

Interview with CP Gajurel on Democracy and Cultural Revolution

Interview with CP Gajurel (Gaurav), posted on WPRM (Britain) site, October 12, 2009



WPRM: In the current situation when the UCPN(M) has its sights set on New Democratic Revolution, it seems more important than ever to understand the party's idea of 21st century democracy, competitive elections under New Democracy and socialism, can you explain this concept to us?

Comrade Gaurav: Yes we are now in the stage of completing the New Democratic Revolution. The New Democratic system is not a socialist system. It is a bourgeois democratic system. The difference is that the revolution is made under the leadership of the proletariat.

The old type of bourgeois democratic revolution took place under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, but the New Democratic Revolution will take place under the leadership of the proletariat. When it is led by the proletariat it will lead towards socialism and communism. On the other hand, if the bourgeois democratic revolution is being led by the capitalist class, it will either consolidate capitalism or, if it develops at all, it will develop towards imperialism. That is the difference. So New Democratic Revolution in this sense is not a socialist revolution, it is a bourgeois democratic revolution but it is led by the proletariat. And, when the proletariat leads this revolution and the revolution is completed, then immediately it will move towards socialism. It will not consolidate bourgeois democracy, it will move towards socialism.

This debate was seriously carried out during 1956 in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). People like Deng Xiaoping said that since it is a bourgeois democratic revolution, it is the time to consolidate capitalism. But, Mao said that it should not be consolidated, it should go forward to socialism. This is the basic division between New Democracy and socialism. And, the question of which class is leading is the fundamental question.

So far as elections are concerned, under a New Democratic system there will be a broad anti-feudal and anti-imperialist alliance. This will be the class character of New Democratic Revolution. It is certainly true that not all anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces are communists.

But there should be a broad alliance of the UCPN(M) with different political forces who are anti-feudal and anti-imperialist. We have to recognise the existence of these other political forces, because they are the ally of the proletariat during New Democratic Revolution. Therefore, we have to guarantee their political freedom, and the political freedom of those parties has already been carried out in China also.

In China, except for the CCP there were nine other political parties, all of which were anti-feudal and anti-imperialist. They competed and participated in elections with the CCP and some of them became ministers in the government. In our case also we have to recognise those forces. They are not communists but they are the allies of anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces, and they should be guaranteed political freedom.

When our party talks about multiparty competition or democracy, we are talking about our concept of '21st Century Democracy'.

The difference here however is that in China there was a condition, all anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces had to cooperate with the CCP. This was the precondition. But now our party is talking about allowing those political parties to compete even with the UCPN(M).

In China there was a precondition, they were not allowed to compete but had to cooperate. In elections they made some sort of compromise or negotiation and they fixed candidates by consensus. In some constituencies the other parties put forward their candidate and the CCP did not. And in most other seats they did not have a candidate but supported the candidate of the CCP.

But here in Nepal today we are talking about competition. All those political parties will be allowed to compete with the UCPN(M). We can have direct elections with those parties and the Maoists. That is the difference. We are formulating this kind of thing because the imperialists and the capitalists, who are the enemies of socialism and communism, accuse communist parties of not allowing other parties to compete. They say there is no competition, there is no democracy. And in fact, in the old way there was scope for those political parties to confuse the masses. For example, there is an election but there is only one candidate, and if everybody has to vote for the same candidate what is the meaning of this? It is something like selection. But we will make it clear that people can vote for their own candidates and that there will be more than two candidates for people to choose between.

Furthermore, we should give the people the right of recall. If the candidate elected by them is not competent, or is taking an anti-people road, the people's right of recall will be assured.

This is the type of thing we have to introduce in an electoral system. Only then can we assure the masses that they can vote for the candidate they like and it is a real election where there are many candidates. The election will have a definite meaning. If there is only one candidate then voting is meaningless.

This is what we mean by '21st Century Democracy'.

WPRM: How will this democracy and use of elections develop as New Democratic Revolution develops into the stage of socialism? Will there be more than one communist party at this time?

Comrade Gaurav: We don't envision more than one Communist Party because every political party has a class character. The proletariat should have their own party.

In the long run, ultimately, there will not be different political parties. When we achieve socialism in that case, we think there will be no necessity for other political parties, because the society will have undergone a big change. There will be no other classes at that time.

WPRM: Do you envision a role for Nepali Congress and CPN (United Marxist-Leninists) after the New Democratic Revolution?

Comrade Gaurav: If they don't change their ideological-political line, we don't envision that they will be able to take part in those elections. The New Democratic system will not allow this if they don't change their ideological-political line and behaviour.

WPRM: Comrade Basanta in Worker #12 has recently written that the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China is the pinnacle of application so far in practice of dialectical materialism, the science of revolution. Can you sum up for us the lessons of the Cultural Revolution as formulated by the UCPN(M)?

Comrade Gaurav: We think the Cultural Revolution is the pinnacle of the development of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

Because Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is a science in the process of development, it is not something static. It is in the process of development and this development is interlinked with revolutionary practice. From this practice comes our ideology. And from revolutionary practice, the experiences of the Russian and Chinese revolutions, and from the examples of counter-revolution in those countries, Mao synthesised the whole thing and developed the theory of Cultural Revolution.

What Mao developed in his life, was more than that which Lenin did in his time, because for Lenin it was not possible to carry out Cultural Revolution or theorise Cultural Revolution. During his life, in the period of revolution and after that he was trying to develop the whole revolution. He formulated so many ideas and theories regarding revolution. But in the case of Mao, during that time China was not a capitalist country, it was a semi-feudal semi-colonial country.

So the responsibility of the CCP was to carry on to accomplish the bourgeois democratic revolution and also to carry on the socialist revolution. It was a historical necessity for the CCP to carry out both these tasks. The CCP, under the capable leadership of Comrade Mao, led these two revolutions and in the process of developing socialism, learned the lessons that Mao took from the capitalist restoration in the USSR and many attempts to reverse the revolution within China itself. These were the materials for Comrade Mao Zedong to develop Cultural Revolution. With all these materials Mao developed our

ideology to a qualitatively higher level. And we think the Cultural Revolution is the pinnacle, it solves the problem of revolution in that it can prevent counter-revolution. Many people say that the Cultural Revolution was a Chinese phenomenon, it was done in China, whether right or wrong, so it is a Chinese question.

But we think it is not a Chinese question, it is a question of theory and it is a question of ideology. So it is a universal theory. And we uphold Cultural Revolution as the universal theory of communism. It holds good for China, and it holds good for Nepal also.

WPRM: Indeed, Mao said the bourgeoisie is not just outside the party but right within it. How will elections help to uncover the bourgeoisie within the party?

Comrade Gaurav: Elections will not help with this. Through elections you cannot root out the bourgeoisie within the party.

To root out the bourgeoisie within the party you have to carry out Cultural Revolution, to find out who are the capitalist roaders within the party. The process of elections will not determine all these things. The process of elections relates to the time when there are other political parties who are the allies of the proletariat.

We will compete with those parties only, not with the puppets of feudalism and imperialism. There is no point competing with reactionaries. Competition means to compete with allies, friendly competition only. So dictatorship will still be applied against reactionary political parties, pro-feudal and pro-imperialist parties.

So far as capitalist roaders within the Communist Party are concerned, this question will not be resolved through elections. That is different. Elections are concerned with forming the government and some matters of state.

But the party of the proletariat should resolve the contradictions within the party in a different manner. In that case we have to apply Cultural Revolution. Cultural Revolution means the party should be interlinked with the masses. The masses will be given full rights to expose the leaders of the Communist Party. If they are really capitalist-roaders, they have to be exposed. This is the mass line as formulated by Mao. He made the slogan 'bombard the headquarters'. Headquarters means your own headquarters, not the headquarters of other parties, but the headquarters of the Communist Party. Because in the headquarters there are many capitalist roaders, so people have every right to bombard that headquarters. People should be mobilised to expose the capitalist roaders. Only through Cultural Revolution can we root out capitalist-roaders.

WPRM: The Cultural Revolution involved many examples of the practice of democracy, such as the right to bombard the headquarters, the four great freedoms, big-character posters, the formation of Red Guards, the 3-in-1 committees, and even the Shanghai commune, not to mention

the reorientation of health care, education and development towards rural areas. Why do you think elections under New Democracy can best provide democracy to the people?

Comrade Gaurav: Democracy as defined by the capitalists or imperialists is, according to their own definition, only political freedom, or competing in elections.

But for us this is not the only characteristic of democracy. Democracy means the rights of the people for food, healthcare, education, all the economic requirements. These are fundamental things for our democracy. So we prefer a different definition of democracy.

What Mao put forward in the Cultural Revolution, these are definitely things of democracy. We uphold all these things. But despite all of these requirements, we think elections are also necessary. In the nature of electing the representatives we prefer competition, but only during the stage of New Democracy. When the society changes totally to socialism, then elections will maybe not be necessary. We are talking about New Democracy. When the society has been changed to socialism, the situation will be different.

We cannot claim now that the same method of elections will be applied during socialism. When there are various different political parties during the stage of New Democracy then there is competition between the political parties. But in socialism the class character of society will have changed, fundamentally changed. In that case there will be no need for various different political parties. And clearly the existence of political parties will be actually not necessary. They will not exist. In that case elections will not be needed.

WPRM: How will the practice of Cultural Revolution and the holding of elections prevent capitalist restoration? Which will be decisive?

Comrade Gaurav: As I have said, we cannot predict the form of elections under socialism. But the method of elections will definitely not be decisive to prevent capitalist restoration. Only Cultural Revolution can do that.

WPRM: According to Mao, not one but many Cultural Revolutions will be needed during the stage of socialism, which will last for many generations.

Comrade Gaurav: Yes, we very much agree with this principle that the Cultural Revolution should continue.

When the Cultural Revolution was terminated in China, the result was capitalist restoration.

This history is there for everyone to see. After the death of Mao, the revisionists said the Cultural Revolution was not necessary. They called those ten years a decade of catastrophe, the revisionists, that was their summation. But during the time of Mao the Cultural Revolution was not always directly carried out. Mao was almost bedridden, and immediately after his death it was reversed. If the Cultural Revolution had been carried out further, definitely it would have prevented the restoration of capitalism. So from the practice of China, we can realise that to prevent capitalist restoration we have to continue the

Cultural Revolution. In China, the Cultural Revolution was carried out for ten years, but that was not enough. It was only enough for that period. We must directly carry out a continuous process of Cultural Revolution.

WPRM: Elections in imperialist countries at present are a bureaucratic procedure that hide the dictatorial nature of capitalist society. How will elections under New Democracy provide a mechanism for the continuous revolutionisation of the masses as well as mobilisation against the danger of capitalist restoration?

Comrade Gaurav: We think that on the issue of what type of election and how the election will be carried out, there is one fundamental question: who is leading the state? Which class is leading the state?

Now the election to the Constituent Assembly was only possible because the state was in some sort of transition. But we are not always in the period of transition. It is a temporary period.

In this period the state is not so powerful. It was possible for our party to take advantage of this because of the revolutionary intervention of the masses, during the People's War and the 2006 People's Movement. It was possible for our party to win, to be victorious in the elections. But the same situation will not continue for a long time. The state will consolidate itself and its own class character. In that case it cannot be in transition. So it all depends on which class is in power. That is the fundamental question.

This will be defined by the constitution, so now our struggle is concentrated on the question of constitution. What type of constitution will there be? Basically there are two positions: whether it will be a People's Federal Republic, in short a People's Republic like that in China but taking into account some particularities of Nepal, or a bourgeois republic, a capitalist republic.

Our struggle is concentrated on this point, the major point of struggle in our country at this time. Our party is for a People's Republic, the other parties are for a bourgeois republic. If a People's Republic wins, then that means the proletariat will have won, they will be in power and they will hold their elections under those conditions. And since they will already be in power there will be freedom for the people to vote according to their choice. But if the proletariat is defeated, if there is a bourgeois republic in power, then the capitalist class will have won, and definitely they will use the same method that the capitalists of the world use during elections. We are in the transitional period and the constitution will define what type of system there will be in Nepal and which class will be in power. The type of electoral system will also depend on the outcome of this fight or struggle for a new constitution.

WPRM: Now that there is increasing talk of the third People's Movement and the coming insurrection, can you explain how the UCPN(M) envisions the New Democratic Revolution taking place? Is it possible to do this through elections?

Comrade Gaurav: When we talk about Jana Andolan (People's Movement) 3 we are talking about mobilising the masses. In the mobilisation of the masses, there are a few things that we have to take into account.

In the revolution in Nepal at this present moment, talking about a People's Republic is not an illegal matter, an illegal political question for accomplishing the revolution. It is a legitimate question. The other political parties can fight for their republic, why can the Maoist party not fight for a People's Republic?

We have every right to fight for the achievement of the people's revolution.

People's Republic means New Democracy, because when New Democratic Revolution was accomplished in China the state was called a New Democratic Republic. New Democratic Revolution and People's Republic are the same. There is a chance that through the constitution-making process we can write a new constitution of People's Republic. But that cannot be achieved without mass upsurge.

This is because in the given situation, the Maoist party is in favour of a People's Republic, but we do not have enough support in the Constituent Assembly to write our type of new constitution. On the other hand, all the other political parties except for the Maoists also don't have enough support to write their type of republic into the constitution.

In this specific situation in Nepal, only Jana Andolan 3 can resolve the problem of writing a constitution. The new constitution cannot be written only in the Constituent Assembly. This is neither possible for us nor for them.

When we have to write the new constitution, only Jana Andolan, a people's upsurge, can put pressure on and create the situation whereby all the other forces excluding the reactionary forces would support the Maoist proposal. There is thus some possibility of a People's Republic. But in all cases only the people's upsurge, or people's movement, will complete the revolution. And our party is in favour of Jana Andolan 3.

Now we call it people's insurrection, or people's revolt. But only a people's revolution can play the decisive role in making New Democratic Revolution.

WPRM: What role do you think Maoists and anti-imperialists around the world can play on these questions of democracy and the construction of socialism, and the successful completion of New Democratic Revolution in Nepal? How can we raise the debate on these questions in the international arena to a higher level?

Comrade Gaurav: At the present stage we are not going to carry out socialist construction. The present task of the revolution is to accomplish New Democratic Revolution. Only then can we carry out socialist transformation. Now we are in the stage of New Democratic Revolution.

And the international proletariat should support the Maoist movement in Nepal to accomplish the New Democratic Revolution. We think that a revolution cannot be replicated, only developed. It cannot be a photocopy of other revolutions. It will not be a stereotype of revolution. The Nepali revolution is based on certain fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, but it will have its specific character.

In the case of China, Mao called this the 'Sinification of Marxism'. We have to accomplish the revolution, based not on exactly what has happened with any other revolution of the world, which took place in history under the leadership of a Communist Party. Although the basic and fundamental guiding principles remain the same, there are many different aspects, including the security of that country, the international situation and other developments in the last decades.

Our party thinks that in the given situation the present line of the party can lead to the completion of New Democratic Revolution. So our class internationally should support the forms put forward by our party to accomplish the revolution. They can make suggestions. But we are formulating tactics on how to achieve the revolution and this does not exactly correspond to other revolutions. Our comrades are in different countries. They read the newspapers and the documents and all the other things, and they find the weaknesses and start to say that we are no longer communists, that we are revisionists.

From outside analysis they will find differences. But what is the reality? The reality of the situation is quite different. And in the present reality we have to accomplish the revolution. That is the major task of the UCPN(M).

We have formulated our line based on the concrete reality of Nepal, the present national and international situation. We think other comrades can make suggestions, because there is danger. When we are in a new experience there is also risk, there is also danger, of deviating towards the right.

Our comrades should give their sincere suggestions, which we will accept. But they should not condemn the revolution. If this revolution will be condemned or will not be cooperated with by our class internationally, it is hard for us to succeed. And we feel that communists will not help on these questions by doing that.

In fact we expect from our comrades internationally that they should give suggestions, they should express their political concerns about whether the party or line has been deviated. But it is their responsibility to always support us. Condemning the revolution as a whole, or not making any positive contribution to the revolution, that is not a good thing. That is not proletarian internationalism.

And if we succeed then communists around the world should welcome our revolution, and our comrades should celebrate. But more important is to think of what is your own contribution? Making revolution, that is your contribution. Communists have to continue accomplishing their own revolution. And we very humbly request this from the comrades of the world.

We are doing our duty to accomplish the revolution in Nepal. We have no other objectives than to accomplish the revolution. We are struggling for that, and we believe we will be successful in making revolution in Nepal. We are confident.