

Proletarian Internationalism: Then and Now

– Basanta

The international communist movement, which confronted a severe setback from the counter-revolution in Russia in 1956, suffered another major blow from the Chinese counter-revolution 20 years later, after Mao died in 1976. The proletariat that had practiced socialism in one-third of the world in the past does not have a single socialist country under its leadership. It was not the direct imperialist offensive that defeated the proletarian power but the revisionism that emerged within the party. But the revolutionaries, who believe in Marxism as their guiding principle, never gave up their mission but continued to go ahead by learning from the past defeats. By struggling against counter-revolution, the proletariat could realize two significant revolutionary achievements in the 1980s.

The initiation of the people's war in 1981, and its continuation under the leadership of the Communist Party of Peru led by Comrade Gonzalo, was the first achievement of that decade for the world proletariat. The formation of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) in 1984 was the second. The role the RCP, USA, had then played in the building of RIM is significant. These achievements of the then world communist movement are crucial milestones when people all over the world were in despair due to counter-revolution. It is self-evident that these two political events had created a new revolutionary wave in the then world communist movement that was very weak in terms of organization and class struggle.

The debate and the exchange of experience among the revolutionaries, including Peru, helped our party raise its ideological and political grasp. On the other, the revolutionary song – **Our red flag is fluttering in Peru** – the revolutionary activists used to sing on the eve of initiating the people's war helped arouse the revolutionary thirst for the new democratic revolution among the masses. Though the internal aspect is principal in the development of an entity, the interaction with revolutionary parties of India and the comrades within the RIM played a vital supporting role in the preparation, initiation, and continuation of the great people's war in Nepal. It would not be fair for a revolutionary communist to underestimate the ideological importance of this phenomenon.

The new democratic revolution in Nepal is an inseparable part of the world proletarian revolution. During the preparation, initiation, and continuation of the people's war, the party had sincerely grasped that the revolution in Nepal would serve the world proletarian revolution and that the world communist movement would play a significant role in advancing the Nepalese revolution. Our party had upheld the proletarian internationalism very firmly and sincerely at that time. The fact that the party had assigned a senior PBM and five other comrades to work in the international field under RIM shows how seriously it had valued proletarian internationalism. RIM had served the world revolution by fulfilling many vital tasks with the active involvement of our party. The following tasks that RIM had accomplished in favor of the international communist movement and the Nepalese new democratic revolution are very important. They are good examples of proletarian internationalism.

First, the ideological position – Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism – the second expanded meeting of the RIM Committee adopted in 1993, has made a significant ideological contribution to the contemporary world communist movement. It established the terminology Maoism the world over as the identity of the revolutionary communist in the 21st century. Today, no communist can become a Marxist without being a Maoist. This vital role played by RIM can and must never be overlooked.

Second, the formation of the world people's resistance movement (WPRM) among anti-imperialist parties, political forces, and personalities is another notable international work carried out by RIM. It had given the slogan – Imperialism: Hands off Nepal! Based on this, the protest rallies organized anywhere in the world played a vital role in disseminating and advancing the Nepalese people's revolution. The **Solidarity Campaign to Support the People's War in Nepal** organized a 50,000-strong demonstration in Delhi on February 13, 2001. It challenged Indian expansionism and imperialism, on the one hand, and enthused the party leaders, entire party ranks, and the revolutionary masses by spreading revolutionary fervor for the Nepalese revolution, on the other. Not this much only, the solidarity

campaign also helped bring together the Indian revolutionary and anti-imperialist forces scattered in India.

Third, the role played by RIM to develop unity among the Maoist revolutionaries in India has been significant. There was a long-run armed conflict between two revolutionary communist parties of India, the MCC and the CPI (ML) (People's War). Though both the parties at the central level considered each other a revolutionary party, the armed conflict at the lower level was a matter of shame for the revolutionaries. Held in 1999, the Regional Conference of Maoist Parties in South Asia under RIM called on both the parties to unconditionally and unilaterally end the conflict. Both of those parties accepted the call, and the armed conflict stopped. Moreover, the close fraternal relationship that had been developing between the two groups since then finally reached party unity in 2004. With the formation of the CPI (Maoist) as of the merger of these two major parties and other centers, the Maoist movement in India has now attained a status capable of challenging the Indian state.

Fourth, the 29th issue of **A World to Win**, an international English magazine that promoted RIM at the time, had played a significant role in disseminating the Nepalese revolution by writing an article entitled, **Revolution in Nepal: A Better World is in Birth!** Not only that, every issue of **A World to Win**, used to publish some materials related to Nepal, and the Nepalese People's War. They are available on various websites even today. We must highly admire the magazine, published then in 6 different languages, had played a vital role in introducing the Nepalese revolution to the entire world.

Fifth, when discussing the role of RIM in the context of the Nepalese new democratic revolution, one cannot and must not overlook the international mobilization of revolutionaries during the construction of the Martyrs' Road in the heart of base areas. The well-dressed and smart-looking western revolutionaries, who joined with Rolpa and Rukum's barefoot people wearing torn clothes, and their participation with shovels in constructing the Martyr's Road was a unique example of unity among the international proletariat. It was a great challenge to the imperialists and the domestic reactionaries that conveyed a message that the Nepalese people are not alone, not only in making the new democratic revolution a success but also in garnering international support for its infrastructural development.

Sixth, after the transfer of our party Headquarters to Rolpa, an RCP, USA leader, who was working under the RIM, arrived in Rolpa on foot from the Indian border to discuss the problems of the world communist movement, in general, and the Nepalese people's revolution, in particular. We heard from our chairman that he embraced him with bursting tears of joy and said, "I arrived at Rolpa, the birthplace of the proletarian revolution in the 21st century". This unmatched example of proletarian internationalism we saw made us admire him more than ever before. The proletarian internationalist sense of responsibility he showed toward the Nepalese revolution at the time made us feel that our responsibility for accomplishing the new democratic revolution in Nepal had increased even more. We have high regard for him even today.

However, there were, and still are, many issues of difference and unity between our party and RCP, USA, on many ideological and political questions. The RCP has serious problems, especially in dealing with the dialectical relations between theory and practice. We disagree with their one-sided understanding that Marxist principles can develop without being involved in revolutionary practice. But the positive role played by RIM and RCP in the development of the Nepalese revolution should never be underestimated just because there is disagreement on some ideological issues. If one does so, it is nothing but prejudice.

The RIM Committee and the RCP had played an important ideological role during the initiation and continuation of the people's war in Nepal. They have been regularly waging firm ideological struggles on some theoretical issues since then. Before our party entered the peace process, the RCP had sent, in October 2005, a letter in which they raised the danger of our party getting in the grip of the bourgeois republic before the new democracy. They said it concerning Baburam's article on the New State. The party dismissed the questions raised in the letter with a blunt and ambiguous reply. And there was no discussion in the party on the issues they had sincerely raised. The ideological debate, which we have in

our party now regarding the bourgeois-democratic republic, proves that RCP's criticism then was timely and correct.

Before entering the peace process, our party used to engage in united activities and ideological struggles with the Maoist revolutionaries in India and other parties within the RIM, including the RCP, USA. The height the Nepalese revolution had attained was the result of the collective effort among the proletarian revolutionaries all across the world. In the contemporary international communist movement, in which there remained no patronage of the leaders like Lenin and Mao, collectiveness and cooperation among revolutionaries was the only weapon for the communists. And they had added momentum to the erstwhile international communist movement. But the situation is very different today.

Since our party entered the peace process, there have been almost no international activities among the fraternal parties. In the past, our ideological activities used to be with CPI (Maoist); now, it has begun with revisionist parties like CPI (Marxist) and SUCI. Chairman Prachanda, who used to give special importance to international affairs yesterday, does not deem its significance today. The terminologies like RIM and CCOMPOSA have become things of terror for some leaders in our party today. After entering the peace process, the fraternal parties have asked many questions about the ideological and political line of our party. Our leadership does not answer them but is escaping from the international debates. Why is it so? Why does our chairman remain silent, when one of our PBM comrades, who claims to be ideologically and politically very close to the chairman, slanders RCP leader Bob Avakian as a CIA agent at the central committee meeting? And, when another PBM writes in a newspaper that Bob Avakian is a renegade, does not the chairman have to say anything about this? Chairman's silence has raised questions -- does he think so as well?

Internationalism is related to class partisanship at the international level. The internationalist partisanship of the proletariat is with the proletariat, and that of the bourgeoisie is with the bourgeoisie. If any leader, who claims to represent the proletariat, sees the proletarian leader of the fraternal communist party as a traitor or an enemy's agent, then who has his class partisanship with, if not with the bourgeoisie of that country? If the chairman deems that PBM as a revolutionary, whose class partisanship is with Barack Obama, then how can a revolutionary cadre of our party see the chairman as a proletarian internationalist? The question is very much serious.

Is the chairman doing all this with no knowledge of it? Not at all. Yesterday he was basically in a correct position ideologically, and he was a proletarian internationalist. So, he used to positively appreciate and respect the role played by RIM and RCP in favor of the revolution. However, today he has undergone a severe ideological deviation. Therefore, in his eyes, yesterday's friends do not look like friends today, and yesterday's enemies do not look like enemies today. For him, yesterday's enemies are like friends today, and friends are like enemies. On the day of the funeral ceremony of Jyoti Basu, the ex-chief minister of West Bengal from the CPI (Marxist), our party chairman sent a central representative to Calcutta with a letter of condolence. But when CPI (Maoist) spokesperson Comrade Azad was arrested and killed by the Indian police, he did not write a single word against it. Why is it so? Bourgeois collaborationism is taking the place of proletarian internationalism in our chairman.

The current problem facing the Nepalese revolution and our party is mainly the ideological problem. Owing to the ideological deviation of the chairman, our party has been gradually sinking into the marsh of reformism. Marxism is being replaced by revisionism and proletarian internationalism by the bourgeois collaborationism in our party. The first and foremost task of the Nepalese revolutionaries is to reverse this situation. For that, the revolutionary transformation of all of us, in general, and the party chairman, in particular, is the only condition.

The objective conditions are gradually becoming favorable for the revolution in Nepal. But the subjective strength is very much weak. The main reason for this is the ideological deviation of the party chairman. The revolutionary transformation of the whole party, principally of the chairman, a strong ideological and political unity based on the revolutionary line, the formation of a strong united front among all patriotic,

progressive, leftist, and revolutionary forces, and an effective proletarian internationalist solidarity among Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties at the international level, etc. are the necessary conditions to build the subjective strength. Not by compromising with the wrong ideas of the chairman Prachanda, emphasis should be placed on the revolutionary transformation of the entire party by waging a vigorous ideological struggle against it, and only in this way, does the remain open to developing subjective strength. Only in this way can we accomplish the revolution in Nepal and serve the world proletarian revolution.

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