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NAXALBARI

NAXALBARI

Theoretical Journal of
CPI (M-L) NAXALBARI

No: 3

December 2010



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Wranglingism Is Fine, But...

Mao Tsetung said that “Marxism is wranglingism.” It is often quoted by Maoists. But just how good are they in wrangling? Do they energetically jump into ‘the ring’ when issues come up? Do they stir up wrangles when they think that vital questions are at stake? Or do they remain passive on this front?

The question should be considered from another angle also. How much of this ideological struggle is opened up? In the current practice within the broad Maoist movement, as well as the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM), opening up of differences, going public, is reserved for the very end, when the differences have arrived at the level of a denunciation or split. Extreme examples where ideological differences at the leadership level or between parties are known to only a few at the top most level for a long period can also be seen, though this is the exception. The justification for this is the need to carry out ideological struggle in an organised manner. Every Maoist party engaged in serious practice, whatever maybe its level, certainly must handle everything, including ideological struggle, in a systematic and organised manner. There

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may also be times in a party's life or during a revolution when debate has to be kept aside in order to present a strongly unified force before the enemy. But norms suitable for exceptional circumstances have become extended beyond justifiable limits, stifling ideological struggle. It in turn hampers the politicisation of the broad masses, the vital importance of which was demonstrated by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR).

Open ideological struggle was the normal practice in the international communist movement. The sharp critiques made by Marx and Engels or the polemics of Lenin against various trends, within and outside the movement, are good examples. The 3rd International (Comintern) was a highly centralised organisation, in its positions as well as organisational methods. Yet open debate on differences continued within the Comintern and its parties till the 10th Congress of the Russian Communist Party. The Russian revolution was facing an extremely challenging situation and absolute unity of the party was necessary to surmount this. Lenin proposed and succeeded in getting adopted a resolution banning factions and factional positions in the party. But this exceptional step later on became the norm. It was sanctified with Stalin's views on 'monolithic party'. Mao Tsetung's criticism of this concept as well as his conscious efforts to create a lively atmosphere within the party and society did bring about some change, especially during the GPCR. But the norms formally remained unchanged. They guided the new Maoist movement.

The main argument against making open ideological struggle the norm, instead of the exception, is that it gives the enemy opportunities to create confusion. Serious differences underlying an ideological struggle, particularly at the leadership level, within a party or between parties,

will inevitably be reflected in open propaganda and to some extent in practice. When the struggle is within a party, its reflection in open propaganda can be prevented through organisational decisions. But this too is possible only to a certain degree, unless there is a fall back to the 'monolithic party' concept. When the struggle is between parties, such organisational control becomes even more weak and problematic since every party will necessarily be doing open propaganda of its views. Any attentive reader can easily make out the differences. The enemy's apparatus devoted to this task quickly picks it up very early itself. So we have the situation where the enemy and its think tanks are soon aware of differences within the Maoist movement. They discuss its implications and factor this into their strategies and tactics. Meanwhile the rank and file and the broad masses are in the dark and, even worse, left unprepared and unarmed with a false sense of unity. Moreover the top down organised control of knowledge is today easily subverted by a tiny minority enabled to source the Internet. They gather all sorts of information, quite often misleading. But in the absence of authentic accounts this misinformation gains credibility; at least in the form of 'something is cooking up'. The ultimate result is a lot of rumour mongering, confusion and overall weakening of the movement. The norm of avoiding open ideological struggle, among parties, is evidently defeating the very aims it set out to accomplish. It is more helpful to the enemy.

Digging deeper into this we come up against another bad thing carried over from our past, the contrived exaltation of leadership. This came in after Lenin. It is an inseparable part of the monolithic party concept package, along with the norms discussed earlier. And it directly impinges on these norms. Lenin's authority was derived from his words

and deeds which accorded with the needs of the party and the international proletariat. It was not created with a string of adjectives, oaths, name dropping or propping him up to be on par with his illustrious predecessors. In fact Lenin sharply fought against such tendencies, even to the extent of insisting on a public denunciation by the Central Committee. Precisely because of this approach the danger of being accused of irreverence to the 'Great Leader' was eliminated and that opened up space for critical debate. Once you have this style of employing add-ons to embellish a leader, rather than relying on the authority that will necessarily emerge through that person's role in leadership, it will invariably create a feudal mentality of reverence within the party and the masses. Its corollary is hostility to criticism. For all the fervent talk on being scientific and critical the mood will be, to paraphrase one of Mao's comments on Stalin, 'Wrangle on, but don't touch my ancestor's ass.'

“Many things may become
baggage, may become encum-
brances, if we cling to them
blindly and uncritically.”

Mao Tsetung

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On the Line and Tactics of the UCPN (Maoist)

**Communist Party of India (Marxist - Leninist) NAXALBARI,
October 2010.**

The political situation in Nepal is quickly building up to a dangerous climax, dangerous for the Nepalese new democratic revolution and the international proletariat. The ruling classes, backed by the expansionist India and the US imperialists, are arrogantly pushing for a counter-revolutionary attack or, at the minimum, a reactionary consolidation. They are strident in their demands to liquidate all the gains made by the people through the great people's war. The terms set in the ceasefire agreements with the United Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) [UCPN(Maoist)], earlier Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) [CPN(Maoist)], are wilfully violated. Its ultimatums and deadlines are ignored. The aggressive manner in which the ruling classes are pursuing their agenda only shows that the initiative is well in their hands. They are increasingly confident that the UCPN(Maoist) will once again yield ground and come to a compromise. On the other side, the once powerful

and united Maoist party is considerably weakened. The masses continue to support it. But parliamentary degeneration and departures from the Maoist style of work and living have severely eaten into the revolutionary quality of the party. Doubts about its revolutionary will are also growing among the people. Yet, despite the threat of a reactionary attack and the erosion of its strength and support, the UCPN(Maoist) leadership is busy with working out formulae that will take it back into government. Evidently, the new tactics visualised by the CPN(Maoist) in 2005 and its realisation in the ceasefire of 2006, have been crucial in the emergence of this situation. This is now the subject of the sharpening ideological struggle, the two line struggle, within the UCPN(Maoist) and the international communist movement. The future of the party as well as the Nepalese revolution hinges on its correct resolution.

Our party has all along paid great attention to learning from the positions and experiences of the CPN(Maoist) and mobilising support for the revolutionary war it led. It had upheld and defended the new turn adopted by the Nepali Maoists in 2006 and played an active role in building support

parliamentary degeneration and departures from the Maoist style of work and living have severely eaten into the revolutionary quality of the party. Doubts about its revolutionary will are also growing among the people.

for the new democratic revolution of Nepal in the new situation. All along, we were also critical of certain ideological positions and practices of the CPN(Maoist). The October 2006 Central Enlarged Meeting (CEM) of our party concluded that “...*the political-organisational plans of the CPN(Maoist) adhere to the tasks and orientation of new democratic revolution. Contrary to the propaganda done by the enemy and the revisionists, as well as the doubts created in the minds of some comrades, the present tactics of the CPN(Maoist) do not in any way indicate a desire to abandon the road of revolution for the sake of a share in the existing power. On the contrary, they indicate an MLM orientation and its application. Their tactics are serving the strategy of new democratic revolution. They are applying these tactics to fight and complete the new democratic revolution. The CPN(Maoist) is leading a great political struggle and it is our internationalist duty to uphold and build support for it.*” The CEM also pointed out, “... *there are some positions, formulations and analysis, within the overall correct orientation, that give room for right deviationist tendencies. Further, we think that some of the views expressed in the press statements and interviews of the CPN(Maoist) leadership have violated the norms of internationalist relations. In general, it has not properly taken into consideration the international fall out of its public statements.*” These were raised before its leadership in bilateral discussions as well as through a letter sent in October 2006. (letter of October 2006, Appendix 1) They were also raised in joint forums like the Regional Conferences of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) and Conferences of the Co-ordination

Committee of the Maoist Parties of South Asia (CCOMPOSA).

The opportunities given by the ceasefire and the interim setup were exhausted by mid-2007. The decision of the CPN(Maoist) in 2007 to come out of the Interim government and initiate mass struggles was welcomed by us. But we were also concerned over the analysis of the situation made by the party leadership and the roadmap it visualised. The plans for developing the mass struggle towards an insurrection were being hinged on the expectation that the demands it was raising could never be accepted by the enemy. We felt, correctly as proved by events, that the enemy could well accept those demands and that the party would once again loose initiative. Public statements of prominent CPN(Maoist) leaders that presented the ongoing Constituent Assembly (CA) process as a goal in itself, and the severe weakening of clandestine structures and style of working were also criticised. These views were put directly to the CPN(Maoist) leadership. We also wrote to its Central Committee (letter of September 2007, see appendix 2). The necessity to break out of the Interim setup at all costs was stressed.

But what was seen was a backtracking of the CPN(Maoist) leadership from the decisions it had taken in its 2007 Expanded Meeting. It rejoined the government. The

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justification now was that this was imperative for the successful conclusion of the Constituent Assembly elections. On our part, we concluded that there has been an erosion of revolutionary will and the danger of the party sliding into rightism had strengthened. The conclusion was that “...unless the present direction taken by the party is reversed, its success in the CA elections or success in developing a mass movement in case CA elections are sabotaged, will not necessarily lead to a revolutionary outcome.”(internal circular, March 2008, Appendix 3). While continuing in the Solidarity movement, we refused the request made by the CPN(Maoist) to send observers for the CA elections. An open comment, made in our media and circulated in the internet, on the victory of the CPN(Maoist) in the CA elections, drew attention to the danger of this victory itself further strengthening rightism, even while the advantageous situation given by the electoral verdict was acknowledged.

The period following the formation of an interim government led by the CPN(Maoist) witnessed a qualitative leap in its rightist downslide. UCPN(Maoist)'s fraternal relations and exchanges with Maoist parties were, for all practical purposes, broken off. We continued to critically comment on the manifestations of rightism seen in practices of the party. Meanwhile, a line struggle emerged within the UCPN(Maoist). This had a positive impact on fraternal relations. This opportunity was used by our party, with the assistance of the UCPN(Maoist) leadership, to have discussions with a wide range of party and mass organisation leaders as well as investigate the ground situation in the country in 2009. They strengthened our critical views which were raised with the UCPN(Maoist) leadership.

Today the most crucial task regarding the revolution in Nepal is the successful advance of the struggle against the rightism that is on the verge of derailing it. While the people's war is the most outstanding advance made by the Maoists in Nepal, it does not exhaust their contributions. In the present world, where the political realm has widened to a great extent, political intervention carried out through diverse forms of struggle has great importance. The recognition of this factor and its utilisation stands to the credit of the Maoists in Nepal. Yet this very approach is also an inseparable element of the course that led to the present situation. Therefore a proper synthesis that draws out the positive and demarcates it from rightist deviations is very crucial in the deepening of the line struggle against rightism.

Negotiations as a form of political intervention

The pace at which the revolution in Nepal progressed, the varied tactics that the party adopted and the maturity and the flexibility it showed at various

instances caught the attention of the progressives and the revolutionary masses all over the world. The heroic struggle of the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) and the masses were supplemented with the political interventions of the party. While the main focus was on rural work, appreciable work was done

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to the extent possible in urban centers too. By correctly grasping the dynamics of the war, the party advanced the people's war qualitatively and quantitatively, in a planned manner, effectively enthusing the masses and maintaining the initiative in their hands. They thus forced the enemy to act according to the agenda set by the people's war.

Unlike the period of the Chinese revolution, when the political sphere was rather limited, today the spread of means of communication and media has extended it throughout the country. There still is a lot of unevenness

in this. But the extension of the political sphere is an important particularity of the contemporary Third World. A total war in which the enemy is attacked on all fronts

the extension of the political sphere is an important particularity of the contemporary Third World. A total war in which the enemy is attacked on all fronts will not be possible if this extremely dynamic sphere is ignored. This is the importance of the active political intervention of Maoists. In an oppressed country the advance of the people's war is the main factor giving weight to such political intervention. The people's war makes the political sphere even more dynamic. In its turn, political intervention that strikes at key points becomes a catalyst which increases the pace of the war (and preparations for it). But in order to carry out political intervention, particular effort and tactical approach are needed. It won't do to stay restricted to the advance of the war alone. This is a method of applying the tactics of political intervention, usually associated with the armed insurrection, in the strategy of protracted people's war.

will not be possible if this extremely dynamic sphere is ignored. This is the importance of the active political intervention of Maoists. In an oppressed country the advance of the people's war is the main factor giving weight to such political intervention. The people's war makes the political sphere even more dynamic. In its turn, political intervention that strikes at key points becomes a catalyst which increases the pace of the war (and preparations for it). But in order to carry out political intervention, particular effort and tactical approach are needed. It won't do to stay restricted to the advance of the war alone. This is a method of applying the tactics of political intervention, usually associated with the armed insurrection, in the strategy of protracted people's war. The approach of the Nepali Maoists of going into negotiation at different times was an application of this correct approach. It helped the party to spread its views more widely. It forced the enemy to remove the tag of terrorist. And it also helped the party to rest its forces and build strength, making it all the more capable of advancing in leaps. This was once again seen in the initial period following the 2006 ceasefire. But now the revolution itself faces the danger of derailment. Obviously, the question of whether this negative situation is an inevitable consequence of the negotiation approach must be settled. Is it the case that the ceasefire of 2006 was unnecessary and the Interim setup, including the CA, could only have led to loss of initiative of the Maoists?

During the preceding period the enemy was pursuing a policy of more or less retreating from the rural areas, unable to withstand the attacks of the PLA, camping in the urban centres and foraging into the countryside from time to time.

By this time the revolutionary forces had succeeded in bringing 80% of the country under people's power. Though they achieved a number of military successes they couldn't capture and retain urban centres since they didn't have the weapons needed to smash the fortifications built by the enemy with US expertise. Since the enemy had succeeded in smashing the urban organisational structures, launching a mass movement also wasn't possible. The CPN(Maoist) evaluated that if this situation, which had emerged during the strategic offensive, were to continue, it would lead to stagnation and loss of initiative. Around this period, the monarchical coup led to a partial realignment of political forces within the country and created an opportunity for uniting with the Seven Party Alliance (SPA) to launch a mass movement based on the call for Interim Government, Constituent Assembly elections and abolishment of the monarchy, slogans initially raised by the Maoists. There was an additional factor. Nepal faces a complex geophysical situation. It is landlocked between two developing ambitious expansionist military giants. In this situation, in an imperialist world dominated by the sole super power US, with no socialist country to get support from, any possibility of neutralising some of the lesser enemies and gaining support internationally was worth utilising. Any doctrinaire approach denying this would have only complicated the situation further. Hence the decision to enter negotiations leading to the Interim setup was justifiable as tactics to enter and organise in urban areas, buy time to prepare for final insurrection and prepare favourable grounds internationally. The approach outlined by the CPN(Maoist) in its August 2006 CC Resolution – "It is indispensable to

have a correct coordination and balance of armed people's war, strong mass movement, peace-talks and diplomatic initiative for the success of Nepalese people's revolution..." was mainly correct.

Negotiations inevitably imply acceptance of certain compromises. They can even go to the extent of admitting the possibility of joining an interim government along with reactionary parties, and touch upon the people's army and the new political power. The negotiations done by the Communist Party of China with the Koumintang, and the compromises proposed by it, are a precedent. (see 'On Peace Negotiations with the Kuomintang' and 'On the Chungking Negotiations', volume 4, Selected Works of Mao Tsetung). The tactics adopted by the CPN(Maoist) and the conditions

The tactics adopted by the CPN(Maoist) and the conditions accepted by it in the course of negotiation have been criticised within the international Maoist movement. Most of them came from a view that ruled out the necessity of negotiation or 'peace' tactics in that specific juncture. There has also been a dogmatic denial of the validity of such tactics itself, though they are accepted in words. The criticism has also been raised that serious errors of line in political positions, seen well before the alliance with the SPA, have paved the way to rightism. As explained above we basically disagree with these criticisms.

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the alliance with the SPA, have paved the way to rightism. As explained above we basically disagree with these criticisms.

At the same time, these criticisms also contained some correct aspects. Even if negotiations were necessary, one important question is whether the specific conditions accepted by the CPN(Maoist) were justified. In particular, the CPN(Maoist)'s accepting to canton the PLA under UN supervision, while allowing important armed duties to the Nepal Army, and to dissolve the new political power structures have been criticised. They have been compared with Mao Tsetung's insistence on retaining the PLA and the new power (base areas) while the CPC was negotiating with the Kuomintang. The CPN(Maoist) has pointed to its disadvantageous situation compared to that of the CPC, which enjoyed support from the USSR, to explain the concessions it made. It has also explained that most of the fighters and weapons were outside the cantonments. Local power centres led by the party continued to function, undeclared, in rural areas. It is a fact that this situation continued to exist, well after the ceasefire was formalised. The enemies were quite aware of it and often accused the CPN(Maoist) of violating the agreements. But there was nothing they could do about it. This was a strong testimony to the dual power existing in Nepal. Unfortunately, most of the criticism on the CPN(Maoist) on this issue simply avoided this real situation. This was an example of the doctrinaire approach seen in them. But there were also some positions that acknowledged the real situation and proceeded to raise criticism. It was pointed out that the CPN(Maoist) was disarming its ranks and the masses,

ideologically and politically, by accepting such conditions

(cantoning the PLA and dissolving local power centres), as they **s u r r e n d e r** revolutionary army and revolutionary power, at least verbally. This is correct. In failing to examine the issue from this angle, from the angle of the ideological significance of the concessions made by the CPN(Maoist), we too made a pragmatist error.

The growth of rightist tendencies

Over the past 4 years the “positions, formulations and analysis” which we criticised have not only given room, as feared,

for the growth of right deviationist tendencies. It has cultivated and nurtured these tendencies, bringing the party to the verge of degenerating into revisionism, even of liquidating itself. From the strong position enjoyed by the party in 2006 we see systematic and steady decline. It has been losing initiative and trailing the ruling classes in a

the CPN(Maoist)’s accepting to canton the PLA under UN supervision, while allowing important armed duties to the Nepal Army, and to dissolve the new political power structures have been criticised. ...most of the fighters and weapons were outside the cantonments. Local power centres led by the party continued to function, undeclared, in rural areas. It is a fact that this situation continued to exist, well after the ceasefire was formalised...This was a strong testimony to the dual power existing in Nepal. But... it was pointed out that the CPN(Maoist) was disarming its ranks and the masses, *ideologically and politically*, by accepting such conditions ... as they surrender revolutionary army and revolutionary power, at least verbally. This is correct. In failing to examine the issue from this angle, from the angle of the ideological significance of the concessions made by the CPN(Maoist), we too made a pragmatist error.

contrary to the directives given in this resolution, its clandestine structure was drastically weakened. While the party could make significant entry into the urban areas and organise extensively, its work in the rural areas suffered. There has been erosion in the fighting quality of the cantoned PLA. A series of ideological, political positions went into reducing the UCPN (M) to this level. The position on Prachanda Path, ambiguous formulations on ‘fusion of PPW and insurrection’ and views on multi-party competition are clearly and directly related to the present mess the party finds itself in. While they must be traced back to the very roots, this document will mainly examine the positions directly underlying the turn taken by the CPN(Maoist) in 2006.

series of compromises. Crucial opportunities for unleashing the masses revolutionary fervour in order to break out of the Interim setup and advance in revolution have been missed. When the masses were rallied, this was restricted and employed as a mere tool in parliamentary manoeuvres and compromises. Why did this happen?

In a Resolution adopted in May 2006, the CPN(Maoist), CC had made it clear that, *“In this situation, on the one hand and mainly it is necessary to raise struggle against right reformist trend that seeks to go ahead by abandoning clandestine structure, working style and revolutionary form of struggle*

and on the other it is necessary to be careful against the dogmato-sectarian trend that only devaluates the importance and necessity of talks, open-meetings and new fronts of struggle. Hence, in the changed situation, party policy is: give priority to clandestine structure of organization, working style and revolutionary form of struggle and don't abandon talks and legal front of struggles too... maximum majority of comrades from command, region and district level will have to go for organizational rectification, consolidation, expansion and mass mobilization, while a certain number of comrades only will have to push the tasks ahead by building talks- team and speakers-team without any unnecessary intermingling between these two and correct coordination with each other... In the present context, when domestic and foreign reactionary elements are conspiring against Nepalese people's aspiration of progress and peace, the whole party from top to bottom must give maximum emphasis on the question of consolidating and expanding people's liberation army and keeping them prepared to go any time into the war front., if the party failed to consolidate and expand people's Liberation Army and keep it prepared 24 hours for war, Nepalese people will suffer a big defeat. 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... Party will never tolerate any vacillation in this basic class and theoretical question."

But, contrary to the directives given in this resolution, its clandestine structure was drastically

weakened. While the party could make significant entry into the urban areas and organise extensively, its work in the rural areas suffered. There has been erosion in the fighting quality of the cantoned PLA. A series of ideological, political positions went into reducing the UCPN (M) to this level. The position on Prachanda Path, ambiguous formulations on 'fusion of PPW and insurrection' and views on multi-party competition are clearly and directly related to the present mess the party finds itself in. While they must be traced back to the very roots, this document will mainly examine the positions directly underlying the turn taken by the CPN(Maoist) in 2006.

The Chungwang Central Committee meeting of November 2005, which took the decision of going into negotiation defined the new tactics thus – *“Now the slogan of interim government, election of the constituent assembly and democratic republic that our party, taking into account of 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 tactic 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 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. 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. Both of the understandings that the slogan of constituent assembly and democratic republic is a pure political and diplomatic manoeuvring to be never applied or as a strategic slogan to be never changed i.e. to be applied in any condition are wrong.” (Political and Organizational Resolution , November 2005)

There are 2 serious mistakes here.
a) The definition of

The conception of democratic republic formed under a new constitution as a transitory form is problematic. Similarly, it is wrong to conceive that the reactionaries in a semi-colonial, semi-feudal country can form a bourgeois parliamentary republic. ... an interim government, in which the SPA also is a partner, will be neither new democratic or simply a continuation of the past. But in that case also it will have class content. It will be a dual power. It is true that the length of the period it will exist cannot be ascertained right now. But, as a general principle, dual power can exist only for a fairly short period. This is particularly true when it is coexisting within a single structure. If this is not explained as such, a rightist tendency promoting the desirability and possibility of a fairly long period of co-existence with the reactionary parties can well come up

democratic republic itself was unclear and b) It was vague on the time period. As pointed out in our October 2006 letter, *“The conception of democratic republic formed under a new constitution as a transitory form is problematic. Similarly, it is wrong to conceive that the reactionaries in a semi-colonial, semi-feudal country can form a bourgeois parliamentary republic. ... an interim government, in which the SPA also is a partner, will be neither new democratic or simply a continuation of the past. But in that case also it will have class content. It will be a dual power. It is true that the length of the period it will exist cannot be ascertained right now. But, as a general principle, dual power can exist only for a fairly short period. This is particularly true when it is coexisting within a single structure. If this is not explained as such, a rightist tendency promoting the desirability and possibility of a fairly long period of co-existence with the reactionary parties can well come up.”*

The state structure is meant for exploitation of one class over the other. There can be situations where, because of the balance of power, dual power exists. But how can both the antagonistic classes co-exist together for a long period?

This ambiguity has in fact encouraged the rightist tendency

The understanding of Bhattraï on this matter is very old and deep-rooted. In his book ‘Political-Economical Rationale of the People’s War’, the stress is on the backwardness of Nepal. But Bhattraï doesn’t see it as Mao did – this backwardness also has its advantages, its positive aspect, the possibility it offers of unleashing the potential of the masses.

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it has not yet come. Furthermore, by conceding the possibility of a bourgeois parliamentary republic, room was given for the persistence of the rightist position on a separate sub-stage of 'bourgeois democracy'.

The handling of the 2-line struggle that emerged in 2004–05 on the same subject had left much to be desired. Comrade Baburam Bhattarai had on several occasions raised the question of "need for a sub-stage", before the complete capture of power and the formation of New Democratic Republic. On the other hand, the CPN(Maoist) was clear that no separate stage was necessary, as a matter of principal, before the final completion of new democratic revolution (NDR). This 2-line struggle was later claimed to be settled but one never got an explanation as to how it was settled. The plenum report covering this line struggle appreciated the capability of the party to avoid split and advance by transformation as a sign of maturity, unlike the negative tradition of the M-L movement of ending in splits even over slight differences. It is indeed a good thing to avoid split. But that cannot replace ideological consolidation or reduce its importance. The entire party needed to be ideologically educated and told that there was a diametrically opposite view which was defeated in the 2 line struggle, thus developing ideological clarity among the cadres and the masses. This was not done.

The understanding of Bhattarai on this matter is very old and deep-rooted. In his book 'Political- Economical Rationale of the People's War', the stress is on the backwardness of Nepal. But Bhattarai doesn't see it as Mao did – this backwardness also has its advantages, its positive aspect, the possibility it offers of unleashing the potential

of the masses. The minds of the masses are not so corrupted with the blind attractions of imperialist-comprador consumerism. It is like a blank paper. This is supportive to the vital task of breaking away from the economical relations of the world imperialist system (of which Indian expansionism is a part). Without such breaking away no oppressed country can hope of equitable, sustainable and all-round development. This is precisely why Mao Tsetung pointed out that there is no Chinese Wall between new democracy and socialism. The NDR removes the shackles of imperialism and feudalism. This inevitably leads to the growth of some local capitalism. But the *aim* of NDR is not the growth of capitalism. It can never be so, no matter how backward the country is. Because any attempt to develop capitalism in an oppressed country will inevitably entangle itself in the imperialist web and end up as bureaucratic capitalism, thoroughly comprador.

But instead of this Maoist approach Bhattraï talks of the need to develop productive forces in a one-sided manner and takes this as proof of the need to develop capitalism. This is expanded to insist that a sub-stage of a period of capitalist development and bourgeois democracy will be necessary before going into completion of the NDR. The presence of the monarchy was taken as a political justification for this. Whatever one may subjectively think, this inevitably means coming to terms with Indian Expansionism that controls the Nepali economy. The dream of developing entrepreneurs from among the Nepalese over a period will simply remain that ... a dream. Instead, a whole new crop of compradors will be reared. Meanwhile the class base of the party will be shifted from the working class/

landless and poor peasants to middle classes. Thus the plan of completing NDR gets aborted and the party faces the prospect of turning into a mere parliamentary-bourgeois party.

Clarity on this question and drawing a firm line of separation from this rightist view was essential to educate the masses and the cadres. This was vital to distinguish the tactics of seeking a short period to carry out urban organising, polarise the middle classes and make necessary diplomatic moves in order to complete preparations for insurrection, from rightist machinations to extend this period of peace and co-existence indefinitely. The formulation of the Chungwang document faulted on both these counts. This was an instance of eclectics, of combining two into one.

One-sided evaluation of the situation

The CPN(Maoist) had based its tactics on the evaluation of the immediate unfavourable international situation faced by the NDR. This was correct. But the strategically favourable situation existing internationally and the unfavourable situation faced by the enemies of the revolution, immediately as well as strategically, were ignored. This had serious implication for its negotiating stance as well as its tactics after the ceasefire came into force. Our letter of October 2006 noted, *“The CPN(Maoist) has correctly stated that the present tactics flow from the strong position achieved by the 10 year old people’s war. This strength is evident. Along with that there is also a favourable factor in the international and national situation, in the immediate sense itself. And it is necessary to stress this. If both the favourable and unfavourable factors are not taken*

On Negotiations

The negotiations and ceasefire agreement of the CPN (Maoist) have commonly been compared, unfavourably, with the tactics of the Communist Party of China. There is some substance in these criticisms. There is also a lot of dogmatism. The questioning, ‘how can Maoists sit together with reactionaries in a government, how can the revolutionary army be merged with a reactionary army?’ was a glaring instance. Subtle varieties are also seen. For instance, a prominent feature in the comparison with the CPC is the assumption that Mao Tsetung never really entertained the possibility of arriving at a negotiated ceasefire with the Koumintang. It is also argued that he agreed for negotiation mainly because of Stalin’s insistence. The negotiation stance adopted by the CPC is thus evaluated as nothing more than a posture. Stalin’s pressure, based on his evaluation that the CPC could not defeat the Koumintang, is well known. Mao has mentioned this and also noted that Stalin later made self-criticism. But it wouldn’t do to club this with Mao’s assessment of a ceasefire. A reading of both of his writings dealing with this issue clearly shows that he did indeed accept the possibility of ceasefire and a period of peaceful activities.

In his ‘On Peace Negotiations with the Kuomintang’ (Selected Works, Volume 4) he wrote: “It is possible that after the negotiations the Kuomintang, under domestic and foreign pressure, may conditionally recognise our Path’s status. Our Party too may conditionally recognise the status of the Kuomintang. This would bring about a new stage of cooperation between the two parties (plus the Democratic League etc.) and of peaceful development. In that event, our Party should strive to master all methods of legal struggle and intensify work in the Kuomintang areas in the three main spheres, the cities, the

villages and the army (all weak points in our work there)." The editorial note introducing this writing says: "This circular drafted by Comrade Mao Tse-tung analysed developments in China during the fortnight after Japan announced her surrender. It set forth the policy of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the peace negotiations, certain concessions the Party was prepared to make in the negotiations and policies for coping with *the two possible outcomes* of the negotiations." (emphasis added) Further on, the various negotiation positions raised by the CPC delegation are detailed in a footnote to Mao's report "On the Chungking Negotiations". They clearly indicate that the negotiation stance of the CPC was by no means mere posturing. The CPC delegation was striving as best as it could to make the negotiations a success. The concessions it proposed were evidently advanced systematically with the expectation that a settlement was possible within the parameters set by Mao's position of safeguarding the fundamental interests of the people. It may be noted that these proposals included 'unifying the military command', 'equitable and rational reorganization of the armed forces of the whole country', 'commission(ing) the existing personnel as officers of various ranks in the reorganized units' and appointing nominees of the CPC in various provincial governments under the Koumintang. Retaining the status quo in the Liberated Areas was proposed only after all the former proposals failed. Mao's report made after a lengthy period of negotiations is quite sceptical about arriving at a settlement. Yet he still hadn't ruled out its possibility. This was based on recognition of objective factors that could override Chiang Kai-shek's subjective desires to launch a war and destroy the revolution.

Stalin's mistaken assessment of the threat of a new world war was one of the reasons behind his insistence that the CPC

should avoid a renewal of the armed struggle. Mao's correct evaluation of the world situation allowed him to emphatically reject this assessment. He could make an all round, realistic estimate of the prospects of renewed civil war and negotiated settlement in China. As explained elsewhere, the one-sided views of the CPN (Maoist) leadership in its analysis of the world situation and that of Nepal have been instrumental in its errors. One of its manifestations was the absence of a realistic assessment of the compulsions faced by the enemies. A similar error, from the opposite end, underlies one of the subtle varieties of dogmatism seen in the polemics. In this case it is manifested as an admission of negotiation tactics ultimately rendered hollow, because the objective situation is either missed out or treated trivially. For instance, it is admitted 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 or refuse to enter into negotiations with the SPA. But what are the implications of these 'specific conditions' and its emergence? It is clear enough that the mass uprising of April 2006 was made possible through the prior agreement with the SPA based on the decisions of the Chungwang CC meeting. This indicated an objective situation. A situation that contained compulsions pushing the ruling class parties and external enemies towards agreement. These tactics themselves became *possible* because of this objective situation. If this objectiveness of the possibility for negotiations (also implying a possible temporary settlement) is accepted, then the line and tactics that allowed the party to utilise it cannot be summarily dismissed. On the other hand, if it is denied or treated superficially then the admittance of 'specific conditions' and negotiations will only be a meaningless gesture.

into account and placed as such before the party and the masses it can lead to the development of pessimistic tendencies. Mao's writings clearly show us that this was how he analysed and presented the situation that made tactics of coalition government both possible and necessary."

The partial view of the situation was an important factor in laying the ground for making unnecessary concessions in negotiations. It had serious consequences in the matter of tactics. Immediately after the ceasefire the party leadership had planned that they will never join the Interim government and would stay outside. It was assumed that the demands and conditions raised by the party would be unacceptable to the ruling classes. This approach was repeated in 2007 after coming out of the Interim government. It was also seen in the question of CA elections, where, right up to the very end, the expectation was that the enemy would try to sabotage it. On each occasion, the anticipated negative response of the enemy was conceived as the point to break out of the alliance with the SPA and advance the revolution. But the anticipation proved wrong, the enemy made concessions and the party lost initiative. (Some of the critics of the CPN(Maoist) tactics made similar estimations and posed *them* as urgent reasons for the

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CPN(Maoist) to break off!) Evidently, the party leadership failed to analyse the factors pressing the enemy to compromise, in other words the unfavourable situation faced by the enemy. In 2006 itself, and repeatedly thereafter, we had pointed this out. But instead of critical re-examination, the party leadership buttressed its one-sidedness with its position on a 'globalised, unipolar imperialism', 'US imperialism functioning as a globalised state' and similar views. This was wrong in principle because it denied the inevitable contention between imperialist powers. Besides, as we wrote to the CPN(Maoist) in 2006, *"This is going beyond noting the status of the US today as a sole superpower, enjoying unchallenged hegemony. It ignores the serious problems faced by the US in carrying out its strategy to achieve total domination through its so called 'War on Terrorism' due to the resistance of the world peoples and also underplays the growing contention within the imperialists camp, particularly with Russia."* The international situation clearly showed that the imperialists, especially the US, wanted a compromise, for tactical and strategic reasons. They were already feeling the effects of getting bogged down in Iraq and Afghanistan. And, politically, the advantage they gained by covering their 'War on the People' as a confrontation with obscurantist Islamic fundamentalists would be lost in a war against a people's revolution led by Maoists. The Indian expansionists too preferred avoiding direct confrontation, given the significant growth of the Maoist led NDR in India and the danger of triggering of a sub-continental upheaval in the event of Indian aggression in Nepal. Both these enemies were well aware that a resumption of the people's war would inevitably lead to their direct involvement, since the

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reactionary Nepal army was no match to the PLA. They still have this concern.

The repeated failure in its anticipations of the enemy's responses, from a leadership that successfully planned ahead and showed exemplary calibre in implementing those plans through a decade of practice of people's war, raises serious questions. Was this an inevitable outcome of the positions underlying the ceasefire and 'peace tactics'? Or was it the fall out of serious errors of line in the direction

taken by the party, even before its unity with the SPA? A careful examination of the objective circumstances negates this. There was enough and more grounds to formulate and carry out tactical moves (mobilising masses on political, economic demands) aimed at ensuring, and justifying, breaking out of the Interim setup to advance the revolution. But if the favourable aspects of the objective situation and unfavourable factors faced by the enemy are discounted, then there won't be any urge to even think of such tactics. Instead, the insistence will be to adopt tactics of posturing and pressurising, with the aim of getting the minimum, because that will be seen as the only plausible achievement. It remains to be examined whether tendencies of doubting the very possibility of succeeding in the NDR, in the present world situation, influenced the Chungwang decisions.

The evaluation of the CPN(Maoist) on the contradictions in play, before and after the ceasefire, has always been marked by an under-estimation of the comprador character of Indian ruling classes. There was (and still is) an over-estimation of the capacity of the Indian ruling classes to act on their own and of their contradictions with US imperialism in policy matters.

The evaluation of the CPN(Maoist) on the contradictions in play, before and after the ceasefire, has always been marked by an under-estimation of the comprador character of Indian ruling classes. There was (and still is) an over-estimation of the capacity of the Indian ruling classes to act on their own and of their contradictions with US imperialism in policy matters. As a result, while note is made of such contradictions and the opportunities they offer, the structural limitations within which Indian expansionism must act is ignored. Therefore the threat of Indian intervention is not evaluated in the context of the present US policy for the whole of South Asia. This threat thus tends to get exaggerated. A similar problem is seen in its assessment of China. In Nepal's geo-political conditions, the contradictions between India and China should certainly be utilised. But these contradictions and the Nepal policies of the rulers in these countries must be viewed within the frame of the imperialist system of dependence within which they exist. Besides, China's stance on the present dispensation in Nepal, with the UCPN(Maoist) in or out of government, and the attitude it would have towards a successful Maoist led revolution in Nepal, are qualitatively different matters. The Chinese revisionists will be severely threatened by a Maoist led new democratic state in Nepal. Sharpening contradictions within China will magnify this threat. Therefore, the extent to which their contradiction with the Indian ruling classes will outweigh this fear and whether they can be counted on to hold the scales against Indian intervention in that situation, are to be seen. *All the trends* within the UCP (Maoist) are over-estimating these factors, though with some unevenness in the weight given

to them. Overall, the tendency of geo-physical calculations outweighing class outlook in the analysis of international relations, and the consequent inflated views on the potential of diplomacy is quite evident. This has always been a characteristic of rightism.

Making an absolute of abolishing the monarchy

Immediately following the Palace massacre, the CPN(Maoist) shifted the focus of its political attack and made the monarchy headed by Gyanendra its main internal target. This was a correct tactical step. It promoted the split among the ruling classes and prepared grounds for uniting the ruling class parties into a broad political mass movement directed against the monarchy. But this tactics was also marked by some errors in principle and inconsistencies. Our letter of 2006 had drawn attention to this. The CPN(Maoist) documents usually characterised the monarchy as representing the feudal forces. The monarchy, as an institution of the state and as a hegemonic ideological apparatus, was indeed the main lynchpin of feudalism in Nepal, one which has a centuries old suffocating grip on

The monarchy, as an institution of the state and as a hegemonic ideological apparatus, was indeed the main lynchpin of feudalism in Nepal, one which has a centuries old suffocating grip on Nepali society. But once Nepal came under British imperialist domination and became a semi-colony, it no longer represented feudalism alone. It became the lynchpin of all reaction.

Nepali society. But once Nepal came under British imperialist domination and became a semi-colony, it no longer represented feudalism alone. It became the

lynchpin of all reaction. The class character of the king and court nobles itself changed. They were increasingly tied up directly with the growing bureaucrat capitalism. Distinguishing between feudal forces and the comprador-bureaucrat bourgeoisie and targeting the monarchy in order to tactically utilise the contradiction among these two parts of the ruling classes was correct. But viewing and presenting the monarchy solely in relation to feudal forces was wrong. The monarchy was only a *form* of the existing Nepali state, a state which serves *all* the ruling classes. Lack of clarity on this promoted the danger of absolutising the struggle to end the monarchy. It aided the argument for a separate sub-stage of 'bourgeois democracy' to be achieved through abolishing the monarchy, instead of placing its abolishment within the broader task of destroying the existing state and completing the NDR. It also influenced the way in which the 'peace' tactics were understood in relation to the strategic task of NDR.

This prevented the party from anticipating a possible move by the enemy to "*do away with the monarchy and set up some sham republic, even incorporating some formal rights for oppressed sections (like in South Africa).*"(letter of 2006) Along with this, the opportunist tendency of avoiding ideological-political precision in formulations under the plea of tactical necessities came up in force and compounded these errors. An example was the loose formulations on 'Republic'. At various times this was said as republic, people's republic, federal republic, and peoples federal democratic national republic. It was always explained that the intended political program of the republic is new democratic, though this is not made explicit due to

tactical reasons. From the very beginning we were critical of this and raised this before the CPN(Maoist) leadership. It was pointed out, *“Tactical slogans should definitely be capable of linking up with the mood of the masses. Lenin’s slogan of “Peace, Bread and Democracy” during the preparations for the October insurrection is an example. But a distinction must be made between such slogans and the direction given to the party through its documents. In the political situation of Nepal where the attainment of the republic is widely understood as the scrapping of the monarchy, when there already is the history of a tendency in the top leadership level arguing for a sub-stage of bourgeois democracy, when party documents themselves say that the republic conceived by the party is not immediately a new democratic one, such blurring of ideological-political clarity will definitely give room for rightist tendencies to grow.”* (letter of 2006)

Thus, the error seen in the CPN(Maoist)’s positions on the monarchy, as well as its varying characterisation of ruling class parties, depending on the ups and downs in its relations with them, have no doubt aided the growth of rightism. In immediate terms, the trend of conceiving and posing the ending of monarchy as almost equivalent to the completion of a stage (or at least a phase) of revolution was instrumental in promoting the view that the completion of the Constituent Assembly process was, *and remains*, a must. This thinking is still shared, though unevenly, by the revolutionary left.

Making an absolute of the Constituent Assembly process

By early 2007 itself the party had succeeded in its plans to enter the capital city and build up its mass base and

structures. But, instead of trying to create grounds for getting out of the Interim setup and launching the insurrection, the CA elections and completion of the CA process came to be seen as an unavoidably necessary step, an aim in its own right. As argued in the previous section this was closely associated with absolutising the abolishment of the monarchy.

Given the centuries old existence of the Nepalese monarchy, its abolishment was no doubt a significant achievement of the revolutionary process led by the Maoists. It considerably weakened the institutions of the reactionary state and deepened divisions within the ruling classes. But the ending of the monarchy did not mean the abolishment of the state. Moreover, the ending of the monarchy was something that could be utilized by the enemies also. And that is what they did. They claimed that the tasks set forth by the 2006 mass movement had been mainly accomplished and that there was no further justification for the Maoists'

separate agenda. This possibility was already seen during the 2007 political crisis when the Nepal Congress hastily declared in favour of a republic. The Interim constitution was even amended to allow the declaration of a republic by two third majority in the Interim assembly itself. Such developments clearly brought out the limits of the CA and Republic slogans as

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tactics to deepen polarisation and prepare the insurrection. But the CPN(Maoist) failed to assess this. Instead, participation in the completion of the CA process was considered absolutely necessary. It was said that this was essential to ensure that this process was not derailed by the enemy. Thus, *what started out as a tactical position for preparing insurrection became a strategic target.*

The completion of the CA elections and abolishment of the monarchy have become issues in the line struggle developing within the UCPN(Maoist). The left argues that this has ended the validity of the tactics adopted at Chungwang. It identifies the present stagnation of the party as an outcome of continuing with tactics of a completed process and demands the formulation of new tactics. On the other hand, rightist, centrist trends argue that the process initiated at Chungwang is yet to be completed. The desire of the left to advance a different set of tactics centred on completing the NDR distinguishes it from the others. But, its argument still shares common grounds with them on the CA question. By arguing that the question of new tactics came up only *after* the completion of the CA elections and abolishment of the monarchy, it too acknowledges that this was an essential necessity. As a result, the shifting of the tactical issue of CA

New tactics had to be formulated, but premised on the reality that the Chungwang process was exhausted by mid-2007 itself. New tactics are needed; not because the CA elections are over and monarchy abolished, but because the party had made sufficient headway by 2007 in the tactical aims set by it in 2005, as part of preparing for the final assault for political power.

and abolishment of monarchy into strategic aims and the role this has played in strengthening the grounds of 'sub-stage' and promoting the deviation from the revolutionary road is missed. New tactics had to be formulated, but premised on the reality that the Chungwang process was exhausted by mid-2007 itself. New tactics are needed; not because the CA elections are over and monarchy abolished, but because the party had made sufficient headway by 2007 in the tactical aims set by it in 2005, as part of preparing for the final assault for political power. After all, *this* was the declared aim of the Chungwang tactics. *If this revolutionary frame of reference is not retaken, the left will remain trapped in the frame set by rightism and centrism, whatever its subjective intentions may be.*

There is the further question of what can be achieved through the present CA. Within the CA the UCPN(Maoist) does not have the required majority to push through its constitutional provisions. But there is an even more basic issue. The principles of any constitution are only as weighty as the force that can be employed to ensure their implementation. This much is clear from the basic teachings of Marxism on the matter of the state, constitutions and government. In the situation of Nepal, the old state is yet to be destroyed. No matter how progressive a constitution may be presented in the CA by the UCPN(Maoist), it will be a dead letter. At the most, as part of an immediate plan for organising the revolutionary seizure of power, constitution making could have been a tool for exposing the enemies and mobilising a broad mass movement. In the absence of such a plan the CA is a trap that ties down the revolutionary party. This is what is happening in Nepal.

Leading the government and the deepening of rightism

The victory of the CPN(Maoist) in the CA elections was overwhelming and gave it a substantial advantage. But it was not a one sided verdict in its favour. The wide lead in seats was not matched in party vote shares. In fact, the significant shares of the two major ruling class parties (Nepal Congress and UML) in proportional votes actually allowed them to regain some legitimacy. In the West and Far West, the main centres of the people's war, the wins of the CPN (M) on both counts were powerful, but in many other places the fight was neck to neck. Had the ruling class parties been united then there was a fair chance that Maoists might not have emerged as the largest single party in the CA. But this hard fact, which revealed the inevitable limitations of parliamentary tactics, was not reflected in the evaluation made by the party. In place of sober assessment, triumphalism ruled the roost.

The policies and practices of the UCPN(Maoist) while in government were consistent with the rightist approach of making the formation of the CA and ending of monarchy into strategic aims. They were an irrefutable testimony to the rightist deviation from the tasks set before it while adopting the 'peace' tactics. This could already be anticipated in the positions taken by the party in 2007 after it reversed its decision to take up struggle. It was demonstrated without doubt right from the very beginning on the issue of government formation. The internal and external reactionaries refused to honour the electoral verdict and allow a government headed by Maoists. The CPN(Maoist) leadership could have made that an opportunity to unleash the revolutionary energy of the

masses in a powerful upsurge, for the 3rd Mass Movement it had been talking for long. Instead, it preferred to enter in petty parliamentary bargaining and come to government through a dangerous compromise - allowing a separate centre in the newly established presidential post. After the formation of the government also, there were a number of situations when the issue could have been taken to the masses and struggle developed. That was never done. Even the issue of the Army Chief was dealt with as matter of government, despite its directly exposing the reactionary challenge raised by the Nepal Army.

Any proletarian led state will have to engage in diplomatic relations with imperialists and reactionaries. It will have to make some concessions to them. At times, it will have to be constrained in its public positions. But none of this can justify placing diplomatic compulsions above proletarian internationalism. In Nepal, the CPN(Maoist) was leading a coalition government, sitting atop a reactionary state. The political and diplomatic compulsions it faced were even more rigid. But within that space too it could have set up a different pole. Instead it chose to ingratiate itself with the imperialists and reactionaries. There was nothing that differentiated the Maoist led government, no new pole could be established. Instead the CPN(Maoist) led government did grave harm to the international cause of Maoism. For example, in the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) meet on Terrorism orchestrated by Indian expansionism, comrade Prachanda could have presented the Maoist perspective on this question. The government headed by him could have refused to sign up. But he went ahead and obediently signed the declaration. Similarly his government could have ended

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Nepali participation in the US led occupation of Afghanistan, but it did not. None of this would have gone beyond the limits of legitimate diplomacy. None of these were impossible in the present world.

The handling of international fraternal relations was even worse. Relations with fraternal parties, RIM and CCOMPOSA were practically broken off.

The Solidarity Committee formed in India was avoided. Not even a statement was brought out on the massacre of the Tamil national minority and fighters of LTTE in Sri Lanka. Relations were established with a number of rightist parties and organisations. In fact, totally opposite to the glorious record of the CPN(Maoist) in proletarian internationalism, a strong tendency of cynical, opportunist utilisation of relations with Maoist parties got strengthened. These relations were played up or muted as a bargaining chip in political manoeuvring. (Some change was seen after the CPN(Maoist) led government was dismissed and the 2 line struggle strengthened. But this tendency remains influential.)

The slogan to struggle from '*street-legislature-government*' (*sadak-sadan-sarkar*) went into cold storage.

The suicidal nature of the deterioration of the party was surely apparent. After all, without the party what was there to ensure a return to government? But logic was operating here. It becomes clear when the deterioration of the party is seen as a simultaneous re-organisation, a reorganisation making it suitable for the rightist course embarked upon by the leadership. This was confirmed and cemented with the unity of the CPN(Maoist) with a section that came out of the revisionist CPN (Unity Center-Mashal).

Some manoeuvring was done at the level of government and parliament but the 'street' and the role of the masses was totally sidelined. The party practically vanished. No statements, no signs of existence of the party were seen. It was allowed to deteriorate and become dysfunctional at various levels. It must be said that at this point the CPN(Maoist) leadership 'outclassed' decades old revisionist parties like the CPM and CPI in India. No matter however much they integrate with the ruling classes, they maintain the primacy of the party, fully aware that this is the instrument by which they maintain their governmental prospects. The reduction of a party like the CPN(Maoist), a party that had steeled itself through the people's war, to such a sorry state in so short a time, is indeed a grave matter to be thought over by Maoists throughout the world. It demands a serious re-examination and advancement of the concepts and methods of party building, particularly in its ideological, political levels.

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organisational dilution of the CPN(Maoist). It conceded significant ground to rightist liquidationism. The formulation on ideology, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism was opportunistically changed to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism/Mao Tsetung Thought for the sake of this unity. The struggle waged earlier by the CPN(Maoist) to insist on the term Maoism and its opposition to any view that saw the adoption of Maoism as a mere matter of words, were conveniently forgotten. If not for the resistance from the revolutionary left within the party 'Maoism' would have been dropped from the name of the unified party itself.

Ironically, through the Army Chief issue the reactionaries inadvertently rescued the UCPN(Maoist) from an ignominious fate. Otherwise, stuck in the day to day activities of government and parliament, it would have degenerated beyond repair.

The line struggle

The left had been steadily building up during the period of the UCPN(Maoist) led government. It got a good opening in the wake of the dismissal of the government over the Army Chief issue. Through continuous struggle the left line has gained significant strength. It has been able to move the struggle away from personalities and focus on line questions. This is a welcome development. But though it is attacking and checking the growth of rightism, the task is not complete. The left still has not achieved a decisive break. It has to rupture from the roots of the right deviation in the party by deepening the ideological-political struggle and consolidating it organisationally. A correct rupture can be achieved only by a critical analysis of the party line and practice and synthesising it at a higher level. A simple

rejection of the past positions, including Chungwang CC, will not do. Though insurrection may still be a possibility, it is essential to break away from any absolutist concept of insurrection that either regards it as the only possibility, ruling out re-initiation of protracted people's war (PPW), or thinks that insurrection should be attempted only with a high chance of achieving countrywide victory. It must also fight for urgent steps to prepare against the threat of a reactionary attack aimed at decimating the Maoists.

One of the main weaknesses of the revolutionary left is its continued support for going back to government and the slogan of carrying out the struggle from '*street-legislature-government*' (SLG). This blurs the distinction between the right and the left and leaves the ranks and the masses confused. Within the left, there is a strong tendency to see the abandoning of the '*street*' part of SLG as the main

error. It urges a 'full' application of the three pronged tactics. This begs the question, struggle for what? Rightists take to the streets when out of government. They need it ... to get back into government and enjoy the crumbs of power. We in India are quite familiar with such revisionist 'street-government' tactics. Can anything different be expected in Nepal? A series of mass struggles were launched by UCPN(Maoist) in

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the period following its dismissal from government. But they have not led to any decisive, qualitative change. All that energy was finally pooled into pushing the ruling class parties towards a new compromise (yet to be actualised) that will allow the UCPN(Maoist) into government. The argument for continuing the SLG tactics is bound up with thinking, still influential within the left, that the CA process must be taken to its logical end. This is seen in some of the views and writings from the left. It is a continuation of the 'absolutising of the CA process', criticised earlier in this document. The influence of erroneous evaluation of the situation, exaggerating the threat from Indian expansionism and considering diplomatic ties with China as an indispensable counter-weight, also underlies this view. Struggle is essential within the left itself to achieve clarity on ideological-political issues and the path forward to completing the revolution. The crucial need today is to regain the revolutionary road. This means line, plan, tactics and determination to break out of the existing Interim setup and advance towards completing the NDR. Nothing less than this will do.

The left has to advance its positions addressing a very complex and challenging situation. In fact it is almost similar to a new initiation. But one that is more complex and challenging. At the time of the initiation of the people's war the party did not have to deal with diplomatic or other similar relations. Everything was a new beginning. But now it must handle a lot many more aspects and pay attention to properly handling their relations, so that the maximum gain can be retained while making the new leap. *But what is decisive is the leap and gearing up the party to take it.*

Because, no matter how good a job is done in handling complex relations and tasks, a restructuring of the present support base, the falling away of a substantial section particularly from among the middle classes, is inevitable. In fact this partial destruction is a necessary corollary to the leap and must be seen as such. This crucially hinges on the deepening of the line struggle and decisive rupture from rightism. Though the urgent task is to address the line and tactical questions immediately posed by the concrete situation, limiting it to these will weaken the left. The ideological struggle must be deepened and the roots of the present rightist tendencies must be identified.

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In conclusion, we would like to place before the Maoists in Nepal an important lesson learnt in the course of struggle against rightism in our own context, **“If a deviation is left not rectified it will generate conditions for its growth into a wrong line.** It will do this by moulding the thinking of the leaders and cadres in its own image. ... opposition [within the CRC, CPI(ML)] not only failed, but also ended up as fuel for the wrong line itself. This happened because there were a lot of common views shared by the contending ideas. ... Despite all its eclecticism, a wrong line has its logic and dynamics. It will incessantly push the party away from Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. The

obvious divergence from Marxist-Leninist-Maoist positions will no longer seem to be so. Large sections within the party may not feel comfortable with such divergence. But their ideological alertness is already dulled by liberal thinking — 'well, they do have a point which must also be considered'. More ground is yielded to the wrong line. Ultimately, the struggle against the wrong line flounders within the ideological, political boundaries set up by that line itself, causing demoralisation. Finally, the most important lesson is this. **No matter how high the heap of garbage, it can always be dug away. Provided, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is firmly grasped and wielded with determination to make a total rupture.**" (from 'Repudiation of the CRC, CPI (ML)'s views on military line', Spring Thunder, 1/1998)

The Maoist movement in Nepal has a rich history of struggle against rightism. It has a powerful Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideological tradition. Political power enjoyed by vast sections of masses for the first time in the country, oppressed sections and regions of society living a life of dignity, backward Nepal being transformed into a beacon for the whole world, daring thinking and initial steps towards building up a self-reliant Nepal - these glorious achievements of the people's war, realised through the sacrifice of innumerable martyrs, has added even more might to this heritage. The Nepali Maoists will surely succeed in drawing on it and regaining the revolutionary road.

Thoroughgoing materialists are fearless

Mao Tsetung

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Appendix 1

communist party of india (marxist-leninist) NAXALBARI

To
Central Committee,
Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)

Dear comrades,

Over the past many years we have had a close relation with your party and learned a lot from your experiences. Our party as well as the masses led by it have always been inspired by the great advances made by the people's war led by you and have been in the forefront in mobilising support for it. Hence, the new developments in your country and the new tactics followed by you naturally became a matter of keen discussion. In view of this, as well as the criticisms raised by some fraternal parties and the revisionist's confusing propaganda, our Central body decided to take up a through study of the issues involved. The discussion our delegates had with you recently was also a part of this. Instead of limiting the study to the Central leadership the leading bodies at the State level were also involved.

We are glad to inform you that this study and discussion based on it at a Central Enlarged Meeting has

been successfully completed recently. It has come to the conclusion that the *“...the political-organisational plans of the CPN (M) adhere to the tasks and orientation of new democratic revolution. Contrary to the propaganda done by the enemy and the revisionists, as well as the doubts created in the minds of some comrades, the present tactics of the CPN (M) do not in any way indicate a desire to abandon the road of revolution for the sake of a share in the existing power. On the contrary, they indicate an MLM orientation and its application. Their tactics are serving the strategy of new democratic revolution. They are applying these tactics to fight and complete the new democratic revolution. The CPN (M) is leading a great political struggle and it is our internationalist duty to uphold and build support for it.”*

The Enlarged Meeting also discussed the dangers you face due to the continuing machinations of US imperialism and Indian expansionism. It has decided to carry out a campaign ‘Hands off Nepal’ wherever we have organisational capacity. The aims of this campaign will be giving an authentic representation of the views of your party, exposure of US imperialism and Indian expansionism and mobilisation of public support for the new democratic revolution of Nepal. ...

While coming to the conclusion that your present tactics and policies are correct, the Enlarged Meeting also had some critical observations. We would like to share them with you in the spirit of fraternal ties. The Meeting felt that *“there are some positions, formulations and analysis, within the overall correct orientation, that give room for right*

deviationist tendencies. Further, we think that some of the views expressed in the press statements and interviews of the CPN (M) leadership have violated the norms of internationalist relations. In general, it has not properly taken into consideration the international fall out of its public statements.” Let us try and explain these points in more detail.

Danger of Giving Room for Rightist Tendencies

- A) You have explained the international and national context for adopting the present tactics as follows: In the present world situation, no socialist state exists and no other revolution has reached near the seizure of power. US imperialism has unchallenged supremacy. The landlocked situation of Nepal also must be taken into account. Hence the present situation demands more tactical flexibility compared to during Mao’s time, even while standing firm on the strategic orientation. Certain specific aspects of the military and organisational situation that make it difficult to seize cities were also cited. The isolation of the genocidal monarchy and the desperation of the SPA to get some political room are additional factors making these tactics possible.

In an overall sense this analysis is correct. But how is this reading of the situation to be related to the evaluation that a new wave of world revolution is emerging? It could be understood that while the situation is favourable in the long run, in the

immediate tactical sense it is unfavourable. But doesn't the immediate situation also contain an unfavourable factor for imperialism? As we know despite unchallenged hegemony of US imperialism it is increasingly bogged down in Iraq and Afghanistan. Even if the resistance in these countries are not led by revolutionary forces, they draw strength for the principal contradiction in the world today, i.e. between imperialism and the oppressed nations and people. An earlier CPN (M) document had itself assessed in 2004, "It is also sure that more the US imperialism goes on being exposed worldwide including in Iraq, Afghanistan and the middle east and more the Indian expansionism goes on being so among the South Asian masses for its own brokerage, favourability for the success of People's War in Nepal goes on being added in the same proportion. Developments of events have been clearly indicating that this favourability will in the days to come augment in favour of the success of Nepalese People's War." This has no doubt played a role in pushing the imperialists and reactionaries to allow the SPA to come to an agreement with you. While your documents refer to the overall favourable situation in the world, this factor is missing in its explanation of the immediate situation. Recently, it has said that the US is functioning like a globalised state with 140 military bases all over the world. This is going beyond noting the status of the US today as a sole superpower, enjoying

unchallenged hegemony. It ignores the serious problems faced by the US in carrying out its strategy to achieve total domination through its so called 'War on Terrorism' due to the resistance of the world peoples and also underplays the growing contention within the imperialists camp, particularly with Russia.

You have correctly stated that the present tactics flow from the strong position achieved by the 10 year old people's war. This strength is evident. Along with that there is also a favourable factor in the international and national situation, in the immediate sense itself. And it is necessary to stress this. If both the favourable and unfavourable factors are not taken into account and placed as such before the party and the masses it can lead to the development of pessimistic tendencies. Mao's writings clearly show us that this was how he analysed and presented the situation that made tactics of coalition government both possible and necessary.

B) Another matter is the analysis made of the parliamentary parties. A recent document (August 2006), analysing the present situation says that "...development of political events has again justified the theoretical understanding that the comprador bourgeoisie, who advocate parliamentarism, not only do not wage decisive struggle against feudalism but do all they can to collaborate with it by settling their share in the

power...Today, the democracy of major parliamentary parties and their leaders has been absurd and despotic to the same extent how much stupid and national treachery has become the nationalism and patriotism of feudal kings. Once again, the history has verified that only the proletariat, by grasping the inseparable scientific relation between nationalism and democracy, can lead the bourgeois democratic revolution to the level of its decisive victory.” This is correct and repeats the earlier analysis made you on the class character of the main Nepali parliamentary parties. But some earlier documents, particularly after the signing of the 12 point agreement with the SPA, were silent about the class roots of their vacillation. For example the November 2005 Plenum Report states, “Even while wide public opinion has been built up today in favour of constituent assembly election, it is clear that the pressure of foreign power centres is working from behind the failure of 7 political parties to abandon the collaborationist slogan of restoration of parliament...The reason behind continuing with such situation seems to be a phobia of imperialists and, to a great extent, parliamentary party leaders, that the Maoists might acquire upper hand when constituent assembly and republic is taken up directly...they have been insisting the People’s Liberation Army, under our party leadership, and weapons to be the main problem. One can easily understand the secret behind the saying that feudal and imperialist

leaders cannot believe us until we come in peaceful politics by abandoning People's War, in other words, until we surrender, but the same kind of saying from the leaders of parliamentary parties, who talk of full democracy or republic, can be said ridiculous only." Here, the SPA's vacillation is merely linked to foreign pressure and fear that the Maoists will get an upper hand in a Constitutional Assembly, and not put in the context of their class character.

It may be argued that since the CPN (M) has always been clear about the comprador class character of the main parliamentary parties it is not necessary to repeat this everywhere. But that is not a satisfactory explanation. Neither can it be explained away as a matter of tactical flexibility. It is a common law that whenever a Maoist party enters into compromises or talks with reactionary forces the possibilities for rightist tendencies to grow increase. Therefore it becomes all the more necessary to repeatedly relate political developments to the internal and international class relations and repeatedly educate the ranks.

Our concern over this increases in view of the assessment made by your November 2005 Plenum about the inner party struggle that developed in 2004-2005. The Report of that Plenum states, "...there remained no basic difference even though there were differences in emphasis and angle in some questions related with ideology of protracted

nature...” and there was “...similar kind of thinking in tactic against the absolute monarchy.” The success of the CPN (M) leadership in overcoming the disunity at its top most level and converting that negative situation into a positive one is certainly a great achievement. The present advances it is making would not have been possible without this. Yet, its evaluation is silent about whether there were any basic differences or not. Clearly enough, the position advanced by com: Lal Dhoj that “As for as the sincere commitment of the revolutionary democratic forces, who aspire to reach socialism and communism via a new democratic republic, towards a bourgeois democratic republic is concerned, the CPN (Maoist) has time and again clarified its principled position towards the historical necessity of passing through a sub-stage of democratic republic in the specificities of Nepal.”¹ was contradictory to the position of the party. Since similar views were expressed in other articles also it cannot be taken as a chance remark. While it is good that transformation took place through struggle, it was also necessary to educate the party about the differences that had come up. Keeping silent about this is a bad method.

Your documents usually characterise the monarchy as representing the feudal forces. Though it is correct to make a distinction for tactical purposes between feudal forces and representatives of the comprador-bureaucrat

bourgeoisie, this way of putting it weakens the understanding of the monarchy as a form of the existing Nepali state, which serves all the ruling classes. This will have implications to how the present tactics is understood in relation to the strategic task of new democratic revolution.

- C) The November 2005 CC document has explained the party's understanding on its present tactics: "Now the slogan of interim government, election of the constituent assembly and democratic republic that our party, taking into account of 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 tactic 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 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.

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.”

First of all it is still not clear whether the democratic republic mentioned here is the presently proposed interim government or the one to be formed under a new constitution adopted by the constitutional assembly. Our delegation could not get a satisfactory explanation. It is quite possible that since the party is developing its tactics and understanding in a quickly changing political situation it is at present not able to give a clear answer. But the position expressed in the quote given above raises some questions. The conception of democratic republic formed under a new constitution as a transitory form is problematic. Similarly, it is wrong to conceive that the reactionaries in a semi-colonial, semi-feudal country can form a bourgeois parliamentary republic. Yet, we can agree that an interim government, in which the SPA also is a partner, will be neither new democratic or simply a continuation of the past. But in that case also it will have class content. It will be a dual power. It is true that the length of the period it will exist cannot be ascertained right now. But, as a general principle, dual power can exist only for a fairly short period. This is particularly true when it is coexisting within a single structure. If this is not

explained as such a rightist tendency promoting the desirability and possibility of a fairly long period of co-existence with the reactionary parties can well come up.

- D) This is also related to the possible outcome of the present tactics. Your overwhelming emphasis after the reinstatement of the old parliament was that there is very little chance for the formation of an interim government or elections to a constituent assembly. Its latest document (August 2006) evaluates that, "...in spite of wide opinion inside the country, peaceful restructuring of state, election of constituent assembly and establishment of democratic republic is becoming impossible. As a result of interference of imperialist and expansionist powers, who represent most clearly the interest of feudal, comprador and bureaucratic capitalist class, and capitulationist character of major parliamentarian parties, who kneel down before them, peaceful way out from the table of talks has been turning out to be impossible." Most probably this will be correct. But, the possibility that the US imperialists and other reactionaries may go ahead with a lengthy truce, including the formation of an interim government, holding elections to a Constitutional Assembly and allowing the monarchy to be scrapped, cannot be ruled out altogether. The unfavourable political situation they face within Nepal at present in view of the support gained by the CPN (M), problems faced by US imperialists in West Asia, the concern

within the Indian ruling classes on getting directly involved militarily, as well as the question of how China will react, give rise to this possibility. Obviously they will never accept the interim constitution proposed by the CPN (M). But the party also will not be able to insist on total acceptance as a condition for continuing the present process.

At present you are not giving any weight to this possibility. But if it materialises then this approach of ruling it out will seriously weaken the capacity of the party in manoeuvring and in ideological training the broad masses and new sections attracted towards it. The present plan of the party to build a broad republican front and launch a new mass movement is oriented on preparing a "...general insurrection for the republic." It has been explained that though the content of this republic achieved through an insurrection will be new democratic it is not stated as such out of tactical considerations. Tactical slogans should definitely be capable of linking up with the mood of the masses. Lenin's slogans of "Peace, Bread and Democracy" during the preparations for the October insurrection is an example. But a distinction must be made between such slogans and the direction given to the party through its documents. In the political situation of Nepal where the attainment of the republic is widely understood as the scrapping of the monarchy, when there already is the history of a tendency in

the top leadership level arguing for a sub-stage of bourgeois democracy, when party documents themselves say that the republic conceived by the party is not immediately a new democratic one, such blurring of ideological-political clarity will definitely give room for rightist tendencies to grow. This will increase if the enemy decides to do away with the monarchy and set up some sham republic, even incorporating some formal rights for oppressed sections (like in South Africa).

In relation to this it must also be stressed that the immediate success of the present tactics will not reduce the gravity of the danger of giving room for rightist tendencies. For example, though the Soviet party under Stalin succeeded in defeating the fascist forces and defending the socialist state, the errors in the line followed by the party such as promotion of Russian nationalism, ultimately strengthened the capitalist roaders.² The bitter experiences of capitalist restoration have driven home the lesson of constant ideological training of not only the party but also the broad masses. The GPCR also gives the lesson of how those who didn't break with bourgeois democratic outlook could be revolutionaries during the new democratic stage but transformed into capitalist roaders once it was over.

Diplomacy and Internationalism

Some of the comments in the interviews of com: Prachanda have violated the norms of internationalist
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relations. His interview to the “Hindu”, where he commented on the Indian Maoist movement, was unnecessary and wrong. We are glad that you have done self criticism on this. But we feel some larger issues are involved. Some statements made by the CPN (M) leadership have also caused confusion and aided the revisionists in their propaganda against MLM. You have explained that in the context of talks and political struggle room must be given for diplomatic manoeuvring. This is understandable. But at the same time every Maoist party also has the internationalist obligation to take into consideration the international fall out of its public positions and the way they will be used by the enemy. Developing a correct line on handling the contradiction between the tactical, diplomatic needs of a party and its internationalist obligations is a long standing issue within the ICM. We urge you to address this aspect while carrying out your present policies.

The question of a New Line for Proletarian Revolution in the 21st Century

We have given great importance to learning from the lessons of the people’s war in Nepal. In particular, we consider the success of the CPN (M) in co-ordinating political and military struggle and in handling and using contradictions among the enemy as an important contribution. But we have not agreed with your formulation “Prachanda Path’. This position goes against the universal character of proletarian ideology.³ About incorporating the tactics of insurrection in the strategy of people’s war we are in agreement. Though this has been put forward and

practiced during the Chinese as well as Vietnamese revolutions and also incorporated in the Peruvian revolution, the Nepal experience has highlighted the possibility and necessity of doing this right from the very beginning of the people's war, especially in the political struggle. But the concept of fusing the strategy of people's war with armed insurrectionary strategy (generally known as 'fusion theory') is problematic because it undermines the universality of the protracted people's war strategy in oppressed countries.

For some time now, you have raised the question of developing the strategy and tactics to deal with the challenges of making proletarian revolution in the 21st century. At present it is argued that its present tactics is part of developing "...a new ideological, political and military line of the proletariat against globalised imperialism and its globalised massive structure.", a "...new model of revolution".

It is true that there is a particularity in the present situation where all reactionary states are engaged in a concerted attack on revolutionary and other armed struggles in the name of fighting 'terrorism'. The impact of globalisation is also creating new opportunities as well as hurdles for the revolutionary movements. Hence the ideology, strategy and tactics of the proletariat must certainly be developed to meet the challenges of the present period. They develop in close relation to revolutionary practice. We are in basic agreement with the CPN (Maoist) on this. But we don't agree to this concept of globalised imperialism because imperialism was always a global system.

Moreover, the necessity of developing a new general line must be substantiated through a proper analysis of the world situation and verified over a period of revolutionary practice. In this regard we believe that there is a tendency to hasty and sweeping generalisations on your part. For example, you have explained that your present tactics are necessitated by the particular international and national situation existing today. In that case careful study and analysis is necessary to separate what is particular to this situation and what remains universally valid that can be incorporated in proletarian strategy. Evidently, it is far too early to make such an analysis and draw conclusions. It will also be useful in this context to remember the caution expressed by Lenin over generalising the experiences of the successful Russian revolution.

In your 2nd National Conference of 2003, you had presented a position calling for multi-party competition in a socialist country to prevent the bureaucratisation of the Maoist party. This position has been contrasted to that of Mao's China where co-operation between different parties accepting the socialist constitution was allowed. It has also called for the general arming of the masses and the gradual dissolution of the standing army. This idea of arming the masses is a step forward. The fact that you are grappling with the question of political institutions better suited to prevent capitalist restoration is also a positive development. The rich experiences already gained through the building of new power in Nepal's countryside will be certainly of good use. But the idea of multi-party competition does not accord to the material reality and challenges of class struggle in a socialist country. World experience shows that the

overthrown ruling classes, backed by imperialism, will never respect any constitution. Our views on this have already been explained.⁴ The present tactics of the CPN (M) are related to these ideas and concepts. While the overall thrust of these positions is to grapple with some serious questions thrown up by the setback of the world socialist revolution and new developments in the world, as yet they are raw. Hence there is a good possibility that they may be grasped in ways quite opposite to what is intended, particularly by the new sections of masses now being drawn in to your folds.

Comrades,

Our party is greatly indebted to you for the frank manner in which you have exchanged your experiences and views with us. We have presented our critical observations in detail so that you too may get a good idea of our thinking. We hope that we may get an opportunity to discuss these issues with you in our next meeting.

With revolutionary greetings,

Central Organising Committee, Communist Party of India
(Marxist-Leninist) NAXALBARI
October 20, 2006

Footnotes

¹ 'The Royal Regression and the Question of Democratic Republic'.

² This was summed up in the Declaration of the RIM.

³ This was dealt with in "The Struggle to Establish MLM", Naxalbari, No: 2.

⁴ 'The Current Debate on the Socialist State System', New Wave, No:3.

Appendix 2

communist party of india (marxist-leninist) NAXALBARI

To
Central Committee,
Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)

Dear comrades,

We thank you for the all the assistance given to our delegation as well as the free and frank manner in which you exchanged views about the present situation in Nepal and your new plans.

We have discussed the report of our delegation. It was received with enthusiasm and your present plan was seen as a great step forward. A circular explaining the situation and the new plan has been issued to our ranks. It calls on the whole party to gear up for building a powerful solidarity movement. We solemnly assure you that we will go all out to build support for the new democratic revolution of Nepal and to resist all interventionist attempts, as well as revisionist and dogmatic propaganda that confuse the masses in India about your party's revolutionary credentials and thus isolates the revolution.

...

Though our delegation had raised the main concern we have over your present tactical approach, we thought

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that it might be good to put it to you once more, particularly since the exchanges of opinions had to be brief. This letter will mainly deal with this.

It is clear that you are facing a very complex and challenging situation. In fact it is almost similar to a new initiation. But one that is more complex and challenging. At the time of the initiation of the People's War you did not have to deal with diplomatic or other similar consequences. Everything was a new beginning. But now you must handle a lot many more aspects and pay attention to properly handling their relations, so that the maximum gain can be retained while making the next leap. ... we are confident with the overall approach you have adopted in this regard. However, we are still concerned with some aspects of your approach.

First of all, there is the question we have already raised – the possibility of the enemies' willingness to accept some of your key political demands such as declaration of a Republic by the present Interim set up. You had accepted this possibility and also mentioned that there already were some indications of this. Recent reports we have seen in the media seem to indicate the possibility of this getting materialised. Evidently, the enemies' are trying to make it as politically expensive as possible for you to come out of the Interim government, if not hoping to induce you to stay on. What worries us is that you had not considered this possibility or its implications and had not made it a part of your ideological-political preparations. We hope you will probe this more deeply.

We see continuity in this with your earlier understanding that the enemies' won't allow you to join the Interim setup and that this will give you the opportunity to launch a new mass movement aiming at a Republic. At that time you were also indicating that your party's inclination is to stay out of the government, though you may join the Interim parliament. Later you changed your plan and joined the government. We have no differences with this. But we think that you lost initiative from this point onwards – not because you joined the government, but because you were ruling out this possibility earlier and had not prepared for it. As a result, after joining the government, it seems to us that you didn't have any concrete plan for developing the political struggle other than propaganda for Constituent Assembly elections. We still think this was more important than the problems created by your compromise on proportional representation. And we fear that if the enemies decide to meet your main political demand in the present situation, you may suffer a similar loss of initiative, precisely since you had not accounted for this eventuality and made alternate plans. This becomes all the more vital, since in the present situation the most decisive thing, correctly identified by you, is to set up an opposite pole of struggle. As you have properly assessed, this is the mood of the masses and of your ranks. But this revolutionary mood may get dissipated if your breaking out is delayed by getting too tangled up in political moves forced by the enemies' compromising tactics.

No doubt, the most decisive thing now is to break out of the Interim setup, at the very least the government, no matter what it calls for. Only this will create the sharp

demarcation and separation so necessary to lay the solid foundation for a new polarisation and impart a new momentum. Of course, this must be done in a tactical manner, giving least room for the enemies. But our assessment is that it will inevitably cause some loss in political support, particularly in the support gained by you in the recent period. This brings us to our second concern. In your explanation of your future plans and the course of development envisaged, this was not mentioned. Maybe this was because the time was too short to go into such things. Our concern here is whether this aspect has been given sufficient weight. If not so, then that would make things more complex. It is evident that there is a section within the party (as well as among the broad masses) that is not happy with the new shift in tactics. This will be strengthened by the enemies' political manoeuvres, even more sharply if it decides to accept the demand for a Republic. We are enthused, and really impressed, by the elaborate process you are carrying out to unify the party and masses and prepare them to carry out the new plan. But we don't see any identification on your part of the inevitable realignment in your support base that will be caused by the present shift in tactics and consequent losses. This will certainly hamper preparations.

Regarding the possibility of the enemies conceding your main political demand, we had explained how we see that possibility in relation to some of the objective compulsions faced by them. To put it in brief again - In the present international situation US imperialism is not that keen to have a direct confrontation with a revolutionary Maoist movement. Such a confrontation will trigger off a

polarisation between progressive and reactionary forces at the world level and this will overshadow the present visible conflict with Islamist movements. This will prove very costly to the imperialists and reactionaries who prefer to present their 'war on terror' as a war against religious terrorism since it is convenient to cover up its real anti-people content. In other words, the factors favourable for revolution in the present world situation may themselves force the enemies to agree to a compromise in Nepal, for the time being. We have seen that this aspect of the situation is not addressed in your recent documents, though they point out the compulsions faced by the revolution in Nepal that make negotiations and diplomatic moves necessary. In your recent explanation of why Indian expansionism adopted a positive approach to your agreement with the 7 Party Alliance also, you point out the differences which emerged between India and the monarchy over its exclusion of pro-Indian political forces from political power after the coup. That is true, but we think that this alone doesn't give the full picture. There is also the important fact that the Indian regime is keen to avoid getting caught up in a direct military intervention in Nepal, particularly since it will have to face a Maoist movement. It very well knows the powerful political fallout this will have within India and the boost this will give to a revolutionary polarisation in this country. We feel that one of the reasons for your repeatedly calculating that the enemies' can't (or won't) accept your political demands and hinging your plans on this, is rooted in your not evaluating the favourable factors in the present world situation, in immediate terms and not just as a future potential. This has implications for your present, correct

and bold, plan. In our opinion, it gives you some freedom of action, more than sufficient to outweigh any tactical problems caused by the enemies' compromising and devious tactics.

In the present world situation, a new upsurge in Nepal will have tremendous revolutionary impact. We are sure of this. And we are united with you in realising the great significance of the present turn. We write to you expressing our views frankly, with this spirit, because the victory of your party and the glorious revolution it is leading is of decisive importance today.

With revolutionary greetings,

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Secretary,
Central Organising Committee,
Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)
NAXALBARI
17th of September, 2007

Appendix 3

(excerpts from the COC circular of March 2008)

Dear comrades,

In April 2007 the CPN (Maoist) evaluated that the basis for unity with the SPA had ended. The August 2007

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EM adopted plans for a mass struggle aimed at leading to an insurrection and the party came out of the interim government. In the course of the mass agitation lakhs were mobilised and the enemy were forced to accept the demands put forward by the party. Following this the CPN (Maoist) has rejoined the government and is now fully engaged in the upcoming Constituent Assembly elections.

...

The CPN (Maoist) could regain political initiative through the mass agitation and has rejoined the government on that favourable basis. But this decision marks a sharp shift from its earlier evaluation that the “basis for unity with the SPA has ended” and that the political situation “is in a revolutionary crisis”. At that time they had concluded that, the way things are developing, even if a republic emerges it would be one formed under US and Indian support and would not be automatically closer to new democracy. There is no explanation now of why the CPN (Maoist) thinks that this is not true of the present situation. Following the 2007 August EM it was explained that the new tactics was ‘using Constituent Assembly elections to further preparations for insurrection’. The mass agitation launched in September 2007 was supposed to be a precursor for the insurrection. Yet the January 2008 resolution of the CPN (Maoist) CC admits that failure to take up “...organisational expansion and consolidation and technical preparation has been the main weakness of this period.”

This indicates that it is failing to develop tactics to break out of the enemies’ ‘compromise trap’. As a result its

resolution to develop political intervention in the direction of an insurrection is weakening. The COC evaluates that the present direction taken by it is towards the right and it is confirming some of the concerns expressed by our party earlier.

Unlike dogmatic criticisms on the CPN (Maoist)'s tactics, our difference of opinion was not over its participation in the interim setup or the Constituent Assembly elections. In our letter to the CPN(Maoist) of 2006 October, in the context of examining its position on a transition government, the COC had written "In the political situation of Nepal where the attainment of the republic is widely understood as the scrapping of the monarchy, when there already is the history of a tendency in the top leadership level arguing for a sub-stage of bourgeois democracy, when party documents themselves say that the republic conceived by the party is not immediately a new democratic one, such blurring of ideological-political clarity will definitely give room for rightist tendencies to grow. This will increase if the enemy decides to do away with the monarchy and set up some sham republic, even incorporating some formal rights for oppressed sections (like in South Africa)." Further on, in its letter of September 2007 the COC had pointed out the error in repeated failure to take into account the possibility of the enemy being willing to compromise and accept its demands. The danger of losing direction and initiative emerging from this error was also pointed out. Its basis was noted as failure of the CPN (Maoist) in recognising the favourable factor in the international and national situation. Evidently the present wrong turn in direction are related to these mistakes. While

criticising the present direction it is taking we must continue to defend what was correct in the CPN (Maoist)'s approach – particularly its tactical flexibility – and our struggle against dogmatic views on this.

According to media reports, the CA election campaign is marked with a lot of violence, mainly directed against the CPN (Maoist). Possibilities for sabotage still remain. But unless the present direction taken by the party is reversed, its success in the CA elections or success in developing a mass movement in case CA elections are sabotaged, will not necessarily lead to a revolutionary outcome.

At present we will not be doing open criticism, though we will continue to publicly air our concerns. In keeping with our internationalist duty we will struggle with the CPN (Maoist) leadership to rectify the wrong direction it is now taking and write to its CC. In accordance to our principled stand that the affairs of Nepal should be decided by the Nepali people and foreign powers should keep their hands off, we will be continuing in the Solidarity Committee for the time being.

"unity, criticism, unity". To elaborate, it means starting from the desire for unity, resolving contradictions through criticism or struggle and arriving at a new unity on a new basis. In our experience this is the correct method of resolving contradictions among the people."

Mao Tsetung
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