

Teach-in (Nepal): The Question of Building a New Type of State

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This article appeared in the issue 9 of “The Worker” (February 2004), the CPN’s (Maoist) theoretical journal. It outlines the their basic stances on theoretical issues involving the creation of a new Socialist state in Nepal.

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“The basic question of every revolution is that of state power. Unless this question is understood there can be no intelligent participation in the revolution, not to speak of guidance of the revolution.”

- V.I. Lenin, (1917b: 34)

The question of state power has now become the central question for the New Democratic revolution in Nepal, which is marching forward to capturing central state power after building revolutionary base areas and local power in the vast rural areas. The question has assumed significance and may be discussed primarily from two angles. Firstly, in the universal context; and secondly, in the concrete national context. Firstly in the universal or general sense, the proletarian (i.e. New Democratic or Socialist) state power is of a ‘new type’ as compared to all the state powers of minority exploiter classes in history. Further-more, after the downfall of all People’s Democratic or Socialist state powers including those in Russia, China and others in the past, the proletarian state powers arising in a new setting in the 21st century have to be of a further newer type. Secondly, in the concrete semi-feudal and semi-colonial national context of Nepal, where even the old bourgeois revolution and state has not been accomplished, the prospective proletarian state would naturally be, and have to be, of a ‘new’ type. Hence, we would first make a general review of the historical experiences on the question of state and strive to analyse the fundamental characteristics of a new type of state.

1. Historical Background

A. International Context

The question of state power has been the central question in every major ideological political struggle in the international communist movement. Struggles against the anarchists during Marx-Engel’s time, struggles against the revisionists during Lenin’s time and struggles against the revisionists and dogmato-revisionists during Mao’s and our own time are principally centred on the question of state power. It would thus be useful to make a brief historical review of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist or proletarian view against the anarchist, revisionist and dogmato-revisionist views,

which may also be called petty-bourgeois, bourgeois and bureaucratic bourgeois views on the state and lay the foundation for a new type of state.

As per the historical facts available so far and their historic-materialist interpretations, origin of the state followed the division of classes in society as a means of dictatorship of one class over the others. Hence the state has been the centre of class struggle in every historical stage starting with the primitive state-communal formation through the slave and feudal societies to the modern capitalist society, and every victorious class has further sharpened and strengthened this weapon of the state according to its class interest. The state, which was initially born as 'servant' of the society, gradually separated itself from the society and took the form of 'master' of the society. By the time the state reached the 'highest' and 'ultimate' stage of the bourgeois republic it became terrible parasitic machinery over the society armed with a huge bureaucracy and standing army. However, according to the law of dialectics that requires everything that is born to meet with its death, the state is also inevitably destined to die someday.

The latest development of the social productive forces to a very high level has made this both possible and essential. This is the fundamental principal of Marxism on the origin, development and end of the state.

Among the founders of Marxism, Marx through his works, principally, "Class Struggle in France" (1850), "Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" (1852), "Civil War in France" (1871), "Critique of the Gotha programme" (1875), etc, and Engels through his works, particularly, "Anti-Duhring" (1878), "The Origin of Family, Private Property and State" (1884), etc. laid the foundation of the scientific conception of the state.

However, the issue of utmost dispute and debate in the international communist movement and the one deserving maximum attention while building a new type of state, is the question of elimination of the old type of state in its highest and ultimate stage in the form of a bourgeois republic and construction of new type of transitional state in its place. Marx and Engels had to wage the main ideological struggle on this question while fighting against the anarchist trend particularly led by Sterner, Prudhon, and Bakunin. While the anarchists idealistically talked of immediate destruction of all types of state and opposed building an alternate state of any kind, Marx and Engels viewed the state objectively and put forward the concept of building a new type of transitional state in lieu of the bourgeois state, whose essence would be the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Elucidating the fundamental difference between the Marxist and the anarchist views on the state, Engels has said:

"While the great mass of the Social-Democratic workers hold our view that state power is nothing more than the organisation which the ruling classes-landowners and capitalists-have provided for themselves in order to protect their social privileges, Bakunin maintains that it is the state which has created capital, that the capitalist has his capital only by the grace of the state. As, therefore, the state is the chief evil, it is above all the state, which must be done away with and then capitalism will go to blazes of itself. We, on the contrary, say: Do away with capital, the concentration of all means of production in the hands of the few, and the state will fall of itself. The difference is an essential one: Without a previous social revolution the abolition of the state is nonsense; the abolition of the capital is precisely the social revolution and involves a change in the whole mode of production." (Marx and Engels 1985:425)

Thus it was well established that the state is not an abstract concept created by somebody's subjective wishes but a concrete object developed and demolished by the objective necessity of society.

Engels had further expounded that after the displacement of the state of the minority exploiter classes by the social revolution of the conscious masses the majority exploited classes should establish a 'transitional' state to apply dictatorship over the defeated exploiter classes and to move towards a classless society, and such a state would be "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word". (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984:120) Marx and Engels had time and again highlighted the Paris Commune of 1871 as the best example of such a transitional proletarian state.

After the experience of the Paris Commune Marx had all the more emphatically proclaimed that the form of the state needed for a long transitional period from capitalism to communism would be nothing but the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is expressed thus:

"Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat." (Marx1975: 26)

The Paris Commune which was created through direct election and participation by the workers of Paris, which was directly defended by the armed masses after dissolution of the standing army and which was equipped with all the executive and legislature powers was upheld as the most shining example of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' by Engels till the end of his life. This is amply reflected in the following assertion of Engels on the twentieth anniversary of the Paris Commune on March 18, 1891:

"Of late, the Social-Democratic philistine has once more been filled with wholesome terror at the words: Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Well and good, gentleman, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the dictatorship of the Proletariat." (Marx and Engels 1985:189)

The founders of Marxism had visualized the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of a new type of state ending all states in history, not as a permanent object separated from and lording over the society but as a temporary product that would wither away by itself in course of time. This is well articulated in this initial formulation by Marx himself:

"And now as to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economist the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: 1) that the existence of classes is only bound up with particular historical phases in the development of production, 2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat, 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society." (Marx and Engels 1977:528)

The expression "this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to... a classless society" clearly asserts that the new type of state in the form of dictatorship of the proletariat is not a state 'in the proper sense of the word' and is a means to do away with all the classes and state.

How the new type of proletarian state (or the dictatorship of the proletariat) gradually withers away and ultimately dies out as a state is further expressed by Engels as follows:

"When at last it becomes the real representative of the whole of society, it renders itself unnecessary. As soon as there is no longer any social class to be held in subjection; as soon as class rule, and the individual struggle for existence based upon our present anarchy in production, with the collision and excesses arising from these, are removed, nothing more remains to be repressed and a special repressive force, a state, is no longer necessary. The first act by virtue of which the

state really constitutes itself the representative of the whole of society- the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society- this is, at the same time, its last independent act as a state. State interference in social relations becomes, in one domain after another, superfluous, and then dies out of itself: the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of processes of production. The state is not "abolished". It dies out." (Engels 1880:147)

This long quotation is by itself so crystal clear and sharp that it needs no additional explanation. However, as the great Paris Commune in existence only for seventy-two days was the only example of a new type of proletarian state in the form of dictatorship of the proletariat during the life time of Marx and Engels, there was no possibility of any practicing of withering away of the state as visualized by the founders of Marxism.

After the death of Marx and Engels, their worthy successor Lenin made additional contributions to the question of state power, both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, his "State and Revolution" (1917) laid a new foundation for the Marxist knowledge and science on the question of state power, and his other works including "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" (1917), "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government" (1918), "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" (1919), etc. elucidated the Soviet system as a new type of state. Lenin practically played a pioneering role in building a new type of socialist state by accomplishing the historic October Socialist Revolution and by defending and developing the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviet system against internal and external attacks for seven years.

The concept of a new type of proletarian state put forward by Lenin on the eve of the October Revolution was like this:

"The proletariat... if it wants to uphold the gains of present revolution and proceed further, to win peace, bread and freedom, must "smash", to use Marx's expression, this "ready-made" state machine and substitute a new one for it by merging the police force, the army and the bureaucracy with the entire armed people. Following the path indicated by the experience of the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Russian Revolution of 1905, the proletariat must organize and arm all the poor, exploited sections of the population in order that they themselves should take the organs of state power directly into their own hands, in order that they themselves should constitute these organs of state power". (Lenin 1917a: 326)

The question of 'smashing' the old state and merging of the army and bureaucracy with 'the entire armed people', and that of 'organizing and arming' the masses and taking the organs of new state power 'directly' into their own hands by the masses, is definitely the most significant aspect of the concept of new type of state advanced by Lenin. This was sought to be implemented in the new state built in the form of 'Soviets of workers, soldiers and peasants' after the October Revolution.

Similarly, Lenin had envisaged to build a new type of state devoid of a 'standing army' and an 'officialdom placed above the people', and vowed thus:

"...I advocate not the usual parliamentary bourgeois state, but a state without a standing army, without a police opposed to the people, without an officialdom placed above the people." (Lenin 1917c: 49)

However, Kautsky and other Right revisionists of the Second International had sought to discard the very class concept of the state and the dictatorship of the proletariat and to spread the illusion of bourgeois parliamentarism in the form of so-called "pure democracy" within the proletarian movement, against which Lenin had launched a severe polemic. In his famous work "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky" (1918), Lenin had amply clarified that in a class

divided society 'democracy', too, would have a class character and bourgeois democracy and constituent assembly were mere concrete forms of bourgeois state.

While replying to the critics of the Soviet system, Lenin had enumerated the specificities of the Soviet democracy thus:

"In Russia ... the bureaucratic machine has been completely smashed, razed to the ground; the old judges have all been sent packing, the bourgeois parliament has been dispersed-and far more accessible representation has been given to the workers and peasants; their Soviets have replaced the bureaucrats, and their Soviets have been authorized to elect the judges. This fact alone is enough for all the oppressed classes to recognize that Soviet power, i.e., the present form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic." (Lenin 1918:33-34)

Thus, an extensive network of local to central Soviets of workers, peasants, soldiers and other revolutionary classes developed in the model of the Paris Commune was the practical expression of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' and a new type of socialist state after the October revolution. When there arose a contradiction between the bourgeois representative organ, the constituent assembly, and the socialist representative organ, the Soviet, immediately after the revolution, the constituent assembly was dissolved as a historically retrograde organ, and the forward-looking Soviet democracy was institutionalized. Even when a vicious imperialist aggression and internal civic war ensued in the immediate aftermath of the revolution, the congress and meetings of the elected Soviets were held in short and regular intervals and all-important decisions of the state were taken through the Soviets. However, when the civil war got stretched and a 'New Economic Policy' (NEP) with features of state-capitalism was introduced to tide over the problems of the economic construction after the end of the civil war, there was gradual erosion in the dynamism and liveliness of the initial Soviet system. The higher-level executive committees started getting more active and powerful at the cost of the Soviet Congress and local organs. The organs of the state, Party and army (which was getting transformed into a standing army from the initial 'Red Guards') were getting intertwined inseparably. A bureaucratic apparatus in the old Czarist mould, cut-off from and placed over the people, started rising up gradually. Similar other bureaucratic deviations were cropping up menacingly in the new Soviet state system. As Lenin was a rare genius of revolutionary firmness and dynamism and a past master in applying revolutionary science in the concrete time and place, he made concerted efforts till the end to curb the rising bureaucratic tendencies in the Soviet state system and to ensure the initiative, supervision and participation of the revolutionary masses in the new state power through 'Worker's and Peasants Inspection', 'non-Party Worker's and Peasant's Conferences', etc.

A glimpse of the problem of bureaucracy in the Soviet state and the Party can be had from the following comment by Lenin towards the end of his life in 1923:

"Let us hope that our new Worker's and Peasants' Inspection will abandon what the French call pruderies, which we may call ridiculous primness, or ridiculous swank, and which plays entirely into the hands of our Soviet and Party bureaucracy. Let it be said in parentheses that we have bureaucrats in our Party offices as well as in Soviet offices." (Lenin 1923:419)

In this context it would be worthwhile to note the warnings of Rosa Luxemburg made from a left revolutionary angle, despite her certain idealist and voluntarist limitations, on the future of the Soviet state:

"Without general elections, without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free struggle of opinion, life dies out in every public institution, becomes a semblance of life, in which

only the bureaucracy remains as the active element. Public life gradually falls asleep, a few dozen party leaders of inexhaustible energy and boundless experience direct and rule. Among them, in reality only a dozen outstanding heads do the leading and an elite of the working class is invited from time to time to meetings where they are to applaud the speeches of the leaders, and to approve proposed resolutions unanimously-at bottom, then, a clique affair- a dictatorship, to be sure, not the dictatorship of the proletariat, however, but only the dictatorship of the handful of politicians, that is a dictatorship in the bourgeois sense...". (Luxemburg 1918:118)

After Lenin's death in 1924, Stalin made efforts to continue and develop the Soviet state in a socialist direction. However, firstly due to a type of economic deterministic thinking that envisaged the development of the productive forces per se would lead the society towards communism, an one-sided stress was laid on economic development through central planning. Secondly, in the particularity of heightened contradictions with imperialism in and around the World War II, the 'external' cause was accorded primacy and the policy of applying force of state power to settle internal contradictions within the state and the Party was followed. Consequently, by the time of Stalin's death in 1953 the Soviet state was caught in a vicious bureaucratic quagmire, and with Khrushchev's advent it assumed an open bureaucratic capitalist and totalitarian character, which was ultimately transformed into naked capitalism in 1989.

With the 'peaceful' degeneration of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia into the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, Mao sought to draw grave lessons from it and developed the theory of continuous revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, or the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR). Even beforehand during the Chinese revolution Mao had developed the concept of a new type of state in the form of 'people's democratic dictatorship' or 'New Democracy' to complete bourgeois democratic revolution under the leadership of the proletariat in pre-capitalist or semi-feudal and semi-colonial societies and to move towards socialism. These are incorporated in his celebrated works like "On New Democracy" (1939), "On People's Democratic Dictatorship" (1949), etc. After the revolution when there was the danger of the people's democratic dictatorship (till 1956) and the dictatorship of the proletariat (1956 onwards) undergoing bureaucratization and degenerating into bourgeois dictatorship, Mao searched for new methods to ensure supervision and participation of the masses in the state and to correctly handle contradictions prevalent in society. In this process were penned such important works like "On Ten Major Relations" (1956), "On Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" (1957), etc. Later on in the Sixties, when the Khrushchovite revisionists blatantly abandoned the principle of dictatorship of the proletariat and advanced the bourgeois concept of the 'state of the entire people', Mao launched a powerful polemic against the same, which is widely known as the 'Great Debate'.

The method of ensuring maximum and continuous participation of the masses in the state through the practice of 'great democracy' under the leadership of the proletariat, is the question of utmost importance in checking bureaucratic deviations and building a new type of state, which is reflected in Mao's assertion:

"We must have this much confidence. We are not even afraid of imperialism, so why should we be afraid of great democracy? Why should we be afraid of students taking to the streets? Yet among our Party members there are some who are afraid of great democracy, and this is not good. Those bureaucrats who are afraid of great democracy must study Marxism hard and mend their ways." (Mao 1977:347)

There is no doubt that the GPCR carried out from 1966 to 1976 under the leadership of Mao made historic contribution in the development of a new type of proletarian state. In this context particularly noteworthy are: widespread slogans of "It is right to rebel", 'Bombard the bourgeois headquarter' etc; revolutionary committees made up of non-Party masses to conduct state functions

in the model of Paris Commune; formation Red Guards in millions through the arming of the masses; inclusion of the rights of workers to strike in the state constitution; etc.

Nevertheless, the incidence of counterrevolution from within the existing state and restoration of bourgeois dictatorship in China after Mao's death in 1976, has added further responsibilities on the shoulders of the new age revolutionaries to build a new type of proletarian state. In this context we should move further ahead after drawing positive and negative lessons of practices of dictatorship of the proletariat from the Paris Commune through the Russian Soviet to the Chinese GPCR. It is obvious that as long as the era of imperialism prevails and there is the compulsion of building socialism within a single country, nobody can and should objectively deny the possibility of counter-revolution after a revolution. Even then, if we can't provide scientific and logical answer to the subjective factors behind the relatively easy and more or less 'peaceful' occurrence of counter-revolution and restoration of bourgeois dictatorship in nearly half of the world that had dozens of socialist and people's democratic state systems in the twentieth century, we won't be able to win the confidence of the masses to accomplish revolution and defend and develop the same up to communism. In this sense it is imperative to firmly grasp that the question of building a new type of state in the twenty-first century means the building of the state that would prevent counter-revolution after revolution and would lead to communism through a continuous revolution; or it is a state that would bring about its own end as a state.

Similarly, as there would be a ceaseless process of revolution and counter-revolution so long as the class division in society remains, we should beware of the dangers of reactionary psychological warfare against the possibility of another revolution after a counter-revolution and resultant proliferation of pessimism and liquidationist, agnostic, nihilist, reformist and revisionist thoughts within the revolutionary camp. For this we should correctly grasp the dialectical law of opportunism donning different guises according to varying time and place as seen during the days of Marx, Lenin and Mao. For instance, on the question of the state in Marx's time as there was the need to fight against the anarchist tendency, which tended to negate the state instantly, Marx and Engels had to stress more on the 'necessity' of a transitional state in the form of dictatorship of the proletariat. When this 'necessity' aspect was one-sidedly exaggerated by the revisionists of the Second International and sought to perpetuate the bourgeois state through cosmetic 'reforms', Lenin launched a vicious ideological struggle against it and developed the new Soviet state power after carrying out the October Revolution. On Lenin's death and during the period of Third International and Stalin, though there was mechanistic stress on the 'necessity' of dictatorship of the proletariat from a dogmato-revisionist angle, the question of continuous revolution and withering away of the state was put in the back burner and consequently the dictatorship of the proletariat itself got distorted and ultimately degenerated into bureaucratic bourgeois dictatorship or totalitarianism. It was only during the period of Mao that both the revisionist and dogmato-revisionist tendencies were attacked and a balanced stress was placed on both the questions of dictatorship of the proletariat and of 'continuous revolution' and withering away of the state. As Mao's efforts during the short period were grossly inadequate and incomplete, the revolutionaries of the present age should dare go beyond all the past experiences and build a new type of state power while firmly grasping the question of dictatorship of the proletariat and continuous revolution.

B. National Context

The centralized feudal state of Nepal was set up nearly two and a quarter century ago under the leadership of King Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha. Though there have been minor reformist changes in 1951 and 1990, the class character of the state has remained semi-feudal and semi-colonial and its political form has been basically autocratic monarchical. As the basic socio-economic base of society has remained semi-feudal and semi-colonial and the standing army, since its inception during the central state formation days, and the bureaucracy, along with its development

since 1951, have been primarily loyal to the monarchy, attempts to introduce 'constitutional monarchy' in the following decades after the 1951 and 1990 political changes have not been successful. The latest experiment in 'constitutional monarchy' and bourgeois parliamentary democracy has virtually ended with the qualitative development of the class struggle in the form of People's War (PW) since 1996 and the old state has once again donned the guise of nakedly autocratic monarchy and military dictatorship since October 4, 2002.

As per the general national and regional structure of the feudal state, the old state of Nepal is based on Arya-Khas high caste chauvinism and is of a unitary and over-centralized type. As a result the majority Tibeto-Burman and Austro-Dravid nationalities and Madheshis (i.e. inhabitant of Terai plains) and the regions of far-western Seti-Mahakali and Karnali are subjected to intense oppression of the unitary and centralized feudal state. Moreover, the dalits treated as untouchables in the so-called Hindu varnashram system (i.e. caste hierarchy) and women under patriarchal domination, are naturally subjected to worst form of oppression by the feudal state.

Thus it is axiomatic that a new type of state in the context of Nepal means a transitional state that would first complete the bourgeois democratic revolution and then would advance towards socialism and communism. In keeping with this objective reality the CPN (Maoist) has since its inception formulated a minimum programme of establishing a New Democratic state based on the people's democratic dictatorship and set the goal of attaining socialism and communism through carrying out continuous revolution. It has also been envisaged that in the concrete condition of Nepal the form of the first phase of bourgeois democratic revolution would be joint democratic dictatorship of different oppressed classes, nationalities, regions, gender and communities under the leadership of the proletariat.

In the light of the destruction of the old state in most of the rural areas and the rising up of different levels and forms of revolutionary people's power in its place, 'United Revolutionary People's Council' (URPC) has been developed since September 2001 as an embryonic central state power to coordinate and guide the local people's power, which is a broad revolutionary united front of different classes, nationalities, regions, women and others under the leadership of the CPN (Maoist). The 75-point 'Common Minimum Policy and Programme' adopted by the First National Convention of the URPC provides a general outline of the New Democratic or People's Democratic state to be built after the revolution. This Minimum Programme has sought to incorporate many important aspects of proletarian democracy (viz. supervision of the masses over the state, public criticism of the state functionaries, etc) developed during the GPCR.

Keeping in view such specificities like the stage of strategic equilibrium of the PW, the triangular contention among revolutionary democratic, parliamentarian and monarchist forces in the country, sensitive geo-strategic positioning of the country sandwiched between two gigantic neighbors, etc, the Party has advanced a further proposal of minimum forward-looking political solution of completing the bourgeois democratic revolution through peaceful negotiations. An outline of a transitional state which is a step below the New Democratic/People's Democratic state has been provided in the "An Executive Summary of the Proposal Put Forward by CPN (Maoist) for the Negotiations" [See, CPN (Maoist) 2004] proposed by the Party during the latest round of negotiations on April 27, 2003. The Party believes that the concept of such a transitional state rising above the bourgeois parliamentarism but not yet reaching the level of New Democracy is appropriate both theoretically and practically in the concrete conditions of Nepal.

Though the concept of New Democratic state developed by Mao is generally correct and appropriate, the CPN (Maoist) has found it imperative to further develop the concept of democracy in the light of the past experiences of counter-revolutions and continuously changing national and international conditions. In this context a recent resolution passed by the Central Committee of the

Party for a public debate says:

“A Party, which may be proletarian revolutionary, and a state, that may be democratic or socialist, at a particular time, place and condition, may turn counter-revolutionary at another time, place and condition. It is obvious that the synthesis of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, namely the masses and the revolutionaries should rebel in such a situation, is fully correct in its place. However, as if a particular Communist Party remains proletarian for ever once a New Democratic or Socialist state is established under the leadership of the Party, there is either no opportunity, or it is not prepared, or it is prohibited, for the masses to have a free democratic or socialist competition against it. As a result, since the ruling Party is not required to have a political competition with others amidst the masses, it gradually turns into a mechanistic bureaucratic Party with special privileges and the state under its leadership, too, turns into mechanistic and bureaucratic machinery. Similarly, the masses become a victim of formal democracy and gradually their limitless energy of creativity and dynamism gets sapped. This danger has been clearly observed in history. To solve this problem, the process of control, supervision and intervention of the masses over the state should be stressed to be organized in a lively and scientific manner, according to the principle of continuous revolution. Once again the question here is to dialectically organize scientific reality that the efficacy of dictatorship against the enemy is dependent upon the efficacy of exercising democracy among the people.

“ For this, a situation must be created to ensure continuous proletarianization and revolutionization of the Communist Party by organizing political competition within the constitutional limits of the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist democratic state. Only by institutionalizing the rights of the masses to install an alternative revolutionary Party or leadership of the state if the Party fails to continuously revolutionize itself the counter-revolution can be effectively checked. Among different anti-feudal and anti-imperialist political parties, organizations and institutions, which accept the constitutional provisions of the democratic state, their mutual relations should not be confined to that of a mechanistic relation of cooperation with the Communist Party but should be stressed to have dialectical relations of democratic political competition in the service of the people. It should be obvious that if anybody in this process transgresses the limits legally set by the democratic state, he would be subjected to democratic dictatorship. ” [CPN (Maoist) 2004:148-49]

Certainly the questions raised in the above resolution regarding the development of democracy will have far reaching significance not only in our own national context but also in the international arena. Thus, only by correctly grasping this we may be able to build a new type of state in the coming days.

2. Important Questions on Building a New Type of State

In the light of the above historical experiences and the new necessities of the ever-changing space and time, it would be worthwhile to analyze the important questions on building a new type of state.

A. The Question of Smashing the Old State

One basic precondition for building a new type of state is the complete smashing of the old state. The more completely and deeply the old state is smashed, the better would be the probability of building a more stable and complete new state. This is the objective law verified by historical experience and facts. The main reason for this is the mutually exclusive rationale and basis of the ‘old’ and ‘new’ state. The fundamental characteristics of the old state as manifested in the primitive class state power to the highly developed bourgeois republic is the use of force or exercise of dictatorship over the majority of laboring classes in society on behalf of the minority exploiting

classes. As antithetical to this, the characteristic feature of the new type of proletarian (or people's democratic, or socialist) state is the use of force or exercise of dictatorship over the minority parasitic classes on behalf of the majority laboring classes. Because of this polar opposite characteristics of the two types of state, it is just impossible to transform the old state into the new one in toto or with general reforms. Particularly in the context of the modern bourgeois republic with a huge standing army and bureaucracy, which is linked with every nook and corner of society with innumerable fibers, it is just unthinkable to build a new state without first completely smashing the old one.

This is the reason why the propounders of scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, have always forcefully hammered on the question of smashing the old state. While showering praises on the Paris Commune, they had said:

"One thing especially was proved by the Commune, viz., that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes." (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984:115)

Furthermore, in his letter to Kugelmann on April 12, 1871, i.e. just at the time of the Paris Commune, Marx had written:

"If you look up the last chapter of my Eighteenth Brumaire, you will find that I declare that the next attempt of the French revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but to smash it [Marx's italics], and this is the precondition for every real people's revolution on the continent. And this is what our heroic Party comrades in Paris are attempting."

This was prominently quoted and highlighted by Lenin in his pioneering work *State and Revolution*. (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984:215)

The principal rationale and basis of the strategy of protracted PW advanced by Mao is also the revolutionary tactics of smashing the old state power part by part from below and concurrently building the new state power in the predominantly rural and agrarian semi-feudal and semi-colonial countries. In this sense there is an inalienable and interdependent dialectical relation between the destruction of the old and construction of the new. If we intently analyze the experiences of revolution and building of new state in Russia, China and elsewhere, it can be seen that where there has been destruction of the old with greater intensity there has been construction of the new with reciprocal stability. In Russia, as the revolution had started from the cities and the impact of revolution in the rural areas had reached in lesser degree and late, there was greater difficulty in building the new revolutionary state in the latter. This historical fact was even acknowledged by Lenin. It is also seen that the new state changes its color more easily and swiftly if we have to induct more officials and technicians from the old state after the revolution. This is the reason why Marx had stated that the workers had to pass through the experiences of intense civil war of fifteen, twenty or fifty years so as to be capable of running the new state.

Certainly some organs of the old state like financial institutions, postal system, communications, transportation etc. can be adapted to the new state. But they are not the principle organs of the state. Standing army, bureaucracy, judiciary etc. are the principle and decisive organs of the state, which have to be mandatorily smashed to build the new state. Along with this the ideological and cultural organs of the old state need to be systematically dismantled to lay the ideological and cultural foundation of the new state. In this context all genuine proletarian revolutionaries should firmly grasp that to reject all revisionist and reformist illusions of 'peaceful transition' from the old state to the new one is not just a question of tactical expediency but a question of strategic and

theoretical importance.

B. The Question of Class Dictatorship and Proletarian Leadership

The most important and fundamental question in the context of building a new type of state is the question of class dictatorship and proletarian leadership. Because, the 'state' in its literal sense and essence is the means of forcibly exercising the will or dictatorship of one class over the other and without the leadership of the last class in history, which has 'nothing to lose but its chains', i.e. the proletariat, no state can be 'new' in its real sense. In essence, by 'new' here it is meant to be the new means, which would negate itself like the proletarian class.

The word 'dictatorship' has been in dispute since the beginning and it is for the use of this word that the bourgeoisie still castigates the communists the most severely. Shaken by such castigation the revisionist 'communists' of the world, including those in Nepal, have sought to discard this word of 'dictatorship of the proletariat' from their policies and programmes and vainly attempted to appease the reactionaries. But, just as the sun does not stop shining even if someone closes his eyes, so the inherent character of class dictatorship of any state does not change even if someone stops using the word 'dictatorship' about it. The only question to be chosen is: the dictatorship of which class? If it is not the dictatorship of the proletariat, or the 'peoples democratic dictatorship' in a multi-class society like ours, then it is the 'dictatorship of the bourgeoisie', or 'feudal-bureaucratic bourgeoisie dictatorship', or any other single or multiple class dictatorship. There is no such thing as the 'free people's state' as claimed by the anarchists of Marx and Engels time, or the 'state of the whole people' as parroted by the Khrushchovite revisionists of the later period.

Stressing on this very issue Engels had written in his famous letter to August Bebel in 1875:

"As, therefore, the state is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, to hold down one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a free people's state: so long as the proletariat still uses the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist." (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984:120)

As an exception in special situations of two struggling classes being in the position of a stalemate, Marx and Engels have talked of the state temporarily assuming a non-class and neutral status and have put forward the examples of the initial stages of the rules of Napoleon Bonaparte (1798-1815) and Louis Bonaparte (1848-1871) in France. (See, Marx 1871 and Engels 1884). However, there should not be any iota of doubt among the revolutionaries that these exceptional conditions are temporary and that the historical rule is for the state to ultimately assume the form of dictatorship of one or the other class.

Hence, while building a new state the revolutionaries should first of all determine with utmost gravity and clarity which class dictatorship it is and against which class this dictatorship is applied. In a semi-feudal and semi-colonial multi-class society like ours, it should be firmly grasped that at the initial stage the new state would be a joint democratic dictatorship of all anti-feudal and anti-imperialist classes, or all the progressive classes from the proletariat through the peasantry to the national bourgeoisie except the feudal and comprador and bureaucratic bourgeoisie. After the completion of the bourgeoisie democratic revolution and transition to socialism the state's character would be the dictatorship of the proletariat and all types of dictatorship would wither away only in communism.

In this context the proletarian revolutionaries should be clear of one general misconception that the 'dictatorship' to be applied against the reactionary classes and the rule of law or 'democratic

centralism' to be practiced among the non-antagonistic classes and the general masses are not one and same thing. Dictatorship is the means of eliminating the enemy classes through use of force and suppression, which is carried out primarily through the armed force, jails, etc. On the contrary, the method of non-antagonistic struggle and punishment used among the ranks of the non-antagonistic classes and masses so as to transform them is 'democratic centralism'. Elucidating this point Mao says:

"Dictatorship does not apply within the ranks of the people. The people cannot exercise dictatorship over themselves, nor must one section of the people oppress another. Law-breakers among the people will be punished according to law, but this is different in principle from the exercise of dictatorship to suppress enemies of the people. What applies among the people is democratic centralism." (Mao 1957:387)

The method or process of applying dictatorship over the reactionary classes also needs to be developed with the demands of the time. The Italian Marxist thinker Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) had put forward the concept that the reactionary ruling classes maintain their dictatorship ('hegemony' in his word) by organizing a form of 'consent' among the people through cultural and ideological means apart from the use of the armed force (see Gramsci 1971), and this had created quite a debate in the international communist movement. This is, however, not an entirely new thing but a supplementary means of psychological use of force to aid the principal and ultimate use of physical force, and is in essence a dictatorship. Nevertheless, in view of the increased role of propaganda war with the advance of information technology in recent years, the new type of state should pay more attention to use the cultural and ideological weapons to maintain its dictatorship.

Whereas the bourgeoisie has been very craftily practicing its dictatorship under a parliamentary 'democratic' cover and in the name of the 'whole people', there has been a long debate in the international communist movement about the form of proletarian dictatorship and the practical method of assuming proletarian leadership over the state. In view of the serious setbacks received by the models of proletarian dictatorship practiced in Russia, China and elsewhere in the twentieth century, the present day revolutionaries should draw appropriate lessons from these experiences and dare experiment and develop new models. After the experiences of the Paris Commune and the Russian Soviets a general understanding was developed that the proletariat should exercise its leadership through the Communist Party organized as its vanguard and the dictatorship should be applied through the Soviets or People's Councils modeled after the Paris Commune. Giving a concrete expression to this, Lenin in 1920 had said:

"...the dictatorship is exercised by the proletariat organized in the Soviets; the proletariat is guided by the Communist Party....." (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984:473)

Similarly, Mao had formulated the method of people's democratic dictatorship and proletarian leadership this way:

"...People's democratic dictatorship under the leadership of the proletariat (through the Communist Party) and based on workers and peasants unity". (Mao 1948)

After the October Revolution Lenin had time and again stressed that dictatorship of the proletariat should be applied through the Soviets. However, his expression while addressing the Third Congress of the Comintern in 1921 that 'the dictatorship of the proletariat would not work except through the Communist Party' was later taken mechanistically rather than in a general sense. As a result grave errors were committed everywhere to virtually erase all differences between a Communist Party and a socialist state. The present day revolutionaries should definitely dare correct them. In the light of the bitter experiences of gradual erosion of the distinction between the Party and representative

institutions, the gradual conversion of the Communist Party itself into a bureaucratic bourgeois Party and the Party's claim of the leadership of the state as a monopoly, we should develop a correct and new method to apply class dictatorship and to exercise proletarian leadership over the state. We should firmly grasp that the dictatorship is not that of a Party or a person but that of the class, and the proletarian leadership is not to be claimed as a monopoly but is to be won over through revolutionary practice and to be applied democratically. We must end at the earliest such paradoxical situation that the bourgeois dictatorship with a reactionary essence has been able to mislead the masses by presenting itself in an attractive form but the people's democratic or proletarian dictatorship with a revolutionary content has had an ugly external form and been discarded by the masses. For this, first of all, it should be established in practice that the Communist Party does not receive the leadership right as a 'monopoly' but gets it because of its proletarian revolutionary character, and an institutional mechanism should be ensured for the class and the masses to reject and abandon a Party that has lost its proletarian character. Similarly, it should be firmly grasped and implemented in practice that the dictatorship of the proletariat is not the dictatorship of the Party or its higher leadership but a class dictatorship applied through the elected representative organs (i.e. the Soviets or the People's Council) of the masses. Even though the 'content' of the dictatorship is principal, the dialectical principle that if the 'form' is not correct it will ultimately hamper upon the 'content' should be correctly grasped and implemented. The future of building a new type of state principally rests on this cardinal question.

C. The Question of Democracy

The main essence of the new type of state is dictatorship over the reactionary classes and democracy for the majority of the progressive and patriotic masses. Hence there is a complex dialectical interrelation between applying dictatorship over one particular section of society and availing democracy to the other section. Only in the process of articulating this interrelation that it is possible to build a new type of state. If one attempts to divorce democracy and dictatorship from each other or to merge the both into one, then there occur serious problems and accidents. This has been proved by the bitter experiences of building new type of state in the past century.

Democracy and dictatorship are two sides of the same coin. In a class divided society democracy for one class is dictatorship against another class and dictatorship over one class is a democracy for another class. Hence in the new proletarian state to apply dictatorship over the handful of exploiting classes is to provide democracy for the overwhelming masses, and to expand the scope of democracy for the masses is to tighten the noose of dictatorship over the reactionary classes. In this sense democracy is also a form of state and as soon as the dictatorship of the proletariat becomes unnecessary democracy, too, becomes unnecessary or withers away.

Hence the revolutionaries should be freed of the hypocritical illusion of absolute democracy or 'democracy for all' as spread by the bourgeois. The bourgeois democracy, or formal democracy, is a concept born out of the struggle against absolute monarchy. Though it has a progressive character and role in a particular historical context, in another historical context it becomes retrograde and it is imperative for proletarian democracy to replace bourgeois democracy; and proletarian democracy itself will be negated in yet another historical condition. This may be made clearer from Lenin's statement:

"The dialectics (course) of the developments as follows: from absolutism to bourgeois democracy; from bourgeois to proletarian democracy; from proletarian democracy to none." (Lenin 1958:42)

In the context of building a new type of state our main concern is how to make proletarian democracy, or in our semi-feudal and semi-colonial context the people's democracy, more lively, dynamic and extensive. That means, once again, to mobilize the masses to the utmost for applying

all-round dictatorship over the reactionary classes, on the one hand, and to correctly handle the contradictions among the people, on the other. As democracy is not an end in itself but merely a means to attain a specific goal, to think otherwise while talking of democracy in the present context would not only be wrong but also harmful. Hence our foremost democratic task should be to mobilize the masses to the maximum extent possible for exercising people's democratic dictatorship over the pro-feudal and pro-imperialist elements in all the political, military, economic & cultural organs of the state. Similarly, our next important democratic task should be to solve the contradictions among different strata of the people by means of democratic centralism without any physical application of force and through ideological struggles and legal remedies. In the past, principal subjective factor for counter-revolution in the socialist and people's democratic states was the failure to constantly mobilize the broad masses for exercising dictatorship over the enemies and for practising democratic centralism among the people and the lacunae in the organization so that the masses could rebel when the need be. It is imperative for us to acknowledge this and to practice proletarian democracy in a new way from the very beginning.

Another important task is to find an appropriate method and institutional process for practicing democracy with these clear objectives. As in the hypocritical formal democracy of the bourgeoisie, we cannot confine the proletarian or people's democracy to formalism by fixing certain formulae. Nevertheless, in the light of the experiences of the Paris Commune through the Russian Soviet to the Chinese GPCR, we can generalize and institutionalize certain methods of proletarian democracy and must dare adopt additional methods and principles going beyond them according to the new needs of the twenty-first century.

In this context as the model of direct democracy practiced in the Paris Commune is worth emulating even today, it would be useful to quote Marx's description of it as below:

" The Commune was formed of the municipal councilors, chosen by universal suffrage in the various wards of the town, responsible and revocable at short terms. The majority of its members was naturally working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class. The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive & legislative at the same time....the police was at once stripped of its political attributes, and turned into the responsible and at all times revocable agent of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the Administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, the public service had to be done at workmen's wages....

"Having once got rid of the standing army and the police, the physical force elements of the old Government, the Commune was anxious to break the spiritual force of repression....The priests were sent back to the recesses of private life, there to feed upon the alms of the faithful in imitation of their predecessors, the Apostles. The whole of the educational institutions were opened to the people gratuitously, and at the same time cleared of all interference of church and state. Thus, not only was education made accessible to all, but science itself freed from the fetters which class prejudice and governmental force had imposed upon it.

" The judicial functionaries were to be divested of that sham independence which had but served to mask their abject subservience to all succeeding governments to which, in turn, they had taken, and broken, the oaths of allegiance. Like the rest of public servants, magistrates and judges were to be elective, responsible, and revocable.

"...the Commune was to be the political form of even the smallest country hamlet, and that in the rural districts the standing army was to be replaced by a national militia, with an extremely short term of service." (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984:75-76)

Similarly, as practiced during the GPCR, such methods like guaranteeing the freedom of expression,

press, strike etc. for the masses, public criticism of and mass action against persons in high authority of Party and state, etc. should be institutionalized. Also, drawing correct lessons from the bitter experiences of failure of the masses to stage organized rebellion against counter-revolution in the past, we should ensure a system in the new context whereby political parties may be allowed to get organized keeping within definite progressive and revolutionary constitutional limits and they may be encouraged to function not only in a 'cooperative' manner but in a 'competitive' spirit vis-à-vis the formal Communist Party. There can be no objective and logical reason for the Communist Party claiming itself to be the representative of the majority proletarian and oppressed classes to hesitate to enter into political competition within a definite constitutional framework, once the economic monopoly of the feudal and bourgeois classes over land and capital and military monopoly over the mercenary professional army, which are the sources of their political hegemony, are thoroughly smashed. One should earnestly acknowledge that this is not an advocacy of bourgeois pluralism but is a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist method to objectively solve contradictions among the people as long as the class division in society exists. Though it could not be practiced for various reasons in the past, the fact that Mao himself was contemplating in that direction can be deduced from his following statement:

"Which is better, to have just party or several? As we see it now, it's perhaps better to have several parties. This has been true in the past and may well be so for the future; it means long-term coexistence and mutual supervision." (Mao 1956: 296)

Whatever it may be, we should be prudent and daring enough to develop proletarian democracy or people's democracy as per the new needs of the twenty-first century. This is the rationale of the new decision of our Party, under the leadership of Chairman Com. Prachanda, in relation to the development of democracy. Moreover, keeping into consideration our specific situation of existence of autocratic monarchy and non-completion of even a bourgeois republic, we should not rule out the possibilities of having to pass through various mixed and transitional forms of democracy in the process of marching from autocratic monarchy through bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy.

D. The Question of Armed Force

Armed force or the army is the backbone of every state in history. To conceive of a state without an armed force is like dreaming of a sun without any light. In that sense, the principal organ of the new type of state would surely be the armed force. The same is the implication of Marx's observation: "The first condition of the dictatorship of the proletariat is the existence of a proletarian army" (Seventh Anniversary of the International). In what sense and to what extent such an army would be 'new' would ultimately determine how much 'new' the state would be.

The professional standing army of the old state, generally rising from the period of absolute monarchy, has now become the largest and the most lethally equipped standing army in history under the modern bourgeois republic. As it fights for the minority exploiting classes and against the majority oppressed classes and is cut off from the masses and productive labour and thus reduced into a mercenary army, the inherent character of the reactionary standing army is utterly brutal, anti-people and counter-revolutionary. That is why the pioneers of proletarian revolution and state have always stressed on smashing the old standing army and on arming the masses to defend the new proletarian state.

While eulogizing the Paris Commune, Marx had said:

"The first decree of the Commune...was the suppression of the standing army, and the substitution for it of the armed people." (Marx-Engels-Lenin 1984: 75)

Similarly, in the decree on the formation of the Red Army issued by the Council of People's Commissars led by Lenin on January 12, 1918, i.e. immediately after the October Revolution, it was said:

"The old army served as the instrument for all class oppression of the toilers by the bourgeois. With the transfer of power to the toiling and exploited classes, the necessity has arisen of creating a new army which would at present serve as the bulwark of Soviet power and which would in the near future provide the basis for replacing the regular army by the armed people, and give support to the impending socialist revolution in Europe." (Quoted in Trotsky 1969: 45)

However, due to different factors as cited earlier, the Red Army in Russia could not fulfill the dream of the Bolsheviks that it "would in the near future provide the basis for replacing the regular army by the armed people". On the contrary, in course of time the Red Army itself got converted into a large professional army and ultimately it became an instrument of counter-revolution. Similarly, the Chinese Red Army, steeled in the twenty-two years long vicious PW, too, gradually changed its colour as a standing army after the revolution and ultimately served as a weapon of counter-revolution. On the basis of these bitter experiences and guided by the scientific ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism on the question of army and state we should strive to build a new type of army as a defender of the proletarian state and medium of continuous revolution, which would be equipped with revolutionary ideology and politics, intimately linked with the general masses and capable of organizing rebellion of the armed masses against counter-revolution.

In this context we should be serious to implement the following resolution recently adopted by the Central Committee of our Party:

"....it should be guaranteed that the people's army of the 21st century is not marked by modernization with special arms and training confined to a barrack after the capture of state power but remains a torch-bearer of revolution engaged in militarization of the masses and in the service of the masses. It is only by developing armed masses from both ideological and physical point of view that one can resist foreign intervention and counter-intervention; this fact must be made clear before the armed forces right from the beginning. The main thrust of work for the 21st century people's army should be to complete the historical responsibility of developing conscious armed masses so that they may learn to use their right to rebel." [CPN (Maoist) 2004:147]

E. The Question of United Front

Another important aspect of building a new type of state is the correct handling of united front policy. In the real world there are several other classes in between the feudal/bourgeois and the proletariat, and in the particular semi-feudal and semi-colonial context like ours there are national, regional gender and other forms of oppressions apart from the class one. Hence, during the transition period the proletariat that has to bear the historical responsibility of providing the leadership for liberation of all the exploited and oppressed sections should be able to practice a correct united front policy and make the state a joint dictatorship of all of them. The question of united front is in essence the question of correct practice of democracy and dictatorship.

In this context, we should correctly grasp that one of the major reasons for the defeat of the historic Paris Commune was the inability of the Paris workers to materialize a timely united front with the rural peasants and one of the principal problems of socialist construction in Russia was the inability to correctly handle the contradictions among the rural peasants. Particularly in a semi-feudal context like ours, one of the principle basis of building a new type of state would be the correct united front policy with the various strata of the peasants. The revolutionaries should acknowledge this with deep seriousness.

Similarly, another big problem encountered while building a proletarian state in the past was related to correctly handling the question of liberation of oppressed nationalities. In the light of all those historical experiences, we should firmly grasp that the best way to solve the national question is to implement the right to self-determination of oppressed nationalities under the leadership of the proletariat according to the concrete time, place and conditions. The new state should strive to correctly handle the national question in the spirit of the following analysis of Lenin:

"In the same way as mankind can arrive at the abolition of classes only through a transition period of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, it can arrive at the inevitable integration of nations only through a transition period of the complete emancipation of all oppressed nations, i.e., their freedom to secede." (Lenin 1916:160)

The question of liberation of women, occupying half the heavens but subjected to patriarchal oppression for ages, is another important task before the new state. This is the main essence of Lenin's exhortation that 'the subject most starkly demarcating bourgeois democracy and socialism is the status of women in them'. Hence the specific task of a new proletarian state should be to guarantee special rights to women for a definite period and to ensure them equal rights and status as the men in all spheres.

Similarly, in the specificities of South Asia, the new state should scientifically solve the question of liberation of dalits, who are treated as untouchables according to the Hindu varna (caste) system, and other minority communities oppressed by the old state in different forms.

In sum, the real essence and challenge of the new state is to solve the non-antagonistic contradictions among all the oppressed classes, nationalities, regions and gender not through the method of 'dictatorship' but through that of 'democratic centralism' and to organize a joint dictatorship of all of them against the reactionary classes.

F. The Question of Construction of Economic Base

There is dialectical interrelation between economic base and political superstructure of society. Whereas initially the economic base gives rise to political superstructure, later on the continuous intervention of the superstructure makes impact on the economic base. Hence, for moving forward towards communism after building a new type of proletarian (i.e. people's democratic or socialist) state, it is imperative to build a corresponding economic base.

In fact the initial basis for the origin of the state and the principal basis of life of the class state so far has been the anarchy of social production. This is what he meant when Engels said:

"In proportion as anarchy in social production vanishes, the political authority of the state dies out." (Engels 1880:151)

Thus the quintessential task of the new type of proletarian state is to end the anarchy of production inherent in the feudal, petty bourgeois, bureaucratic bourgeois, etc. economic systems and to construct large scale planned, balanced, organized and controlled socialist economic system.

Moreover, without the development of labour productivity to definite higher levels, the material base for socialism and communism cannot be prepared. For, without sufficient production in society that enables distribution to all "according to necessity", one cannot materially conceive of classless and stateless communism. Hence the new proletarian state should prepare the economic base for socialism and communism by increasing the capacity of labour through rapid expansion of education and culture and by increasing productivity through maximum utilization of science and technology and organization of large-scale production.

However in the past, particularly in Russia during the period of Stalin, a mechanical and metaphysical conception that the development of productive forces by itself would usher in socialism and communism was prevalent and a wrong outlook prevailed that equated state ownership with 'socialism'. These, of course, were proved wrong by the later developments. The development of the productive forces and state ownership are necessary preconditions for socialism, but they themselves are not adequate and complete. More important than this are the socialist labour relations of production and socialist transformation of all the organs of the superstructure including the state and the development of socialist consciousness of the masses. Drawing lessons from these bitter experiences, Mao's China, particularly during the GPCR, had developed a new system of socialist economic construction based on the principle of 'grasp revolution, promote production', which the present day revolutionaries should emulate and strive to develop further according to the changed circumstances. One should constantly keep in mind that the economic base for socialism and communism can be prepared only by resolving the long-standing contradictions between advanced productive forces and backward production relations, between physical labour and mental labour, between rural and urban areas, between agriculture and industry, between economic production and defense production, etc., through conscious and planned struggles.

In a most backward and primarily agrarian and rural semi-feudal and semi-colonial economic context like ours, the path of economic construction from people's democracy to socialism would be all the more protracted, arduous and complex. Hence we should strive to transform the backward agrarian economy into an advanced industrial economy through cooperativization, collectivization and socialization and to lay the foundation of socialism and communism by constantly placing the revolutionary politics in command and by arousing the initiative of the masses. Only on such a material base that the new type of state can be built and can it march forward.

G. The Question of International Relations

In the present era of imperialism, due to the inherent unequal and uneven nature of development of capitalism, there is the need and possibility of bringing about proletarian (i.e. people's democratic or socialist) revolution even in one particular country of the world. However, as the whole world is increasingly tied into the economic, political, military, cultural stranglehold of imperialism, international relation would be a very complex and significant dimension in building a proletarian state in one country alone.

The following analysis of Lenin about the international relation of proletarian state in such a huge country like Russia after a year of the October Revolution may be equally or even more relevant in our present context:

"...From the very beginning of the October Revolution, foreign policy and international relations have been the main question facing us. Not merely because from now all the states in the world are being firmly linked by imperialism into a single system, or rather, into one dirty, bloody mass, but because the complete victory of the socialist revolution in one country alone is inconceivable and demands the most active co-operation of at least several advanced countries...." (Lenin 1986: 117)

In the past century, even though the more than a dozen of the socialist or people's democratic states in the world perished mainly due to their own internal causes, there can be no doubt that world imperialist sabotage and interventions played an important secondary role in their downfall. Hence it is imperative for the new type of proletarian state to be built now to follow a policy of marching ahead while resisting against imperialism/ expansionism/hegemonism from the very beginning. For this, it is necessary, on the one hand, to unite with all proletarian forces of the world on the basis of proletarian internationalism, strategically, and on the other, to maintain diplomatic relations with all the countries on the basis of the policy of peaceful coexistence with different state systems and to

attempt to derive maximum advantage out of inter-imperialist contradictions, tactically.

Within this general policy and in the specific geo-political context of Nepal, we should strive to maintain diplomatic relations with the two immediate big neighbours on the basis of non-alignment and mutual benefits and to march forward to establish South Asian Soviet Federation after completing revolution in whole of South Asia as envisioned by our Party's Second National Conference held in 2001.

H. The Question of Continuous Revolution and Withering Away of the State

The main reason why the proletarian state or the dictatorship of the proletariat was termed 'no longer a state in the proper sense of the word' by Marx and Engels is that it is not a medium of preserving or defending class contradiction as in traditional class society but is a medium of transition from class society to classless society and the object of withering away of itself in the process. Thus the main essence or particularity of the new type of state is, firstly, that it is the means of continuous revolution against the residual and newly emerging classes, and secondly, that it withers away in the process. This is not separate but a single interrelated process.

Furthermore, what ought to be correctly grasped is that 'withering away' does not mean physical liquidation of the state, but, as Engels has said, a transformation from the means of 'government of persons' into means of 'administration of things'. For, with the end of class contradiction in communism only the 'political' role of the state as a 'special coercive force' is over, but the mechanism of voluntary organization to manage the essential goods and services in society remains intact.

However, it is a bitter truth that in the past the proletarian state powers instead of serving the masses and acting as instruments of continuous revolution turned into masters of the people and instruments of counter-revolution, and rather than moving in the direction of withering away transformed into huge totalitarian bureaucracies and instruments of repression. The present day revolutionaries should draw appropriate lessons from this and should strive to lay proper foundation for the new type of state from the very beginning.

In this context the first thing the new state power should acknowledge and practice from the very inception, as Lenin initially propounded and Mao subsequently raised to a new height, is the concept of GPCR or continuous revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. As the defeated reactionary class can again raise its head in a new form and the material condition of the state power itself can give rise to a new bureaucratic capitalist class from within the revolutionary camp, we should institutionalize a mechanism of continuous struggle with the participation of the wider masses under the leadership of the proletariat in every sphere of the state and the superstructure. In other words, advancing from the GPCR in China we should look for new methods to exercise all round dictatorship over the old and the new reactionary classes and to continue this process till all classes are abolished in society.

Secondly, to transfer the state power that had become master of the people in the past into servant of the people and to lead it towards ultimate withering away, methods of ensuring participation of the wider masses in the state or expanding greater democracy in society should be institutionalized. In this context it may be worthwhile to keep in mind the following statement of Lenin:

" From the moment all members of society, or at least the vast majority, have learned to administer the state themselves, have taken this work into their own hands, have organized control over the insignificant capitalist minority, over the gentry who wish to preserve their capitalist habits and over the workers who have been thoroughly corrupted by capitalism-from this moment the need for

government of any kind begins to disappear altogether. The more complete the democracy, the nearer the moment when it becomes unnecessary. The more democratic the “state” which consists of the armed workers, and which is “no longer a state in the proper sense of the word”, the more rapidly every form of state begins to wither away.” (Lenin 1917d: 334-5)

Thus, continuous revolution against the residual ‘pugmarks of the old state’ and newly emerging classes and participation of the wider masses in such a continuous revolution is the method of withering away of the state initially hammered by Marx and Engels and later developed by Lenin and Mao. Withering away is, therefore, neither the abolition of the state immediately after the revolution as contended by the anarchists, nor is it first developing in a bureaucratic form like the old state of the bourgeoisie and then miraculously collapsing some day in the distant future as claimed by the revisionists, or more particularly by the dogmato-revisionists. Withering away means cessation of only the ‘political’ function of the state as an instrument of coercion, and it begins on the very day of consummation of the revolution but gets completed only with the total victory over the residual and newly emerging classes through continuous revolution and with the ultimate submersion of the state in the sea of the masses. The new proletarian (including the people’s democratic) state should correctly grasp and implement this, and only in that sense would this state be different or ‘new’ from the old one.

3. Conclusion

Despite the contrary propaganda of the imperialists, the 21st century will once again go through a vicious class struggle or war for the state power. Our great PW is part of the same worldwide process. Hence it is imperative for all to focus their attention on the question of state power, which is the central question in every revolution. Every state is in essence an instrument of dictatorship over certain classes and that of democracy for some others. In this sense dictatorship and democracy remain as two sides of the same coin in every state, and it is just ridiculous to talk of a state with either only dictatorship or only democracy. But it is a great paradox of history that whereas the proletarian state with an essence of dictatorship over the limited exploiting classes and that of democracy for a majority of exploited classes has been denounced as ‘dictatorial’, the bourgeois democracy with an essence of democracy for a handful of exploiting classes and that of dictatorship over the majority of working classes is hailed as an ideal model of universal and eternal democracy. Apart from the class bias and disinformation campaign of the imperialists certain grave short comings in the practice of the proletarian state in the past, (for example, practical cessation of differences between the Party and the state, gradual inaction and demise of the people’s representative institutions, development and expansion of the standing army in place of arming the masses, virtual emasculation of the electoral system and freedom of speech and press, use of state force to solve contradictions within the Party and among the people, lack of people’s participation, supervision and intervention in the state affairs and development of totalitarian tendencies, etc.) are also responsible for this. In this background, we should dare develop the model of a new type of proletarian state with the ideological guidance of MLM and Prachanda Path and keeping in mind the experiences of revolutions from the Paris Commune through the Russian Soviet and the Chinese GPCR to our present revolution.

In this context it is imperative to keep in mind what Lenin has said:

“ The transition from capitalism to communism is certainly bound to yield a tremendous abundance and variety of political forms, but the essence will inevitably be the same: the dictatorship of the proletariat” (Lenin 1917d: 286) (emphasis added).

In other words, the essence of the transitional revolutionary state to be built after smashing the old reactionary class state would be dictatorship of the proletariat or democratic dictatorship of the oppressed people. But the political forms of such transitional revolutionary dictatorship can be varied in keeping with different time and places, and we should exercise our revolutionary creativity in practicing and developing such forms. Particularly in the light of the historical experiences of easy degeneration of the past proletarian states into totalitarian bureaucratic capitalist states, we should strive to find newer forms of the 'transitional' state, which is said to be "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word".

In the transitional period of a backward society like Nepal, where the transition has to take place from semi-feudal autocracy through bourgeois democracy to communism, there would be naturally more diversities and complexities. However, if we succeed to exercise continuous dictatorship over the handful of reactionaries with active participation of the masses by forging a united front of different sections subjected to class, national, regional, caste and gender oppressions under the leadership of a correct proletarian Party, we shall definitely attain the goal of classless and exploitationless society. The main thing is the correct proletarian outlook of the leadership and the question of ensuring continuous and active participation of the masses in the state affairs. This is the rationale behind our Party's recent attempt to raise the question of democracy from a new perspective. The proletarian revolutionaries should firmly grasp that the question of democracy and new type of state are inseparably interlinked, and they should initiate the process of withering away of the state by submerging the state in the sea of the great democracy of the masses, as Lenin had said: "The more democratic the 'state'... the more rapidly every form of state begins to wither away." In this context, we should defeat the anarchist tendency that denies the very necessity of a transitional state, the Right revisionist tendency that gets swayed by the formal democracy of the bourgeoisie and abandons dictatorship of the proletariat, and the dogmato-revisionist tendency that vulgarizes the proletarian (or people's democratic) dictatorship into a totalitarian bureaucratic capitalist dictatorship, and must-strive to establish the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist-Maoist thought that leads to a classless and stateless communism through continuous revolution and withering away of the state by exercising great democracy under the dictatorship of the proletariat (or people's democratic dictatorship). In this eventuality no body can stop our great campaign to build a new type of proletarian state in the 21st century and march towards communism through continuous revolution and withering away of the state.

Baburam Bhattarai

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