



revolution

at the roof of the world



*Articles and
analysis on
the revolution
in Nepal*

introduction

The people of Nepal have stood up.

The people of Nepal have swept the despised monarchy into the dustbin of history and are proceeding with their revolution. A decade long people's war led to fair elections and the construction of a Constituent Assembly. Now led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), Nepal stands on the verge of becoming the first new socialist country of the 21st Century. Nepal, sandwiched between China and India, is one of the poorest countries in the world, but is now on the road to building a new society in which the working people have power.

The core of the CPN (Maoist) strategy was people's war in the countryside. Beginning in 1996, they progressively grew stronger as they engaged police outposts with hunting rifles. Later they challenged the Royal Nepal Army (RNA) with the full force of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). This was accompanied by preparing students and workers in the cities for general strikes and insurrection.

The war ended in 2006 when a peace deal was signed to form an interim government. This government elected a body to draft a new constitution, abolish the monarchy, and establish Nepal as a republic. The Maoists swept the elections to the Constituent Assembly, winning the most seats, but not quite a majority.

The major question since the election of the Constituent Assembly revolved around the control of the military. The CPN (Maoist), based on Mao Zedong's statement that "without a people's army the people have nothing," demanded the merger of the PLA and the Nepal Army. The Nepali Congress Party (NCP), the major bourgeois party in the Assembly, worked

diligently to stop revolutionary changes. For instance, the Congress Party demanded the Maoists dissolve the people's power structures in the countryside and disband the PLA. The Maoists have stood firm and after considerable struggle, the Congress Party Prime Minister Koirala stepped down.

Through all of this, the hand of U.S. imperialism has been present. The CPN (Maoist) is designated a terrorist organization by the White House. Furthermore, the U.S. trained and equipped the RNA since the people's war began. The U.S. wants nothing more than to build and maintain an empire all over the world, and sees Nepal as a part of that. But like others all over the world, the people of Nepal have a thirst for independence and liberation.

The CPN (Maoist) bases its practice on the theories of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao. They have applied Marxism to conditions in Nepal and call this "Prachanda Path" after the founder of their party. They work to fight against slave-like labor conditions in the countryside and fight diligently for the rights of oppressed nationalities in Nepal. Additionally, they are making considerable strides towards women's liberation and the emancipation of the dalits ('untouchables'). Bringing these oppressed groups into the political life of the country is instrumental to the continuing successes of the revolution.

The Freedom Road Socialist Organization, in our meetings with representatives of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), expressed solidarity with the Nepali people in their continuing struggle against feudalism and imperialism. We are proud to release this pamphlet, highlighting some of our analysis of the revolution in Nepal. ★

Freedom Road Socialist Organization

contents



***In Solidarity with the Revolutionary Movement
in Nepal and Against U.S. Intervention 6***

***Movement Fights Poverty and
Oppression in Nepal 7***

On the Verge of Revolution in Nepal 10

***Maoists Sweep Constituent Assembly
Elections in Nepal 13***

Nepal: End to Hated Monarchy 17



Hisila Yami (AKA: Comrade Parvati), member of the Central Committee of the CPN (Maoist) and head of the Women's Department, following her successful election to the Constituent Assembly.

FRSO FIFTH CONGRESS RESOLUTION:

***In Solidarity with the Revolutionary Movement
in Nepal and Against U.S. Intervention***

FRSO stands in solidarity with the revolutionary movement in Nepal led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). One of the poorest countries in the world, Nepal has long been ruled by a corrupt and vicious monarchy held up by imperialism.

In 2006, after leading an armed struggle for ten years that liberated vast areas of the countryside, the CPN(M) led a mass movement in Nepal's capital Katmandu that toppled Nepal's king, opening the way for the new democratic and then socialist stages of the revolution.

There is popular support in Nepal for revolution and socialism. But the Nepali revolutionary movement still faces serious obstacles. The main obstacle is intervention from U.S. imperialism and its allies in the region, who are trying to prop up Nepal's discredited monarchy and stop the advance of the revolutionary movement.

The Nepali people and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) are inspiring working and oppressed people all over the world. They are showing that socialist revolution is still possible, even in a difficult international situation. FRSO supports the Nepali revolutionary movement, opposes U.S. intervention in Nepal and supports self-determination for the Nepali people.

Summer 2007

FIGHT BACK! NEWS — SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2005

Movement Fights Poverty and Oppression in Nepal

The government of Nepal is in trouble. Nepal is ruled by King Gyanendra, who shared power with an elected legislative assembly until Feb. 1. On that day, King Gyanendra abolished the assembly, banned the legal political parties in the assembly and arrested their leaders and censored the media and Internet.

This was an act of desperation to stave off a revolution. King Gyanendra seized total power in order to focus all the government's attention on trying to defeat Nepal's growing revolutionary movement.

Revolution Brewing

There is a powerful revolutionary movement in Nepal, led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). The CPN(M) took up arms in 1996, forming the People's Liberation Army and beginning a protracted people's war based in the countryside. Their ideology and guerrilla war strategy are inspired by Mao Zedong, the leader of the Chinese revolution.

Nepal is a landlocked country surrounded on one side by the Tibetan region of China, and on the other side by India. Nepal is home to the Himalayan Mountains, which include Mount Everest and many of the other highest mountain peaks in the world. Among the poorest and least developed countries in the world, Nepal is a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country. 80% of the population lives in the countryside or is dependent on the agricultural economy. Its economy and politics

have long been dominated by the United States and neighboring India. The dire poverty and extremely mountainous terrain provide ideal conditions for guerrilla warfare.

The Rise of the CPN(M)

The CPN(M) began the armed struggle in 1996 with few arms - they decided that for real change in Nepal, there would need to be a revolution. They determined that no reforms to the monarchy would be enough to liberate Nepal's bitterly poor and oppressed workers and peasants.

The CPN(M)'s power and influence grew quickly after they initially built base areas in the western part of the country. Their influence spread to other areas as they carried out mass organizing to address the problems of the people while also building the People's Liberation Army to overthrow the old state. In most rural areas, the CPN(M) is already the de-facto government.

They are using the strategy of protracted people's war that was developed in the Chinese revolution. This means they start by building base areas of support in the countryside and gradually expand their sphere of influence to surround the cities from the countryside - until they're strong enough to defeat the military head-on in the capital, Kathmandu. Though the CPN(M) is based in the countryside, their supporters do political work in the cities too, building mass struggles and fightbacks in the cities and working to bring the urban and rural movements together for a countrywide revolution when the time is right.

Last year the CPN(M) announced they had reached the stage of 'strategic offensive' in the people's war. In the people's

war strategy, this is the final stage in the revolutionary process. This means that the CPN(M) will continue to build their strength and bide their time to decide when the time is right to confront the Royal Nepal Army directly at their strongest point, in the capital. If the rebels take Kathmandu, they will abolish the monarchy and the old state and begin the process of carrying out the New Democratic revolution.

Particularly since the Feb. 1 coup, the CPN(M) has tried to build an alliance with the political parties that the king outlawed - the biggest ones being the Congress Party and the CPN(UML) - with the goal of getting rid of the king and ending the monarchy. To date those parties have not united with the CPN(M) against the king, though there has been evidence of some possible moves in that direction. The CPN(M) tries to build this united front with the bourgeois parliamentary parties in order to strike the main blow at the king and end Nepal's remnants of feudalism and colonialism.

The CPN(M)'s strategy to build this alliance is through their call for the formation of a representative Constituent Assembly that would bring together all political forces except the king, in order to abolish the monarchy and create a new democratic republic to replace the current 'constitutional monarchy.' Their call for an end to the monarchy is increasingly popular since the king suppressed the previously legal political parties. In this new political context, the CPN(M) is the only party able to effectively organize against the king, since they are armed and have base areas in substantial areas of the country. They called major multi-day strikes since the Feb. 1 coup, which were very successful, paralyzing transportation in the country and cutting off the capital. They have announced that they have more anti-monarchy protest actions planned.

Short term and day-to-day developments in Nepal are difficult to predict due to the king's blanket of repression and censorship. Media reports from Nepal are no longer reliable, so reports of scores of rebels killed must be taken with a grain of salt. Now the Nepali media is censored from reporting anything about the revolutionary movement except what the government says, so the king is inventing propaganda to try to discredit the revolutionary movement and confuse the masses of people by making it look like the revolution is losing or is divided.

Since all news coming out of Nepal is censored, it is important to remember the basic facts: the king is isolated and coming from a position of weakness, and the revolutionary movement is strong, with huge liberated areas in the countryside and an already-powerful people's army. The larger-scale battles that are being reported in the countryside and the alarm-bells being sounded by the U.S. Embassy make it clear that the revolution in Nepal is advancing and the monarchy is in trouble.

By Staff

FIGHT BACK! NEWS — APRIL 2006

On the Verge of Revolution in Nepal

As of April 24, Nepal's King Gyanendra appears to be nearing his last days in power. Huge mass protests of hundreds of thousands of people are defying a shoot-to-kill curfew after 19 days of a general strike. Massive crowds are gathering on the outskirts of the capital, Katmandu, and attempting to move slowly into the city in the face of the Royal Nepal Army

shooting into the crowds. Presumably the protesters are trying to get to the center of Katmandu to the Royal Palace, which was cordoned off a couple days ago with barbed wire and military troops.

The Nepali people have taken up in a mass way the demands of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) - an end to the monarchy, the creation of a constituent assembly and the formation of a democratic republic. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world, run by a semi-feudal monarchy that is dominated by imperialism.

The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) has led a powerful people's war that has liberated large parts of the countryside over the past ten years. Last February, King Gyanendra seized absolute power, dissolving the country's parliament and arresting many leaders of the country's seven main legal political parties. After months of appealing to the king in vain to restore the parliament, the seven parliamentary parties finally made an alliance with the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), forging a 12 point agreement. So far the alliance has held and the seven parties called a general strike a little over two weeks ago with the tacit support of the Maoists.

While hundreds of thousands of people take the streets around Katmandu, the Maoists have launched large military attacks in the countryside, including a bold attack just 60 miles from Katmandu where hundreds of rebel soldiers of the CPN(M)'s People's Liberation Army simultaneously attacked an army barracks, a telecommunications tower and several government buildings in Chautara.

Last week on April 21, with hundreds of thousands of Nepalis in the streets demanding his ouster, and with his imperialist

sponsors in the US and India threatened to pull the plug on him, King Gyanendra made a speech in which he offered to "restore democracy". What he meant was that Nepal would return to the parliamentary monarchy setup that Nepal has had since 1990 and that he had dissolved in February 2005 when he took total power. King Gyanendra offered this proposal to save himself from certain defeat, under sharp pressure from the US, British and Indian governments, which all immediately lauded the King's offer as a breakthrough.

But for the people of Nepal, it appears to be too little to late. There were already hundreds of thousands of people in the street demanding an end to the monarchy entirely, not a return to a parliamentary monarchy. On April 17 the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) put out a statement urging the masses and the political parties to reject any such offer should one be forthcoming, and instead to follow the masses in demanding an end to the monarchy and the creation of a new government. According to the statement, "The time has come to see off from the stage of history the royal fascist elements... by dispensing a decisive last blow now." The seven parliamentary parties rejected the king's offer and have continued the mass protests. At the same time, imperialist powers are continuing to work overtime to try to broker a deal between the king and the parties to try to save the king and keep the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) out of power.

For now it seems a deal to save the king is unlikely and the future of Nepal is being written by the masses of people in the streets. It appears to only be a matter of time, and a short amount of time at that, before the protests make it to the palace and the king either gets out in time and lives out his life in exile, or he doesn't get out in time and meets a less pleasant future.

COMMENTARY BY JOSH SYKES, SUMMER 2008

Maoists Sweep Constituent Assembly Elections in Nepal

A new day had dawned in Nepal. After fighting a decade-long people's war, which led to a coalition government replacing



Chairman Prachanda, CPN(M), celebrating the Maoist electoral victory

martial law imposed by the King of Nepal, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) is leading the Constituent Assembly elections in Nepal. The vote counting is not completely finished, but at the time of this writing the CPN (Maoist) has won a total of 120 seats, with

the opposition Nepali Congress Party coming in a distant second at 37 seats. The Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) won 33 seats, but following their election defeat their ministers have resigned from the coalition government cabinet.

A total of 601 seats are up for grabs in a complex voting system. According to the Interim Constitution of Nepal adopted in 2006, a 'mixed system' must be utilized for elections to the Constituent Assembly. The 'first past the post' system determines 240 members of the Constituent Assembly while a proportional representation system determines the other 335 directly elected members. With 120 of the total 240 first past the post election seats, the Maoists should win at least 100 more seats through proportional representation emerging as the single largest party, much to the surprise of the west-

ern media who expected the CPN (Maoist) to come in third, behind the Congress Party and CPN-UML.

The purpose of the Constituent Assembly is to draft a new constitution for Nepal following the ouster of the monarchy as a result of the people's war led by the Maoists. According to the CPN (Maoist), the elections represent the beginning of the New Democratic process for Nepal. This refers to a two-stage revolutionary process, wherein a bloc of progressive classes, led by the CPN (Maoist), first intend to move through a 'New Democratic' phase of the revolution, build a People's Republic of Nepal and eliminate the vestiges of feudalism and imperialism before moving on to the construction of socialism.

According to Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, one of the main leaders of the Maoists, the victory of the CPN (Maoist) in the constituent assembly election is the direct result of the protracted people's war. "The people were looking for total change. We advanced the political agenda for total change during the decade-long people's war. We have people from different castes, ethnicities, genders and people from different regions. The main agenda of the people's war was to restructure the state. It took ten years of the people's war to establish our political agenda. The people felt that the country's socio-political and economic structure needed a complete overhaul. So we couldn't look at things through our old lenses. The media and the elite missed the picture. As a result, the CA results surprised many. The ground realities had changed and they helped us to emerge as the largest party."

The CPN (Maoist) waged armed struggle against the Nepali government from 1996 to 2006 based on the military theories developed by Mao Zedong through the course of the



Chinese Revolution. The Nepali's strategy for people's war, called Prachanda Path, after the founder and Chairman of the CPN (Maoist), Prachanda, involved combining the strategy of surrounding the cities from the countryside with insurrectionary actions in the urban centers. During this

process, the CPN (Maoist) established its immense popularity among the masses of workers and peasants of Nepal through radical agrarian reform, fighting with determination for the rights of women and oppressed nationalities, labor organizing and student mobilizations. (For more information about the people's war in Nepal, see *Movement fights poverty and oppression in Nepal*, September/October 2005.)

The people's war was able to advance relatively quickly because the U.S. has been tied down elsewhere, most notably by the resistance in Iraq, and has been unable to intervene to the degree that it has against similar struggles in the Philippines and Colombia. The U.S. has given some military aid to Nepal's monarchy but has not been able to commit a sizable number of troops. Because of the U.S.'s overextension, these and other movements, such as the people's war being led by the communists in neighboring India, have been able to make advances.

Following King Gyanendra's dissolution of the parliament and seizure of absolute power in early 2005, the CPN (Maoist) joined with other parties in an alliance to oust the king and establish the constituent assembly elections that are now

taking place. The CPN (Maoist)'s People's Liberation Army grouped their military forces and arms into 'cantons' under the supervision of U.N. monitors, in 2006 as part of the peace process.

The repressive measures instituted by Gyanendra were very unpopular and at this time only a handful of Hindu fundamentalists tied to the old feudal system still support the king.

Former U.S. president Jimmy Carter, whose Carter Center has been observing the elections, said that he hopes the United States will drop the CPN (Maoist) from its terrorist list and recognize the Maoist government.

The U.S. is driven by its own interests however - the maintenance of an empire in service of a corporate elite - and it is possible that it may attempt to intervene against the democratically elected Maoist government, as it did when Hamas was similarly elected in Palestine.

The elections paint a very different picture of the Maoists than a group of 'terrorists' as the U.S. government insists. The elections demonstrate that the CPN (Maoist) has been very popular in Nepal throughout the difficult period of the people's war, and additionally gives the lie to claims that the guerrillas ruled the countryside through terror and intimidation. It demonstrates clearly that there is a call from the people of Nepal to end imperialism and feudalism and to work toward the possibility of a socialist future.

Josh Sykes is a member of the Freedom Road Socialist Organization.

FIGHT BACK! NEWS — JUNE 2008

Nepal: End to Hated Monarchy

On June 11, King Gyanendra left Nepal's royal palace for the last time. He was forced out of power by a powerful revolutionary movement. A new Nepali government is now being formed through a Constituent Assembly, led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist).



Gyanendra's fall from power ends a 240-year-old dynasty of self-proclaimed 'god-kings,' and brings to an end the last Hindu monarchy in the world. King Gyanendra had the backing of the U.S. and India, Nepal's powerful neighbor which has often meddled in Nepali politics. But that wasn't enough to prop him up in the face of massive and well-organized popular opposition.

The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) waged a ten-year guerrilla war from 1996 to 2006, establishing popular support among the deeply impoverished people and exercising control over most of the countryside. Then in 2006, a popular uprising in the capital, Kathmandu, nearly shook the king from power. That set in motion a process that led to this year's Constituent Assembly elections to create a new constitution and government.

After months of delays from the more conservative parties, the Constituent Assembly elections were held in April. The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) won in a landslide over the pro-establishment Congress Party and CP-UML.

At its first meeting on May 28, the Constituent Assembly's first order of business was a 560 to 4 vote to officially end the monarchy and declare Nepal a Federal Republic. CPN(M) leaders gave the king a month to leave the palace and announced the palace would be turned into a museum. Massive crowds of people filled the streets to celebrate.

Even though they were badly defeated, the more conservative parties are still resisting change and impeding the formation of a CPN(M)-led government. Former Prime Minister Koirala of the Congress Party is inexplicably clinging to his position, demanding to be the new president or prime minister even though his party was badly beaten in the Constituent Assembly election.

Despite such repeated obstacles thrown up by conservative forces, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) has continued to push the revolutionary process forward with popular support.

By Staff

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April/May 2008

Vol. 11, No. 2

Anti-war movement, progressives unite for September 1 protest at RNC

By Bob

Minneapolis, MN. In a last ditch effort to win re-election, Governor Tim Walle has announced that he will be running for a second term in 2008. The announcement is a clear sign of his determination to stay in office.

The announcement, released by the governor's office, states that Walle will be running for a second term in 2008. This is a clear sign of his determination to stay in office.

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May Day 2008: Long Live the People's Struggle!

By Bob

Minneapolis, MN. The annual May Day celebration in Minneapolis was a success. The parade was a clear sign of the people's determination to stay in office.

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INSIDE:

¡LUCHA Y RESISTE! Noticias y Perspectivas de la Lucha del Pueblo

50 CENTS

April/May 2008

Vol. 11, No. 2

Marcha pro-inmigrante en contra del gobernador de Minnesota

By Bob

Minneapolis, MN. El sábado 12 de mayo se celebró una gran marcha pro-inmigrante en Minneapolis. La marcha fue un claro signo de la determinación de la gente de luchar por sus derechos.



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300 marchan en Minneapolis en contra de una propuesta de ley anti-inmigrante en Minnesota

By Bob

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Primero de mayo 2008: ¡Que viva la lucha popular!

By Bob

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Algunas de las protestas más grandes del mundo se celebran en Minneapolis el primer día de mayo.

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