the cause of the revolution and weaken the Marxist-Leninist forces.

In the 1960s and early 1970s Marxist-Leninist forces in a great many countries, under the influence of the Cultural Revolution in China and as part of the general worldwide revolutionary upsurge, joined with sections of the masses in waging armed revolutionary warfare. In a number of countries the Marxist-Leninist forces were able to rally considerable sections of the population to the revolutionary banner and maintain the Marxist-Leninist party and armed forces of the masses despite the savage counter-revolutionary repression. It was inevitable that these early attempts at building new, Marxist-Leninist parties and the launching of armed struggle would be marked by a certain primitiveness and that ideological and political weaknesses would manifest themselves, and it is, of course, not surprising that the imperialists and revisionists would seize upon these errors and weaknesses to condemn the revolutionaries as "ultra-leftists" or worse. Nevertheless these experiences must, in general, be upheld as an important part of the legacy of the Marxist-Leninist movement which helped lay the basis for further advances.

In the oppressed countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America a continuous revolutionary situation generally exists. But it is important to understand this correctly: the revolutionary situation does not follow a straight line; it has its ebbs and flows. The communist parties should keep this dynamic in mind. They should not fall into one-sidedness in the form of asserting that the commencement and the final victory of people's war depends totally on the subjective factor (the communist), a view often associated with "Lin Piaoism". Although at all times some form of armed struggle is generally both desirable and necessary to carry out the tasks of class struggle in these countries, during certain periods armed struggle may be the principal form of struggle and at other times it may not be.

When the revolutionary situation is ebbing, the communist parties should determine appropriate tactics and not fall into rash and impatient advances. In such situations, political and organisational preparations necessary to carry out protracted people's war should by no means be neglected and forms of struggle and organisation suitable for the concrete conditions should be determined in order to hasten the development of the revolution while awaiting favourable conditions for further advance. It is necessary to combat any erroneous view which would postpone the commencement of armed struggle or the utilisation of any form of armed struggle until conditions become favourable for revolutionary warfare throughout the country. This view negates the uneven development of revolution and revolutionary situations in these countries, in opposition to

Mao's statement, "A single spark can start a prairie fire." It is also important to note that the overall international situation has an influence on the revolution in a particular country; not taking this into account leaves the Marxist-Leninists unprepared to seize the opportunity when the revolutionary process is hastened by the developments on the world scale.

Today as the danger of a new imperialist war is rapidly developing, the Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations in the neocolonial countries are also confronted with the urgent task of devoting attention to the struggle against imperialist war. Communists must take into account the possibility that many of these countries may be dragged into the imperialist war according to the position these countries have in relation to the different imperialist blocs. Communist parties must consider the various concrete situations that might arise in the midst of such an imperialist war and develop their thinking in relation to these situations. Given the objective conditions in these countries the masses are generally less aware of the danger and consequences of an imperialist war and the Marxist-Leninists must educate them. In the event of an imperialist war the most important task of the Marxist-Leninists is to utilise the favourable opportunities thrown up by such a war to intensify the revolutionary struggle and turn the imperialist war into a revolutionary war against imperialism and reaction.

The Joint Communique of Autumn 1980 pointed out:

There is an undeniable tendency for imperialism to introduce significant elements of capitalist relations in the countries it dominates. In certain dependent countries capitalist development has gone so far that it is not correct to characterize them as semifeudal. It is better to call them predominantly capitalist even while important elements or remnants of feudal or semi-feudal production relations and their reflection in the superstructure may still exist.

In such countries a concrete analysis must be made of these conditions and appropriate conclusions concerning the path, tasks, character and alignment of class forces must be drawn. In all events, foreign imperialism remains a target of the revolution.

The analysis of the implications of the increased introduction of capitalist relations in the countries dominated by imperialism, as well as the specific case of those oppressed countries which can correctly be termed "predominantly capitalist," remains an important task for the international movement. Nevertheless some important conclusions can be drawn today.

The view that the combination of formal political independence and the introduction of widespread capitalist relations has eliminated the need for a new democratic revolution in most or many of the former direct colonies is wrong and dangerous. This view, promoted by various Trotskyites, social-democrats and petit-bourgeois critics of revolutionary Marxism, holds that there is no qualitative distinction between imperialism and those nations oppressed by it, thus eliminating at a single stroke one of the most important features of the imperialist epoch.

In fact imperialism continues to be a fetter on the productive forces in the countries it exploits. The capitalist "development" which it undeniably introduces to greater or lesser degrees does not lead to an articulated, national market and a "classical" capitalist economic system but to an extremely lopsided development dependent on and in the interests of foreign capital.

Even in the predominantly capitalist oppressed countries foreign imperialism along with its domestic props remain the principal target of the revolution in its first stage. While the path of the revolution in these countries will often be considerably different than those in which semi-feudal relations prevail, it is still necessary, in general, for the revolution to pass through a democratic, anti-imperialist stage before the socialist revolution can be begun.

The relative weight of the cities in relation to the countryside, both politically and militarily, is an extremely important question that is posed by the increased capitalist development of some oppressed countries. In some of these countries it is correct to begin the armed struggle by launching insurrections in the city and not to follow the model of surrounding the cities by the countryside. Moreover, even in countries where the path of revolution is that of surrounding the city by the countryside, situations in which a mass upheaval leads to uprisings and insurrections in the cities can occur and the party should be prepared to utilise such situations within its overall strategy. However in both these situations, the party's ability to mobilise the peasants to take part in the revolution under proletarian leadership is critical to its success.

Due to the establishment of a central state structure prior to the process of capitalist development, semi (or neo) colonial countries, in the main, have multi-national social formations within them, in a large number of cases these states have been created by the imperialists themselves. Furthermore, the borders of these states have been determined as a consequence of Imperialist occupations and machinations. Thus it is generally the case that within the state borders

of countries oppressed by imperialism, oppressed nations, national inequality and ruthless national oppression exist. In our era, the national question has ceased to be an internal question of single countries and has become subordinate to the general question of the world proletarian revolution, hence its thoroughgoing resolution has become directly dependent on the struggle against imperialism. Within this context Marxist-Leninists should uphold the right of self-determination of oppressed nations in the multinational semi-colonial states.

Thus it can be said that the Marxist-Leninists in the colonial and neo-colonial countries confront a double task on the ideological and political front. They must, on the one hand, continue to defend and uphold the basic teachings of Mao concerning the character and path of the revolution in those types of countries, as well as defending and building upon the revolutionary attempts that (to paraphrase Lenin) accompanied the "mad years" of the 1960s. At the same time, the revolutionary communists must apply the critical Marxist spirit to analysing both past experience as well as the current situation and developments that affect the course of the revolution in these countries.

The Imperialist Countries

As the Joint Communique pointed out, in the imperialist countries "the October Revolution remains the basic point of reference for Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics." It is necessary to reaffirm and deepen this point because the basic Leninist principles regarding the preparation for and waging of the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries have long been buried under an avalanche of revisionist distortion.

Lenin correctly stressed the need for communists to develop an all-round political movement of the workers capable, when conditions ripen, of leading the revolutionary forces in society in an insurrection aimed against the reactionary state power. He correctly pointed out that such a revolutionary movement could not grow spontaneously out of the day-to-day economic struggles of the workers and that, further, these struggles were not the most important arena of revolutionary work. He argued that the revolutionaries must "divert" the spontaneous movement of the masses away from a narrow struggle over the conditions and sale of labour power. In order to do this it is necessary to bring political consciousness to the workers from "outside" their immediate experience, above all through political exposure and analysis of all the major events in society in every sphere: political, cultural, scientific, etc. Only in this way could a class conscious sector of the proletariat be formed - conscious of its revolutionary tasks and of the nature and role of all the other class forces in society.

Lenin emphasized too that as crucial as agitation and propaganda are, they are not enough. Only through class struggle, especially political and revolutionary struggle, could the masses fully develop their revolutionary consciousness and fighting capacity. In this way, and together with the all-round work of the communists, the masses learn through their own experience and are educated in the furnace of class struggle.

Far from preaching the "monolithic unity of the working class," Lenin demonstrated that imperialism inevitably leads to a "shift in class relations," to a split in the working class in the imperialist countries between the oppressed and exploited proletariat and an upper section of the workers benefiting from and in league with the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Lenin was also the vigorous opponent of all those who, in one form or another, sought to identify the interests of the proletariat with that of "its own" imperialist bourgeoisie. He vigorously fought for a line of revolutionary defeatism in relation to imperialist war and consistently upheld the banner of proletarian internationalism in opposition to the tattered "national flag" of the bourgeoisie.

Lenin also analysed that the possibility for making revolution in the capitalist countries was linked to the development of revolutionary situations which appear infrequently in these countries but which concentrate the fundamental contradictions of capitalism. He analysed the error of the Second International of banking everything on the gradual and peaceful accumulation of socialist influence among the masses and argued instead that the task of communists in relatively 'peaceful' times was to prepare for the exceptional moments in history when revolutionary transformations in these types of countries are possible and when the activities of the revolutionaries mark the society and the world for "decades to come."

Despite the clarity of Lenin on these subjects, and their centrality to the overall body of scientific socialist theory, the Leninists have quite often chosen to ignore it.

Early in the history of the Third International, in certain Communist Parties, erroneous conceptions of "mass parties" in non-revolutionary situations and economist deviations appeared. These tendencies grew in strength and became articles of faith in the communist movement, along with other wrong and extremely dangerous tendencies to champion bourgeois national interests in the imperialist countries.

Unfortunately, the rupture with modern revisionism during the 1960s was notably incomplete especially regarding the strategy and policies of communists in the imperialist countries. While the "peaceful road" was rejected and criticised and the need for an eventual armed struggle was propagated, little effort was given to summing up the historical lessons of revisionism in the communist movement in the capitalist countries. In general, the Marxist-Leninist forces adopted a course of work based more upon the negative experiences of some of the Communist parties during the 1930s than on the "October Road" forged under Lenin's leadership.

In most imperialist countries during this period, a significant section of new-born revolutionary forces took wrong turns into policies of adventurism or left sectarianism. But especially as time wore on, the new Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations generally adopted a line making the centre of their work concentrating on the day-to-day struggles of the workers and battling with the revisionists and bourgeois trade union officials for the leadership of these struggles. This worship of the "average worker" and the preoccupation with the economic struggle did little in terms of actually winning workers to a revolutionary position and to the Marxist-Leninist parties but did unfortunately have a corrosive effect on the Marxist-Leninist parties themselves and on their members. The economist line dominating the Marxist-Leninist movement in these countries stood in sharp contrast to the very revolutionary principles on which it was founded. The young militants who made up the bulk of these parties joined them because they wanted to contribute to the worldwide revolutionary process, because they wanted to struggle for communism. The desire to spread the revolutionary movement of the 1960s to the proletariat and to merge with the workers, inspired to no small degree by the experience of the revolutionary youth in the Cultural Revolution, was a powerful and correct revolutionary sentiment which, however, became misled and distorted under the influence of economism. As the worldwide revolutionary upsurge receded, the Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations tended to move further and further to the right in an effort to obtain a mass following on a non-revolutionary basis. The members of these organisations saw less and less connection with the preparation for revolution and the tasks they were actually pursuing. The results of this were distortion, demoralisation and the strengthening of opportunism.

All of this was further compounded by confusion among the Marxist-Leninists regarding the "national tasks" (or more precisely, the tasks of them) in the imperialist countries. As was pointed out, the polemics of the Chinese Communist Party contained serious errors in this regard,

errors which were incorporated by the Marxist-Leninist movement. The correct, internationalist desire to fight against US imperialism (correctly singled out as the main bastion of world reaction at that time) increasingly mingled with a promotion of the national interests of the imperialist states insofar as they came into contradiction with the US and (especially from the early 1970s on) with the Soviet Union. Increasingly wrong positions were taken by a great many Marxist-Leninist parties concerning world affairs, positions which went against internationalism and objectively aligned the positions of these parties on these issues with imperialist war preparations and counter-revolutionary suppression. As pointed out earlier, some Marxist-Leninist parties in the imperialist countries had already adopted a thoroughly social-chauvinist line even before the coup d'etat in China in 1976.

These two serious and related errors, economism and social-chauvinism (including the embryonic revisionist "Three Worlds Theory"), were the main subjective factors that contributed to the virtual collapse in Europe of the Marxist-Leninist movement following the coup d'etat in China. The communists in the advanced capitalist countries must give great emphasis to the struggle against the influence of these deviations in building and strengthening genuine Marxist-Leninist parties.

As the Marxist-Leninist movement floundered in most of the advanced capitalist countries some sections of the revolutionary youth attempted to find a "new ideology" and a different path. The attraction of anarchism and other forms of petit-bourgeois radicalism for significant sections of the revolutionary youth reflected a desire to bring about revolutionary change. Nevertheless these forces are incapable of playing a fully revolutionary role insofar as they lack the only thoroughly revolutionary ideology, Marxism. In some countries small numbers of people have turned to terrorism, an ideology and political line which does not rely on the revolutionary masses and has no correct perspective of a revolutionary overthrow of imperialism. While these terrorist movements like to appear very "revolutionary," they have also incorporated, more often than not, a whole series of revisionist and reformist deviations such as "the liberation struggle" in imperialist countries, the defence of the imperialist Soviet Union, and so forth. These movements share with economism the fundamental failure to grasp the centrality of raising the political consciousness of the masses and leading them in political struggle, as preparation for revolution.

While the "excavating" of basic Leninist principles is the starting point for the elaboration of a revolutionary line in the imperialist countries,

it is still only a beginning. The imperialist countries of today differ in important respects from turn-of-the-century Russia and other imperialist countries at that time and a great deal of experience (positive and negative) in trying to build a revolutionary movement in these countries has been accumulated since the October Revolution.

The process of imperialist development has led to a number of important changes in these countries - including the virtual elimination of a peasantry in some of them, the rapid growth of new sections of the petit bourgeoisie, and so forth. The most important development, however, is the greatly increased parasitism of the imperialist states based on the plunder of the oppressed nations, and a further polarisation of the working class that goes along with it.

There is in the imperialist countries a large, well entrenched and influential labour aristocracy which benefits from imperialism and willingly serves its interests. Imperialism sharpens the contradiction between these workers and a significant strata of the working class [including its industrial reserve army - the unemployed] who are impoverished and who desire and are inclined to fight for a radical change. In the principal Western imperialist states this lower section of the working class is composed in no small measure of immigrant workers from the dominated countries as well as, in some cases, national minorities and oppressed nations from within the imperialist states themselves. It is this lower section of the working class that is the most important element of the social base of the party of the proletariat in the imperialist countries.

In between these two sections of the workers there is a large number, sometimes even a majority, of workers who, while not benefitting from imperialism in the manner of the labour aristocracy, have been greatly influenced by a long period of relative prosperity and who are not, in ordinary times, in a revolutionary mood. The fight for the allegiance of the broad masses of these workers as they are propelled into motion by deepening crisis and especially as a revolutionary situation develops, will be an important element in the struggle between the revolutionary, class conscious proletarians led by the Marxist-Leninist party and the reactionary labour aristocracy and its political expressions. While not neglecting to carry out work among the bourgeoisified sections of the working class the Marxist-Leninist party in the imperialist countries should principally base its work on the most potentially revolutionary sections of the workers.

It is not possible to build the revolutionary movement and lead it to victory without paying attention to the battles for daily existence of the

working class and masses of other strata. While the party must not direct its own or the masses' attention mainly to such struggle nor foster the dissipation of its own and the masses' forces and energies on them, neither can the party fail to do work in relation to them. Leading economic struggles is not the same thing as economism. The proletarian party should take these struggles, especially those with the potential to go beyond conventional bounds, seriously into account. This means conducting work in relation to these struggles in such a way as to facilitate the moving of the masses to revolutionary positions, especially as the conditions for revolution ripen.

The Marxist-Leninist party must strive to carry out Lenin's call to turn the factories into fortresses of communism. This is not only an important political question for the preparation of the revolution but also has important implications for the armed insurrection of the proletariat.

Unless the Marxist-Leninist parties in the imperialist countries strike deep roots among the revolutionary masses through evolving and implementing a revolutionary mass line, then efforts to utilise revolutionary situations will be seriously weakened. In all this the tactics and style of work developed by the Bolshevik Party and summed up by Lenin still remain the basic guideline. However, in order to develop a revolutionary mass line and style of work, Marxist-Leninists in the imperialist countries must put aside conventional wisdom about 'proper' forms of struggle and organisation and all such dogmas, analyse the specific characteristics of contemporary imperialism and the nature of struggles being waged by the masses and seek out favourable new grounds for revolutionary practice and develop new forms of struggle and mass organisations.

As Lenin so vividly expressed it, the communist ideal "should not be a trade union secretary, but a tribune of the people."

The Marxist-Leninist party, while principally basing itself on the most potentially revolutionary sections of the proletariat, must strive to carry out revolutionary work among other sections of the population including elements of the petit bourgeoisie.

Another factor potentially very favourable to the proletarian revolution in more than a few of the imperialist countries is the existence of oppressed nations and national minorities within the bellies of these beasts. Often, as noted above, large numbers of proletarians from these nationalities form an important part of a single, multi-national proletariat there. But, in addition to this, there is also a broader national question involved, encompassing other classes and strata of these oppressed nationalities. Such situations have often given rise to sharp national

struggles within these imperialist states, and if they are properly handled by the proletarian parties there, which should support such struggles and uphold the right of self-determination where applicable, these struggles can play a significant role in the struggle to overthrow imperialist states.

In the countries of Eastern Europe Marxist-Leninists face the task of formulating correct strategy and tactics for the socialist revolution, taking into account the domination of Soviet social-imperialism and the concrete tasks it poses without minimising or overlooking the central task of overthrowing the state power of their own bureaucratic bourgeoisie.

The current developments toward world war and both the dangers and revolutionary opportunities that presents require that the Marxist-Leninist parties in the imperialist countries place great importance on the question of world war and revolution. The Marxist-Leninist party must expose imperialist war preparations and especially the interests and manoeuvres of its "own" imperialist ruling class. It must demonstrate to the masses that such a war flows from the very nature of capitalist exploitation and is a continuation of imperialist economics and politics, and that only the advance of the world revolution can stop the war in preparation and attack its source. The communists must constantly struggle against every effort to identify the interests of the proletariat with those of the imperialist bourgeoisie and must train the class conscious proletariat and others to see through the bloody imperialist nature of the national flag.

The communists must build support among the masses for the anti-imperialist struggle of the oppressed peoples and nations, even where such struggles are not led by Marxist-Leninists. The party must consistently and concretely train the proletariat in internationalism.

The increased danger of world war is now being felt sharply by the masses in the imperialist countries and communists must pay great attention to the mass movements against war preparations and to addressing the questions posed by these movements. The Marxist-Leninist party must support the revolutionary elements in these movements and strive to win them to its ranks. The party must unite with the anti-war sentiments of the masses while at the same time combatting illusions that a "peace movement" can stop the imperialist war and especially the national chauvinist views that seek to avoid the devastation of war for one imperialist nation or another at the expense of the rest of the world.

While uniting with the masses in struggle against imperialist war preparations the Marxist-Leninist party should not put forward or support demands for "nuclear free zones", illusory notions of abolishing imperialist blocs and so forth in the imperialist countries. Even in the lesser, non-nuclear states the communists must constantly stress to the masses that imperialism breeds world war, that all imperialist ruling classes are implicated in preparing this crime against humanity, and that the only real solution lies in revolution and not in illusory, and ultimately reactionary, efforts towards "neutrality."

The Marxist-Leninist party must prepare itself and the revolutionary proletariat so that if revolution is not able to prevent the world war it is in the best position to take advantage of the weakness of the imperialists, to build on the inevitable widespread hatred of war and direct it against the imperialists themselves and strive to turn the imperialist war into a civil war. The revolutionary defeatist position must be adopted by the Marxist-Leninists in all the imperialist countries. In the imperialist countries the communist press plays a particularly important role in the preparation of the proletarian revolution. The press must be built as the collective propagandist, agitator and organiser of the party.

The Marxist-Leninists in the advanced capitalist countries face the task of continuing to combat the pernicious influence of revisionism and reformism in their ranks. The key to doing this remains the fight for principles developed by Lenin in the course of preparing and leading the October Revolution. At the same time the Marxist-Leninists must sum up past experience, fight against dogmatism, be firm in principle and flexible in tactics, and undertake a scientific study of the developments in the imperialist countries over the last several decades and the further development of revolutionary strategy that flow from them.

For the Ideological, Political and Organisational Unity of Marxist-Leninists

The communist movement is, and can only be, an international movement. Indeed the very launching of scientific socialism, the Communist Manifesto, declared "Workers of all countries, unite!" With the success of the October Revolution, the formation of the Communist International and the subsequent spreading of Marxism-Leninism to every corner of the globe, the international unity of the working class took on an even more profound meaning.

Today, in the midst of profound crisis in the ranks of Marxist-Leninists, the need for international unity and the need for a new international organisation are urgently felt.

In building up its own organisation on a global level, the international proletariat has accumulated both positive and negative experience. The concept of world party and the resultant over-centralisation of the Comintern should be evaluated so that appropriate lessons from that period can be drawn as well as from the positive achievements of the First, Second and Third Internationals. It also is necessary to evaluate the overreaction of the Communist Party of China to the negative aspects of the Comintern that led them to refuse to play the necessary leading role in building up the organisational unity of the Marxist-Leninist forces at the international level.

At the present juncture of world history, the international proletariat has to take up the challenge of forming its own organisation, an International of a new type based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, assimilating the valuable experience of the past. And this goal must be boldly proclaimed before the international proletariat and the oppressed of the world with the same revolutionary daring of our predecessors from the Communards of Paris to the proletarian rebels of Shanghai who dared to storm heaven and resolved to do the "impossible" - build a communist world.

The process of forming such an organisation will, in all likelihood, be a protracted one.

The most crucial task the Marxist-Leninists face, in this respect, is to evolve a general line and a correct and viable organisational form, conforming to the complex reality of the present-day world and the challenges it poses.

The function of such a new International will be to continue and deepen the summation of experiences, develop the general line on which it is founded, and serve as an overall guiding political centre. These tasks necessitate a form of democratic centralism based on the ideological and political unity of Marxist-Leninists. But it cannot be of the same nature as the functioning of a party in a single state, since the components of such an international organisation will be different parties having equality of right and responsibility of leading the revolution in each country in the sense of each party's share in the preparations and acceleration of the world revolution.

Considering the level of ideological and political unity and maturity achieved by the Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations at the Second Conference, they must take the following preliminary steps in the direction of fulfilling the higher tasks mentioned above:

1. An international journal must be developed as a vital tool in reconstructing the international communist movement. It must be at once both an organ of analysis and political commentary as well as a forum for debating the questions of the international movement. It must be translated into as many languages as possible, vigorously distributed in the ranks of the Marxist-Leninist parties and among other revolutionary forces. The Marxist-Leninist parties must correspond regularly with the journal and contribute articles and criticism.

2. Helping the formation of new Marxist-Leninist parties and the strengthening of existing ones is the common task of the international communist movement. The ways and means must be found for the international movement as a whole to assist Marxist-Leninists in different countries in carrying out this crucial task.

3. Joint and coordinated campaigns should be conducted by the Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations. The First of May activities should be carried out under unified slogans.

4. The different Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations should carry out the political line and decisions adopted by the International Conferences and agreed to by these parties, even while continuing to carry out principled struggle over differences.

5. All Marxist-Leninist parties and organisations should, within the measure of their capacity, contribute financially and practically to the tasks involved in furthering the unity of the communists.

6. An interim committee - an embryonic political centre must be set up to lead the overall process of furthering the ideological, political and organisational unity of communists, including the preparation of a draft proposal for a general line for the communist movement.

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The constitution of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, based on the higher level of ideological and political unity of Marxist-Leninists achieved through principled struggle, represents an extremely important step for the international communist movement. But the need to race to catch up with the objective developments in the world is still apparent. The revolutionary struggle of the masses of the people in all countries is crying out for genuine revolutionary leadership. The genuine Marxist-Leninist forces, in individual countries and on a world scale, have the responsibility to provide such leadership even as they continue to

struggle to solidify and raise the level of their unity. In this way the correct ideological and political line will bring forward new soldiers and will become an ever more powerful material force in the world. The words of the Communist Manifesto ring out all the more clearly today: "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win."

March 1984

Central Reorganisation Committee, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)
Ceylon Communist Party
Communist Collective of Agit/Prop [Italy]
Communist Committee of Trento [Italy]
Communist Party of Bangladesh (Marxist-Leninist) [BSD (M-L)]
Communist Party of Colombia (Marxist-Leninist), Mao Tsetung Regional Committee
Communist Party of Peru
Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist
Haitian Revolutionary Internationalist Group
Nepal Communist Party (Marshall)
New Zealand Red Flag Group
Revolutionary Internationalist Contingent [Britain]
Proletarian Communist Organisation, Marxist-Leninist [Italy]
Proletarian Party of Purba Bangla (Bangladesh)
Revolutionary Communist Group of Colombia
Leading Committee, Revolutionary Communist Party, India
Revolutionary Communist Party, USA
Revolutionary Communist Union [Dominican Republic]
Union of Iranian Communists (Sarbedaran)



Interview of Prachanda

[Expert from the interview of CPN (Maoist) Cherman Prachanda's interview with Varadarajan of The Hindu in the first week of February 2006 and published in the print edition of the same paper on February 8, 9, and 10, 2006.]

Varadarajan: Your party has waged a "people's war" in Nepal for 10 years and the anniversary is now coming up. There are some who say that this war - and the Royal Nepal Army's counter-insurgency campaign - has cost the country dearly in terms of the violence and bloodshed that has accompanied it. In your estimation, what has been the main accomplishment of these 10 years?

Prachanda: For 250 years, our peoples have been exploited under the oppression of feudal lords. The people's war has helped crush the feudal structure in the rural areas. We think this is the main achievement. Also, in the overall sense we feel that in Nepal there is going to be a great leap forward in the socio-economic condition because we are going to lead the country to a democratic republican structure. A political situation has been developed through this process, and we feel this is also a very big achievement of the people's war.

Varadarajan: In your party plenum last August in Rolpa, you took a momentous decision - to strive for and participate in multiparty democracy. If you were going to accept multiparty democracy after 10 years of war, why go about this in a roundabout way?

Prachanda: I want to answer your question in two parts. There is the whole theoretical and ideological question that we are trying to develop, because we want to analyse the experience of revolution and counter-revolution in the 20th century on a new basis. Three years ago we took a decision in which we said how are we going to develop democracy is the key question in the 21st century. This meant the negative and positive lessons of the 20th century have to be synthesised in order for us to move ahead. And three years ago we decided we must go in for political competition. Without political competition, a mechanical or metaphysical attitude will be there. So this time, what we decided is not

so new. In August, we took serious decisions on how practically to build unity with the parliamentary political parties. We don't believe that the people's war we initiated was against, or mainly against, multiparty democracy. It was mainly against feudal autocracy, against the feudal structure.

Varadarajan: How difficult was it for your party to come to this decision? How difficult was it to build consensus on the need for multiparty democracy within the leadership and cadres?

Prachanda: An agenda was first presented to the Central Committee on democracy. Then there was an internal debate within the party rank and file for a whole year. After that, the CC plenum unanimously decided that within a definite constitutional framework we have to go in for competition. Without competition, we will not be able to go forward. This was a unanimous decision.

Varadarajan: Nowadays, we hear the phrase 'The Maoists will sit on the shoulders and hit on the head.' Does this mean your alliance with the parties is tactical rather than strategic, that when the head - the monarchy - is weakened or defeated, you might then start hitting the shoulder?

Prachanda: It is not like this. Our decision on multiparty democracy is a strategically, theoretically developed position, that in a communist state, democracy is a necessity. This is one part. Second, our decision within the situation today is not tactical. It is a serious policy. We are telling the parties that we should end not only the autocratic monarchy but monarchy itself. This is not even a monarchy in the traditional way it was in Birendra's time, so we have to finish it. After that, in the multiparty democracy which comes - interim government, constitutional assembly and democratic republic - we are ready to have peaceful competition with you all. Of course, people still have a doubt about us because we have an army. And they ask whether after the constitutional assembly we will abandon our arms. This is a question. We have said we are ready to reorganise our army and we are ready to make a new Nepal army also. So this is not a tactical question.

Varadarajan: The 12-point agreement suggests you and the political parties have met each other half-way. They have agreed to a constitutional assembly and you have dropped your insistence on a republic.

Prachanda: We have not dropped our demand for a democratic republic. But to achieve that minimum political slogan, we have said we

are prepared to go through free and fair elections to a constituent assembly. There shouldn't be any confusion that we have now agreed to a ceremonial monarchy. Some people have tried to draw this conclusion from the 12-point agreement but even at the time we explained to the parties that our slogan is a democratic republic. Earlier, we were saying people's democratic republic but this does not mean we have dropped that goal either. It's just that according to today's power balance, seeing the whole situation and the expectation of the masses, and that there [should] not be bloodshed, we also responsibly believe that to get there too we will do so through peaceful means.

Varadarajan: So the struggle for "people's democracy" will also be peaceful?

Prachanda: We will go for the goal of the people's democracy through peaceful means. Today, we are talking of a democratic republic and our understanding with the parties is that the way to realise this is the constituent assembly. At that time, any other party would be free to call for a ceremonial monarchy, some may be for constitutional monarchy - such a thing is possible with the seven parties.

Varadarajan: But whatever the outcome, you are ready to accept it.

Prachanda: We are ready to accept whatever is the outcome. This we are saying in clear-cut language.

Varadarajan: Your three-month ceasefire, and then the one month extension, did a lot to improve the profile and image of the Maoists, which had been damaged by certain incidents like the Madi bus blast. What was the logic behind that ceasefire and what are the roadblocks in the way of declaring another ceasefire in the near future?

Prachanda: As for the specific timing, there were two factors. The UN General Assembly was going to be held and the so-called king was going to go there. There he would have said he was for peace and democracy. Such a notorious element was going to go and create confusion over there. This possibility also needed to be crushed. This was a question. So we thought of a ceasefire as one way politically to hit out at him.

It was only after the ceasefire that the dialogue with the political parties began. And then a conducive atmosphere got created for the 12-point agreement. We also wanted to send a message to the international community that we were different from the way we were

being projected ideologically. For example, right now we are having discussions with the European Union and with others, but among all the international forces, U.S. imperialism is the most dogmatic and sectarian element. The U.S. ruling classes are dogmatic. They don't understand what is happening. We are trying to look at the world in a new way, to change in a new way, and we wanted to send out this message. And in this regard, during the ceasefire, we were quite successful.

Varadarajan: What you are proposing is that the parliamentary parties stage a revolution!

Prachanda: Yes, but we feel their role can be a historic one. But they are not ready. The second way is also what we have been discussing, that the U.N. or some other credible body will supervise things. The RNA will be in the barracks and the PLA will also be under supervision. Both armies and arms will be under international supervision and will not enter the fray. Then there will be elections for a constitutional assembly. Our army will not interfere in the process.

Varadarajan: But what form will this international supervision take? Will it include foreign troops?

Prachanda: No troops. There can be a militia or police, which we create only for election purposes.

Varadarajan: Who will be part of this militia?

Prachanda: We have not gone into such details - there can be the cadres of the different parties, but all without firearms, to manage security for the elections. So there will be elections for the assembly and whatever verdict of the masses comes, it is on that basis that the army has to be reorganised. If the republic result comes, then the RNA's generals and commanders will have to go and the interim government would appoint as generals officers who are loyal to democratic values. If a constitutional monarchy wins, then there is the danger that the old generals will remain. So my point is that the army can be changed. This is the underlying idea behind the 12-point agreement and the parties also agree with this.

Varadarajan: So you are saying the problem of the PLA and its arms is not a big problem.

Prachanda: It is certainly not a problem the way people outside believe. If there is political will on our side and the parties, it can be solved.

Varadarajan: How do you see the role of India today? Last year, when the King seized power, India took a tough stand against

him which surprised many. Today, this policy has its critics but the bottom line is that the Indian Government does not seem to regard the Nepal Maoists as illegitimate in the way that the king and the U.S. regard them.

Prachanda: In the past, India's role was not good. It was a policy of total alignment with the king. Last year, after February 1, when the situation changed in a big way, the role of the Indian authorities strikes us as positive. There is now a tough stand against autocracy. Still, the two-pillar theory [that Nepal's stability rests equally on constitutional monarchy and multiparty democracy] persists and the Indian authorities have not officially abandoned this theory. They haven't said there is need for only one pillar. So officially, India is still sticking to the two-pillar theory and we want the Indian authorities to change this theory. They are right to support the democratic movement, but sticking to the two-pillar theory causes confusion.

Varadarajan: But if India abandons it, wouldn't the King accuse the Indians of interfering in Nepal's affairs, and then he will accuse the Maoists of being agents of India.

Prachanda: We do not think such a thing is possible. During the 1990 movement, when Rajiv Gandhi imposed a blockade on Nepal, the Nepali people did not oppose the blockade because it was in the context of the blockade that the democratic movement picked up speed and advanced very fast. If India is in favour of the democratic movement and a forward-looking political solution, then it will not be considered intervention. But if India supports regressive forces, this would be called intervention. Exertion of external pressure in favour of the masses is never regarded as interference. This is how it seems to us. The people of Nepal will not see this as intervention.

For example, some political leaders came from India recently to show solidarity with the movement. Gyanendra tried illegally to detain them at the airport, calling it intervention. But more than 99 per cent of Nepali people did not regard that as intervention. They saw it as fraternal assistance. Of course, when Hindu fundamentalists like this Singhal comes to Nepal, the King welcomes him. When they crown him 'King of the Hindus', he doesn't call it interference, but when political leaders come and say there should be democracy, he says this is interference. So the anger of people has grown against the King, not India. This is why we feel it is time for India to abandon the two-pillar theory.

Varadarajan: If tomorrow you were to meet Manmohan Singh, what would you ask him to do?

Prachanda: First, change this two-pillar theory. The Nepali people

are trying to end the monarchy and you should end your relationship with it. Second, release all our comrades who are in prison in India. We are fighting for genuine multiparty democracy but they are imprisoned there, in Patna, Siliguri, Chennai. If you release them all, a message will go out. And if you feel the Naxalite movement in India is a problem for you, we feel we are trying to deal with the problems in Nepal in a new way, so if you release our comrades and we are successful in establishing multiparty democracy in Nepal, then this will be a very big message for the Naxalite movement in India. In other words, the ground will be readied for them to think in a new political way. Words are not enough, we need to validate what we are saying by establishing that democracy. Third, once a democratic republic is established in Nepal, then the historical doubts that have existed in the relations between Nepal and India can be ended once and for all. So for all these reasons, you should strongly support the movement for democracy.

Varadarajan: In many ways, the United States has emerged as the king's strongest backer. How do you evaluate Washington's role?

Prachanda: Their role has not been good. After February 1, India's role has been positive - for example the agreement we were able to reach with the political parties, I do not think it is likely that the Indian authorities knew nothing about this. But the U.S. role from the beginning has been negative and they are still trying to effect a compromise between the monarch and the political parties against the Maoists. Despite the fact that we are talking of pushing multiparty democracy, the U.S. has decided our movement and alliance has to be crushed. So they have a negative role.

Varadarajan: What is the American interest in being soft on the king?

Prachanda: It is not that they are afraid of what might happen in Nepal. Rather, their strategy is against the Indian and Chinese masses and also, I think, against the Indian and Chinese authorities. The U.S. has a grand strategy, and Bush is talking of China and India as big economic powers and even as threats. Perhaps they see Nepal as a country that is between these two countries and believe that if the situation here does not give rise to forces which are in step with themselves, then there could be a problem. So the U.S. is looking at Nepal from the strategic point of view. It is not that they have any economic interest here. Political control is the key, so they want to strengthen the king.

Varadarajan: What about the attitude of China? Some people in India argue that if India continues to take a tough stand against the king, he will turn to China for help and Beijing will benefit.

Prachanda: Earlier, we had a doubt, that perhaps China might be behind the king, that China would try and take advantage. But then we analysed the situation and came to the conclusion that China would not play this role. China's relations with India are improving and China will not want to jeopardise such a big interest by backing the Nepal king. And in the end, I think our analysis has been proved correct. Recently, when the Indian Foreign Secretary, Shyam Saran, went to Beijing, he had talks, and a few days later, for the first time, the Chinese authorities issued a statement that they are worried about the situation inside Nepal and that it needs a careful resolution. Until then, Beijing had always maintained that what was happening inside Nepal was an internal problem. Today, China has no interest in antagonising India to build a relationship with the king. This is our analysis. And it looks like India and China could have a common approach towards Nepal. Certainly, a common approach is needed. If China and India do not work together, there will be a big problem not only for now but the future. So they need to have an understanding in favour of democracy, in favour of the people of Nepal. As far as U.S. interests are concerned, they are neither in favour of Indian or Chinese masses. So at the political level, all of us must come together to counter them, we should not fall under their trap.

Varadarajan: How do you explain for the contradictory nature of some of U.S. Ambassador Moriarty's statements? Last year, he did use tough language against the king in his speech to the Institute of Foreign Affairs.

Prachanda: The U.S. from the start believes the Maoists are a more immediate threat than the king. Even in the most recent statement from the State Department, they said the king should immediately open talks with the parties to deal with the Maoists. And this is the product of their vested interest. If the Bush administration's intentions were good, there is no reason to regard us as a threat. If its intention is in favour of democracy and solving Nepal's political problems, then there is no reason to see us as a threat especially when we are saying we are for multiparty democracy and are willing to accept the verdict of a constituent assembly.

We are glad with the new situation that is emerging after Shyam Saran went to China, it seems the situation can change. Our movement is also going forward and I think in 2-3 months, if the struggle continues, then there is a real chance of ending the kingship once and for all and making a democratic republic in Nepal. This is the best outcome for China and India, and everyone else. The U.S. does not want this. They want to maintain the monarchy at all costs. Moriarty consistently has been speaking against the Maoists. He is connected to the Asia-Pacific military command of the U.S. He is not a political man. And we know that although his views

are different from some in the U.S. establishment like, say, Senator Leahy, but overall, the position of the U.S. authorities is not in favour of democracy and Nepal people. Leadership question and inner party life

Varadarajan: Has your party put behind it the differences which emerged last year between yourself and Baburam Bhattarai?

Prachanda: There was a problem and we solved it so well that the unity in our party is stronger than ever before. Our problems were not of the kind the media wrote about. We had an ideological debate about how to evaluate the 20th century. Why did the communist movement suffer such an enormous setback? Why did the Russian revolution get overcome by counter-revolution? Why did China also go down that path? This was a debate within the central committee for many years. There were other problems linked to shades of opinion within the party - like the Madi blast - but the purpose was to sort out our future plan. This was the purpose of the debate. But the timing was such that these things happened after February 1. If the timing had not been so bad, there wouldn't have been that much propaganda. But the time the king took over was also the time the debate in our party sharpened.

Varadarajan: The question was raised of a cult of personality in the party. As you know, any objective evaluation of the experience of the 20th century communist movement has to consider the cult of personality as certainly one of the factors in the reversals.

Prachanda: That is correct. But I want to clarify one thing. Between Dr. Bhattarai and me, there was never any debate on the issue of leadership. He has never challenged my leadership. On the issue of leadership personally, there has never been a difference. There were differences on ideological questions, about what we should do now, and there was a debate. And this debate we solved in the Rolpa plenum in August. We took it to a higher level and our unity has become stronger.

Varadarajan: To what extent do you think the logic of your line on multiparty democracy applies also to the Maoist movements in India?

Prachanda: We believe it applies to them too. We want to debate this. They have to understand this and go down this route. Both on the questions of leadership and on multiparty democracy, or rather multiparty competition, those who call themselves revolutionaries in India need to think about these issues. And there is a need to go in the direction of that practice. We wish to debate with them on this. If revolutionaries are not going to look at the need for ideological development, then they will not go anywhere.



Interview of the CPI (Maoist) Spokesperson

[Expart from the interview taken by correspondent of the People's March with Com. Azad, the spokesperson of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) in the end of June 2006.]

PM: How do you look at the current developments in Nepal?

Azad: Our Party hails the historic struggle of the people of Nepal for democracy and a better society. However, the revolutionaries in India hope that the struggle in Nepal will go on until the overthrow of the King along with the so-called parliament and capture of power by the revolutionary and democratic forces. We hope that the Maoists will be able to maintain their initiative to direct the ongoing political developments. They would need to remain alert in their alliance with the seven party alliance, which wants to strike a compromise with the King and betray the aspirations of the people.

PM: How do you view the tactics of the CPN(Maoist) in joining the interim government and promising to abide by the verdict of the constituent assembly?

Azad: We think that Maoists forming a government jointly with the comprador bourgeois-feudal parties such as the reactionary Nepali Congress, revisionist CPN-UML and the other parties of the ruling classes will not really work out as they represent two diametrically opposed class interests. It is a wrong interpretation on the question of the state in Nepal to expect a possibility of a peaceful transition from the CA (Constituent Assembly) to the NDR (New Democratic Revolution). One may bring some reforms from above and satisfy certain deprived sections of the people but it will never solve the basic problems of the people as you cannot smash feudalism and throw out imperialism from the soil of Nepal by utilizing the old state whatever embellishments one might do to give it a refurbished image. Nothing short of a revolutionary upheaval of the masses can achieve the above objective. No doubt given the huge mass mobilizations throughout the country and the efforts to create an even wider upsurge are positive preparations to take the revolution forward, but some of the statements in the interviews tend to give the impression

that the CPN(Maoists) are giving over-emphasis to the possibility of advancing the movement through the Constituent Assembly and in alliance with the 7-parties. This can have dangerous implications.

PM: And what about the dissolution of the revolutionary organs of power and merging of the two armies?

Azad: As regards merging the army within a reconstituted state army, it is even more dangerous. The invitation to the UN to supervise the cease-fire and monitor the demobilization of the people's armed forces is also dangerous. The UN is essentially an instrument of imperialism and particularly American imperialism. It is bound to work in the interests of the reactionary ruling classes of Nepal and imperialism.

PM: The various parliamentary parties in India, not to speak of the Left parties like the CPI and CPI(M), have been hailing the line of participation in the interim government and parliamentary democracy taken by the Nepali Maoists and say that it will have a positive impact on the Maoist movement in India. How does your Party assess its impact?

Azad: It is the wishful subjective thinking of these parties in India that the developments in Nepal will have a "positive" (what they mean by positive is the Maoists shunning armed struggle and joining the so-called mainstream of parliamentary politics) impact on the Maoist movement in our country.

No wonder, the various ruling class parties and the so-called left parties in India are elated at the change of stance by the CPN(Maoist) led by comrade Prachanda. They are naturally hailing the line taken by the CPN(Maoist) and are calling upon the Maoists in India to realize the futility of armed struggle and to follow the Maoists of Nepal by participating in the parliamentary pig-sty in India. As bitter enemies and opponents of revolution all these parties have been in the forefront in suppressing the ongoing people's war in India. The decision of the CPN(Maoist) to participate in the government along with the reactionary parties, declaring their commitment to the so-called rule of law and the future constitution, and to become actors in the ensuing game of parliamentary elections following the elections to the constituent assembly has come as a breather for the ruling class parties in Nepal and the parliamentary system of India.

In fact, in his interview with The Hindu last February, comrade Prachanda himself hinted at the "positive" impact that his line of multiparty democracy will have on the Maoist movement in India. It must have come as a great relief for the Indian ruling classes to hear comrade Prachanda

speaking of his Party's commitment to multiparty democracy and the message he wants to give to the Naxalite movement in India by successfully establishing multiparty democracy in Nepal.

When asked what he would say if he were to meet the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, comrade Prachanda said:

"We are fighting for genuine multiparty democracy but they are imprisoned there, in Patna, Siliguri, Chennai. If you release them all, a message will go out. And if you feel the Naxalite movement in India is a problem for you, we feel we are trying to deal with the problems in Nepal in a new way, so if you release our comrades and we are successful in establishing multi-party democracy in Nepal, this will be a very big message for the Naxalite movement in India. In other words, the ground will be readied for them to think in a new political way. Words are not enough; we need to validate what we are saying by establishing that democracy."

It is really a matter of grave concern that comrade Prachanda, instead of demanding the expansionist Indian ruling classes to stop all interference and meddling in Nepal's internal affairs, only talked of how their tactics would bring about a change in the outlook of the Maoists in India. Needless to say, these remarks will not only be deeply resented by the revolutionary masses of our country who have seen the wretched system of parliamentary democracy in India but will also be proved totally wrong through their revolutionary practice.

PM: The CPM and one of its top leaders, Sitaram Yechuri, was focused as a messiah from India to play a role between the Maoists and SPA (Seven Party Alliance). After returning back to India he and his party advised the Indian Maoists to follow the line of the CPN(Maoist). How do you explain this when they seem hostile to the Maoists here? Apart from this Yechuri told the press that the Indian Maoists have planned to kill him and the secret regarding this decision was informed to him by the Nepali Maoists. What is your comment please?

Azad: The CPM is a party of the Indian ruling classes, representing the interests of imperialism, feudalism and the CBB in India. Their primary task seemed to be to bring the Nepalese Maoists into the parliamentary 'mainstream', which they also keep preaching us in India. When we do not accede they have used the worst forms of state terror against us as in West Bengal. Their aim is the same in both countries — to pacify the Maoists in India with bullets and do the same with the Nepalese Maoists with sugarcoated bullets. Yechuri and the CPM in effect played a more affective role for the Indian ruling classes when the Congress was fumbling

with the Karan Singh fiasco. But when he overdid his 'diplomacy' and was sidelined, he cooked up the conspiracy theory of the Maoists in India planning to kill him to regain some credibility and try and sow seeds of mistrust between the two Maoist parties. A true Chanakya!!

PM: Why are you opposed to the tactic of multiparty democracy as proposed by the CPN(Maoist)?

Azad: Firstly, we are greatly perturbed by the proposal put forth by comrade Prachanda in his various interviews that his party was committed to multiparty democracy, which will be practiced not after the revolutionary seizure of power by the proletariat but within the semi-colonial semi-feudal society. The 2003 Plenum document was quite vague regarding CPN(Maoist)'s concept of multiparty democracy or political competition, i.e., whether it is applicable after the seizure of power by the revolutionary party or prior to seizure itself. It only says it is possible to organize political competition within the constitutional limits of the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist democratic state. However, the statements, interviews and documents released after the 12-point Delhi Agreement between the CPN(Maoist) and the Seven Party Alliance in November 2005 all point to the need for competition within the existing system after the Constituent Assembly is elected.

There is also confusion regarding the class character of the Parties with whom such political competition has to be conducted. While the 2003 document clearly stated that these forces will be anti-feudal and anti-imperialist in character, the post November 2005 documents and interviews of CPN(MAOIST) provide scope for such competition with the constituents of SPA who are basically comprador bourgeois-feudal in their character in spite of their role against monarchy, or, more specifically, against King Gyanendra's autocratic rule.

It is indeed very unfortunate that the CPN(Maoist) has not adhered firmly to that analysis from a strategic and class perspective. It is one thing to make necessary adjustments, understandings and tactical unity with these parliamentary forces and even with a section of the imperialists against the main enemy when conditions for such alliances become ripe. But to create illusions on the character of these parties or overlook their links with imperialists and Indian expansionists will do great harm to the revolution in the long run.

Moreover, we find that comrade Prachanda and the CPN(Maoist) had turned the tactics to the level of strategy and path of the world revolution in the 21st century. Thus, in his interview to The Hindu comrade Prachanda stressed that the Maoists' commitment to multi-party democracy is not tactical but the result of a lengthy ideological debate

within the party over three years. He said: "our decision on multi-party democracy is a strategically, theoretically developed position and we are telling the parliamentary parties that we are ready to have peaceful competition with you all."

The CPN(Maoist) leader directly assured the comprador bourgeois-feudal parliamentary parties that his Party is ready to have peaceful competition with all of them. And by describing this decision on multiparty democracy as a strategically, theoretically developed position comrade Prachanda has brought a dangerous thesis to the fore—the thesis of peaceful coexistence with the ruling class parties instead of overthrowing them through revolution; peaceful competition with all other parliamentary parties, including the ruling class parties that are stooges of imperialism or foreign reaction, in a so-called parliamentary elections; abandoning the objective of building socialism for an indefinite period; and opening the doors wide for the feudal-comprador reactionaries to come to power by utilizing the backwardness of the masses and the massive backing from domestic and foreign reactionaries or the comprador bureaucratic bourgeois and feudal and petty bourgeois forces to hijack the entire course of development of the society from the socialist direction to maintaining the existing system (even if in a new form) in the name of democracy and nationalism. Whatever may be our good intentions for building a more democratic system, the laws governing class struggle will not permit of such a system. History has proved this time and again from the days of the Paris Commune right up till the earlier revolutions in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

PM: And how do you ensure political competition with other parties? The CPN(Maoist) claims that it is only by organizing political competition and institutionalizing the right of the masses to install an alternative revolutionary party in power that counter-revolution can be effectively checked.

Azad: It is, indeed, surprising that the CPN(Maoist) should arrive at such a conclusion even after the proletariat is equipped with rich and varied experiences on the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, after it is armed with such an appropriate form, method and weapon as the cultural revolution and is in possession of a wealth of writings by our teachers—Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao—and by several Marxist writers on the subject of checking the degeneration of the Party, Army and the State; preventing the restoration of capitalism; and building a new type of state and society. To think that continuous proletarianization and revolutionization of the Communist Party can be ensured and that counter-revolution can be effectively checked by organizing so-called

political competition or by institutionalizing the right of the masses to install an alternative revolutionary party or leadership on the state means falling into the trap of bourgeois formalism and under-mining the real task of mobilizing the masses extensively to wage bitter class struggle against the old reactionary defeated classes and the new bourgeois class developing within the Party, Army and the Administration. It is difficult to grasp how alternative revolutionary parties can exist- especially since the communist parties have always understood that different political lines represented either a proletarian outlook or a bourgeois outlook.

PM: Do you find anything wrong when the CPN(Maoist) says it will go to the new democratic stage via the bourgeois democratic or multiparty republic?

Azad: No Maoist would say it is wrong to fight for the demand of a Republic and for the overthrow of the autocratic monarchy. And likewise, none would oppose the forging of a united front of all those who are opposed to the main enemy at any given moment. Needless to say, such a united front would be purely tactical in nature and cannot, and should not, under any circumstances, determine the path and direction of the revolution itself.

The problem with the theorization by the CPN(Maoist) lies in making the fight against autocracy into a sub-stage of NDR and, a tendency to make the sub-stage overwhelm (dominate and determine) the very direction and path of the revolution. The programme and strategy of NDR drawn up by the Party prior to its launching of the armed struggle, its targets to be overthrown, and even the concrete class analysis made earlier based on which the revolution had advanced so far, are now made subordinate to the needs of the so-called sub-stage of Nepalese revolution. The sub-stage of a bourgeois democratic republic appears, from their interviews and statements, to have become the all-determining factor.

As far as we know, , we can say that the numerous types of state system in the world can be reduced to three basic kinds according to the class character of their political power: (1) republics under bourgeois dictatorship {in addition to these there are the fake republics in the backward semi-feudal, semi-colonial countries under the joint dictatorship of the CBB and feudal elements, backed by imperialism }; (2) republics under the dictatorship of the proletariat; and (3) republics under the joint dictatorship of several revolutionary classes. In essence, the slogan of a bourgeois democratic republic given by the CPN(Maoist) cannot but come under the first type of republic in spite of the participation of the revolutionary party in the state power along with the comprador bourgeois-feudal parties.

In his interview with the BBC correspondent, comrade Prachanda gave his vision of future Nepal in the following words:

"We believe that the Nepali people will go for a republic and in a peaceful way the process of rebuilding Nepal will go forward.

"In five years' time Nepal will move towards being a beautiful, peaceful and progressive nation.

"In five years' time the millions of Nepalis will already be moving ahead with a mission to make a beautiful future, and Nepal will truly start becoming a heaven on earth."

He further asserted that a democratic republic elected in such a way will solve the problems of Nepalis!!

"We believe that with the election of a constituent assembly, a democratic republic will be formed in Nepal. And this will solve the problems of Nepalis and lead the country into a more progressive path."

Anyone reading the above lines would think that these views reflect more a nationalist sentiment than a proletarian class outlook.

How will Nepal start becoming a "heaven on earth" after becoming a bourgeois republic? How can the formation of a democratic republic "solve the problems of Nepalis"? Can it free itself from the clutches of imperialism after becoming a republic in the present imperialist era? Does the CPN(Maoist), which claims to believe in MLM, really think that the "process of re-building Nepal will go forward in a peaceful way"? And is there a single instance in world history where such peaceful process of rebuilding has taken place? Does not the history of world revolution show that bitter class struggle, bloody and violent at times, continues even after decades following the capture of power by the proletariat? Then how could comrade Prachanda think of such a peaceful process of rebuilding Nepal even at this sub-stage? Do the parties belonging to the SPA really fight imperialism, Indian expansionism and feudalism in Nepal? Is there a guarantee that the CPN(Maoist) will defeat the bourgeois-feudal parties, with which it wants to go for political competition, in the elections and ensure that Nepal does not drift into the clutches of imperialism and Indian expansionism? How could one believe that once the elections to the Constituent Assembly are over and Nepal becomes a Republic, not under the leadership of the working class party but may be under an alliance of a hotchpotch combination of Parties i.e., an alliance of ruling class and working class under CPN(Maoist), the country would free itself from feudalism and imperialism and become a "beautiful, peaceful and progressive nation" ?

According to comrade Prachanda's opinion, "the reactionary class and their parties will try to transform this republic into bourgeois parliamentary one, where as our party of the proletariat class will try to transform it into new democratic republic. How long will be the period of transition, is not a thing that can right now be ascertained. It is clear that it will depend upon the then national and international situation and state of power balance."

This so-called transitional multiparty republic is sought to be transformed into a new democratic republic through peaceful struggle by means of political competition with reactionary class and their parties, which try to transform it into a bourgeois parliamentary republic!!

Whatever be the tactics adopted by the CPN(Maoist) the most objectionable part in the entire matter is its projection of these tactics as a theoretically developed position which it thinks should be the model for the revolutions in the 21st century. In the name of fighting against dogmatism our comrades of CPN(Maoist) are slipping into dangerous territory.

Moreover, as long as the Party wages a consistent struggle against imperialism and local reactionaries and pursues the line of redistribution of land and wealth, nationalisation of all comprador, foreign industries, banks and foreign trade, it is certain to face opposition from the other parliamentary parties. And if it wants to be part of the parliamentary game it has to abide by its rules and cannot carry out its anti-feudal, anti-imperialist policies in a thoroughgoing way. Even the independence of the judiciary has to be recognized as part of the game of parliament and can cause obstruction to every reform which the Maoist party tries to initiate after coming to power through elections. This is already being seen with the 8-point agreement being said to be illegal. US imperialism is even strongly demanding that the Maoist should participate in the constituent assembly only after they lay down their arms. The CPN(Maoists) have rightly opposed this position of the US and also Indian expansionists. We expect that they will remain firm in this.

Then there will be several institutions like the judiciary, the election commission, the media, various artistic, cultural and even religious bodies, non-government organizations, and also human rights organizations. Some of which are floated by the ruling classes, and so on. If one slips into the quagmire of the so-called multiparty democratic republic, one cannot escape from upholding these so-called independent institutions. Many of these can become hideouts of the reactionary forces and work for counter-revolution in diverse subtle ways. One cannot forget the subtle manner in which the western agencies infiltrated and subverted the societies in East European countries and even in the former Soviet Union.

PM: Comrade Prachanda says that the tactics adopted by his party are based on the specificities of the political and military balance in the world as well as particular class, political and power balance in Nepal besides the experiences of the 20th century. What is your Party's opinion on this?

Azad: It is true that comrade Prachanda in his interview to *The Hindu* last February cited the above three factors for his party coming to the decision on multiparty democracy. In fact, this understanding could be seen in the CPN(Maoist) even before the said interview. For instance, in the CC meeting in August 2004, it began to be skeptical about the prospects of victory in a small country like Nepal when it is confronted by imperialism and there is no advancement of any strong revolutionary movement.

It is true that the revolutions everywhere are confronting a tough situation especially after the setback of China. Tactically speaking, in the present-day world, the enemy forces are quite strong while our subjective forces are weak. World imperialism has unleashed a massive offensive on the revolutionary forces, national liberation movements and on the people's movements everywhere. But this is only one side of the coin. At the same time, the objective conditions are quite favorable; imperialism, particularly US imperialism, is hated by the people everywhere and massive people's movements are breaking out against imperialism, particularly US imperialism, throughout the world. Any revolution in today's world has to inevitably face the attacks by the imperialists.

To face an enemy much bigger than the revolutionary forces there are no question that it may and will require a great flexibility in tactics. Particularly when we are a sizable force such flexibility can more effectively be wielded for the achievement of our goals. But while doing so there is always a danger to lose sight of our strategic tasks of the seizure of power by armed force. From the statements being made by the CPN(Maoist) leadership it appears that that danger is there. Many statements being made and the interviews being given tend to negate some of the basic Marxist understandings regarding state and revolution. It may be said to have been made in the context of diplomacy; but its end result is to mis-educate the revolutionary and progressive camp. It is not expected from a Marxist statesman.

In the interview com Prachanda had gone to the extent of saying: "We are ready to accept the people's verdict, if they chose constitutional monarchy and multiparty democracy." It is indeed a great tragedy to see the Maoist party finally ending up in these political positions in spite of having de facto power in most of the countryside.

PM: Comrade Prachanda says that the line of multiparty democracy applies to the Maoist movement in India too. How does your party see this?

Azad: We saw his comments on this point in his interview with The Hindu correspondent. It says:

"We believe it applies to them too. We want to debate this. They have to understand this and go down this route. Both on the question of leadership and on multiparty democracy, or rather multiparty competition I believe those who call themselves revolutionaries in India need to think about these issues. And there is a need to go in the direction of that practice. We wish to debate with them on this. If revolutionaries are not going to look at the need for ideological development, they will not go anywhere."

Such advice has been coming forth from the various ruling class parliamentary parties in India since long. The revisionist CPI and CPI(M), who swear by Marx and Lenin, regularly sermonize through their magazines, documents and statements, regarding the futility of armed struggle for seizing state power and achieving revolutionary social transformation. They desperately try to show how parliamentary multiparty democracy is the best instrument for achieving this transformation as witnessed in West Bengal and Kerala. The CPI(ML)-Liberation, in the name of MLM, preaches the virtues of multi-party democracy and calls all those who do not wish to be tied to the parliamentary pig-sty as anarchists and adventurers.

- It is good that the CPN(Maoist) wants to debate with the Maoists in India on the question of leadership and multiparty democracy. There have been interesting discussions and exchange of opinions and experiences between the leaderships of our two parties on the concept of leadership, on the question of personality cult and concentration of all power in the hands of one individual, etc. Our opinion has always been that it is necessary for a good section of the Party leadership to work among the masses and concentrate on building class struggle even after the seizure of power in order to prevent the degeneration in the Party functionaries, officials in the various state departments, particularly the armed forces, in the various units in the production sphere, and so on. We must encourage the masses to criticize the mistakes committed by the party and the party leaders even in the course of the revolutionary movement prior to the seizure of power. We must develop collective leadership rather than focusing on any one individual or delegating revolutionary authority. Dependency on one or few individuals instead of developing collective leadership and involving the entire Party membership and the masses in decision-making has been one of the

causes that led to great reversals in Russia and China where, after the demise of outstanding proletarian leaders like Stalin and Mao, the CPSU and the CPC turned revisionist so easily.

We agree with comrade Prachanda when he says that "from the lessons of the 20th Century communist states - we want to move to a new plane in terms of leadership - where one person doesn't remain the party leader or the head of state."

In fact, this had also been one of the major points of debate during the inner-party struggle in the CPN(Maoist) during 2004-05 when comrade Bhattarai (Laldhoj), in his Basic Questions for Inner-Party Discussion, raised questions such as: Is proletarian leadership a centralized expression of collectivity, or is it a person centered? Does the principal law of dialectics, viz. one divides into two, apply to the main leadership or not? How does the system of a single person occupying the top Party, army and the state posts, and that too for life, solve the question of generating revolutionary successors and of continuous revolution? Our party, the CPI(Maoist) wish to conduct a serious debate on these questions and also on the question of Prachanda Path and on the concept of path, thought and ism.

PM: What would you say with regard to the concept of 21st century democracy as proposed by the CPN(Maoist) led by comrade Prachanda?

Azad: What is new in the concept of 21st century democracy raised by the CPN(Maoist) and how is it qualitatively different from the democracy of the 20th century? The CPN(Maoist) had also claimed that its "decision on multi-party democracy is a strategically, theoretically developed position" which is even applicable to conditions in India. One knows about bourgeois democracy and proletarian democracy, that democracy too has a class character, which in a class-divided society democracy will serve the ruling class while exercising dictatorship over the rest of the people. In bourgeois republics the nature of democracy is bourgeois. It is meant to serve the bourgeoisie while oppressing the vast majority of the people. Its essence is bourgeois dictatorship. Likewise, in people's democratic republics, the democracy is meant for all the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist classes while dictatorship is exercised over the enemies of the people and their agents. The qualitative difference between different types of democracies lies in their class character. But when the CPN(Maoist) says that there is a qualitative difference between the democracy of the 20th and 21st centuries without any reference to the class character, it is not only unconvincing but also seems to be highly subjective.

One reason given is that in the 21st century there has "been unprecedented development in science and technology, particularly in electronic communication technology, in the world." How this unprecedented development has a bearing on the strategy of the revolutions in the 21st century or on the nature of democracy in the 21st century is not clear.

It says that "in the field of ideology, the central committee has attempted to draw a strategic outline of the world revolution based on the analysis of today's world situation and mainly the new analysis of globalized imperialism and proletarian movement and has succeeded to present a totally new concept in relation to leadership and accomplishing revolution and preventing counter-revolution" and "in the field of politics" it says, it has made a "qualitative leap in the concept regarding political and military strategy and tactic established in the 20th century."

We are still not clear what is this new concept and qualitative leap claimed by CPN(Maoist) except for their line of multiparty democracy and political competition which boils down to competing peacefully with the various reactionary and revisionist parties for power in a so-called transitional multiparty democratic republic.

PM: One last question. What is the message you would like to give to the revolutionary ranks of Nepal, India and the rest of the world?

Azad: First we would seriously request the CPN(Maoist) and its leadership to reconsider some of its recent positions and learn from the history of past mistakes. The Nepalese party and people have a great history of struggle and sacrifice. Over 10,000 have lost their lives in the course of the present people's war. We salute these heroic martyrs of the Nepalese and world revolution. We are confident that the great Nepalese people will advance the revolution forward facing the numerous twists and turns in the movement. There is no doubt that revolution today is no simple task; the path will be zig-zag.

We also call on the people of India to lend full support to the Nepalese revolution. But while doing so it is also the duty of the Indian and world proletariat to render friendly suggestions to their comrades in Nepal. After all, the interests of the Nepalese revolution are very much in the interests of world revolution, and more particularly of its neighbor, the Indian revolution. The revolutionary people of India are ready for any sacrifice in support of the Nepalese revolution. We are confident that we will march forward, together, against the obnoxious system of world imperialism and its local semi-feudal base.

Azad: Thank You





Publisher

Yuga-Jyoti Publication

Tinkune, Koteshower

Kathmandu, Nepal, Phone : 01-4466787

Regd. No. 60063/065/066

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