

# **COMMUNIST MOVEMENT IN NEPAL, 1949 - 72**

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## C O N T E N T S

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ORIGIN AND HISTORY1.1 Origin:

In the history of Nepal, the Rana rulers (1846-1951) were noted for their despotic and tyrannical rule. They cruelly suppressed the aspirations of the people for socio-economic change in the society. For instance, Mr. Subha Krishan Lal was sentenced for 9 years because he wrote a book Makke Ko Khaiti (Cultivation of Maize) in which he mentioned that, in<sup>1</sup> Nepal, people did not get even a square meal a day.

However, the Rana autocracy began to face a challenge with the advent of the 20th century. The socio-political changes which were taking place in its neighbourhood had their impact on Nepal. India was resurgent with the national movement and it influenced the Nepalese students studying at various universities in India. The Nepalese people also launched a religious and social reform movement, for example, the<sup>2</sup> Arya Samaj movement.

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1. For details see, K.P. Shrivastava, Nepal Ki Kahani (Story of Nepal) (Delhi : Atma Ram & Sons, 1955), pp. 107-110.
  2. Bhuvan Lal Joshi and Leo E. Rose, Democratic Innovation in Nepal: A study in Political Acculturation of Nepal (California, 1966), pp. 51-2.

These reform movements gradually turned into a political movement against the Ranas. The 'Gorkha League' emerged in this process and periodicals like 'gorkha sansar' and 'Tarun Gorkha' were published. Thereafter, a secret political organisation named 'Nepal Praja Parishad' was formed in June 1936 in Nepal. Its objective was to overthrow the Rana Shahi and to establish a constitutional monarchy and a multi-<sup>3</sup> party system. The Praja Parishad-led movement was, however, brutally suppressed by the Ranas in 1940; but it only helped in strengthening the political consciousness of the Nepalese masses.

In the meantime, the process of industrialisation, though very slow, as well as urbanisation began. It gave rise to a small 'urban elite class'. Thus, for the first time in the history of Nepal another political force, apart from the one which represented feudal forces, emerged. It also began to oppose the Rana regime because of its various vested interests.<sup>4</sup>

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3. Ibid, pp. 52-65.

4. For details see R.S. Chauhan, Struggle and Change in South Asian Monarchies (New Delhi, 1977), pp. 52-3.

The victory of the Soviet Union in the Second World War, the rapidly growing strength of the Chinese Liberation War, and the liberation movements in Vietnam, Malaya and other colonial countries influenced the Nepalese revolutionaries.<sup>5</sup> The smuggling of Marxist literature into Nepal also inspired the Nepalese revolutionaries. They were highly influenced by the land reforms that took place in the Soviet Union.<sup>6</sup> On the other side, Nepalese youths were also influenced by the National movement of India. Many of them participated in the Quit India Movement.

The people's struggle against the Ranas gave birth to several small communist groups. The Nepal Prajatantrik Sangh formed in 1944, was one such group. The 'Vishwa Bhatari Sangh' (World Brotherhood Association), 'Samyawadi Sangh' (Communist Association), Marxist Study Forum, Progressive Study Circle<sup>7</sup> and other such groups also gained importance. In 1947, the Napali National Congress was formed and it was the first national political organisation. It also invited all Napalese political organisations to join a united struggle against the Ranas.<sup>8</sup>

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5. Bheem Raval, Nepal ma Samyawadi Andolan : Udbhav ra Vikas (Communist Movement in Nepal : Origin & Development) (Kathmandu, 1990) p.25
  6. R.S. Chauhan, "Political Parties in Nepal" in Haruluro Fukui; ed. Political Parties of Asia and the Pacific (Greenwood Press, 1985) p. 806.
  7. Raval, no. 5, pp. 17-18.
  8. Joshi & Rose, no. 2, p. 53.

The Nepali National Congress represented three trends, namely, feudal, liberal constitutional monarchist and communist.<sup>9</sup> The formation of the Nepali National Congress inspired the Nepalese revolutionaries to fight the Ranashahi. Man Mohan Adhikari secretly organised a 'Mazdoor Sangh' (Workers' Union) in 1947 at Biratnagar.

The workers of Jogbani-Biratnagar launched a big and historic agitation in March 1947. They pressed for the demands such as - better housing facilities, increase in wages, malaria control, medical facilities, reasonable hours of work, and hygienic conditions in the factories.<sup>10</sup> Very soon, the movement shifted its stress from simple economic demands to political demands. These were: (i) responsible government to the people, (ii) civil rights, and (iii) release of political prisoners. Subsequently in Kathmandu, on June 15, 1947, the students of the Teendhara (Three streams) school launched a movement. They demanded

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9. Mohan Dhvaj Gurung, Notes on the Communist Movement in Nepal (Varanasi, 1977), p.3
  10. Kusum Shrestha, Monarchy in Nepal : Tribhuvan Era (Bombay, 1984) p. 131.
  11. Khalak Prasad Suvedi, Nepali Vidyarthi Andolan Ko Adha Satavdi 1996-2086 (Half century of the student's Movement of Nepal (1940-1990) (Pokhara, Nepal, 1991) p. 6.



the introduction of geography, history, economics, political science and other such subjects in their courses.<sup>11</sup> The Nepali National Congress supported these agitations and appealed to entire people to support the movement.

The movement was crushed by the Rana regime and led to the arrest of B.P. Koirala, Man Mohan Adhikari and others. At that very time, the communist leaders alleged that the Nepalese Congress leaders were adopting a 'conciliatory' attitude towards the Ranas. The communist leaders therefore withdrew from the Congress to devote their time to a more serious study of Marxism and its application to the conditions of the Nepalese society.<sup>12</sup>

Pushpa Lal Shrestha (who earlier had been the Secretary of the Nepali National Congress), after quitting the Congress, translated the Communist Manifesto into Nepalese and got it published on 5th April 1949, with a long introduction dealing with the political situation within Nepal. In July of the same year, the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) was formed in Calcutta by five Marxists: Pushpa Lal, Durga Devi, Niranjana Govind Vaidya, Nar Bahadur and Narayan Vilash. Pushpa Lal became the party's first secretary.

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12. Chauhan, no. 6, p. 807

Nar Bahadur was sent to eastern Nepal, Niranjan Vaidya to Birganj, and Durga Devi and Narayan Vilash to Kathmandu to organise the prospective members and supporters of the party.

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Following their return to Calcutta, the first issue of the party organ, "Communist Pachhik Prachar Patra" (Communist Fortnightly Publicity Paper), was published. It was published on September 15, 1949, with the manifesto of the CPN and on the same day CPN's official birthday was celebrated. The CPN claimed:

It is the only party in Nepal which is thoroughly anti-feudal and anti-imperialist. Other parties seek adjustments or compromise with the ruling circle, but the CPN advocates an alternative programme. It is committed to building socialism and communism by completing the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist revolution, that is, the New Democratic Revolution by uniting with all the sections of social and political forces that can be united with in the struggle against the ruling class.

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The communist movement in Nepal, thus, began with the anti-Rana agitation, an agitation to bring about democracy and radical changes in the Nepalese society. It focussed on raising the consciousness of the toiling masses against the exploitation of the 'feudal' Rana regime and the 'opportunism' of the Nepali National Congress.

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14. Gurung, no. 5, p.8.

## 1.2 History

From its very inception, the Communist Party of Nepal started working with the peasantry by giving the slogan of agrarian revolution. Under the auspices of the CPN, a number of mass organisations emerged, including a trade union federation, Kisan Sangh (Peasants' Organisation), and the All Nepal Peace Committee.<sup>15</sup> It also attracted students, youth and intellectuals by demonstrating its opposition to 'Anglo-American imperialism' and the feudal oligarchy<sup>16</sup> of the Ranas.

However it was not able to operate openly in Nepal until the armed rebellion led by the Nepali Congress had overthrown the Rana regime and legalised the political activities. The CPN was not prepared to work in concert with the Nepali Congress at that time. The armed struggle launched by the Nepali Congress placed the CPN in a dilemma. The relations of the CPN with the Nepali Congress had not been cordial from the very beginning. The CPN did not participate in the armed struggle launched by the Nepali Congress against the Rana regime. However, it issued a statement supporting the armed struggle and predicted that it

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15. Rishikesh Shaha, Modern Nepal, vol.2 (New Delhi, 1990), p. 239.

16. Anirudha Gupta, Politics in Nepal (Allied Publishers: Bombay 1964) p. 199.

would result in some changes. It called upon the people, particularly the peasants, to arm themselves to confiscate the land of the landlords and distribute it among the peasantry. It also appealed for strengthening the people's revolutionary army.

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But before the struggle could gather momentum, King Tribhuvan managed to flee to India and requested the Nehru Government to intervene. The result was the "Delhi Agreement" of February 1951 under which (i) Tribhuvan returned to Nepal as the recognised Head of the State; (ii) an interim cabinet of Ranas and Nepali Congress was formed, pending election to the constitutional assembly; and (iii) legal sanction for political activities was given. The CPN criticised this agreement as the "betrayal" of the revolution by the Nepali Congress leaders. It also branded the Nepali Congress as the representatives of the "National Capitalist-bourgeoisie" and a tool of the "reactionary" Nehru government.

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17. Gurung, no. 9, p.10.

18. Gupta, no. 16, p. 201.

19. Ibid.

In the meantime, the CPN moved its headquarters from Calcutta to Kathmandu. When Nehru visited Nepal in June 1951, the Party, in collaboration with Tanka Prasad Acharya's Praja Parishad and some other socio-political organisations such as the Social Reform Federation, the All Nepal Peace Committee, the Trade Union Congress', Peasants', Students' and womens' organisations and the All Nepal Agricultural Reform Forum and even some elements of the pro-Rana Gorkha Dal organised a black flag demonstration. It called Nehru a 'tool' of 'Anglo-American imperialism' intent on reducing Nepal to the status of an Indian colony for the benefit of 'monopoly capitalism'.<sup>20</sup>

The CPN was profoundly influenced by the Chinese Communists' mass line and engaged in extensive political agitation and organisation among agricultural workers at Jhapa, Bara and Rauthat districts of eastern terai. Success in this even led the CPN towards the formation of the United Front in 1951, called "Jatiya Janatantrik Samyukta Morcha" (People's Democratic United Front). The United Front manifesto criticised the coalition government, headed by M.P. Koirala, as a

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20. Leo E. Rose "Communism under High Atmospheric Conditions: The Party in Nepal", in Robert A. Scalapino, (ed.), Communist Revolution in Asia: Tactics, Goals and Achievements (University of California, 1969), p. 365.

'stooge' of the Indian Government. It also criticised the expansionist policies of the imperialist powers like America and Britain and declared its preference for the Soviet and Chinese systems. The front succeeded in becoming a strong rival to the Nepali Congress and won support of the masses, especially of intellectuals. The ascending popularity of the United front, in which the CPN had a decisive say, on the one hand, and the declining popularity of the interim government on the other hand, contributed to the image of the CPN in the eyes of the people.

Keeping the favourable situation in mind, the CPN leaders held its First National Conference, with a view to expand the base of the party, in the last week of September, 1951 in Calcutta. The Conference emphasised armed struggle apart from other forms of struggle. "New Democracy" was adopted as a programme of action for the emancipation of Nepalese people. But before this programme could take any shape, the party was banned on 25 January 1952 on accusation by

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21. Parmanand, The Nepali Congress Since its Inception (Delhi, 1982), p. 105.
22. K. Dixit, "Communist Movement in Nepal", Frontier, 3(7), July 18, 1970, p. 10.
23. Chauhan, no. 6, pp. 808 and 818.
24. Raval, no. 5, p. 35.

the government for its 'complicity' in the abortive  
25  
revolt organised by Dr. K.I. Singh.

The ban on the CPN was lifted in 1956 on a written assurance given by the CPN that it would conduct its activities peacefully and constitutionally and accept the King as the constitutional head of the  
26  
State. Therefore, during 1952-56, the Party had to work underground and carry on with its activities by infiltrating into peasants' and other organisations such as "Jana Adhikar Suraksha Samiti" (Civil Liberties Defence Committee). Reflecting its renewed popularity and strength, the CPN won about 50 percent of the total votes and six seats in the Kathmandu municipal  
27  
elections of September 1953.

The CPN held its First Party Congress in January 1954, at Kathmandu, where a constitution was adopted, outlining the Party's organisational structure. It also approved a party programme which included three

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25. Asian Recorder, vol. 1, no. 68, 1956, p. 783.

26. Keesing's Contemporary Archives (Bristol), vol. 10, 1956, p. 17263.

27. Parmanand, no. 13, pp. 166-7.

controversial provisions: (i) continuous struggle against the 'feudalistic' royal regime; (ii) replacement of monarchy by a republican system framed by an elected constituent assembly; and (iii) confiscation of large and middle sized land holdings without compensation.

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Later on February 20, 1954, the Party's critical attitude towards the monarchy was expressed in a resolution passed by the Politburo, which declared that "the King, who represents the feudal landlord interests no less than the former ruling Ranas, has been opposed to any furtherance of the cause of democracy in the country".

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The new line, adopted at the first party Congress, caused differences within the CPN. Several CPN leaders began to change their views about the monarchy. Therefore, the second All-Party Conference was held in November 1955 to reconsider party questions. A new political resolution "Why the changes in the Party Programme ?" was adopted. The resolution favoured a more moderate policy toward the monarchy, over the strong opposition of the faction led by Pushpa Lal.

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28. Rose, no. 12, pp. 367-8.

29. Ibid, p. 368, see also Gupta, no.10, p. 203.

30. Ibid, p. 369.



The split in the Party leadership, particularly over the issue of monarchy, continued to plague the CPN. Even the Second Party Congress, held in 1957 at Kathmandu, could not resolve these differences and consequently led to the emergence of two factions, namely - "moderates" and "extremists".

At the end of the year 1957, the Communists, however, felt themselves strong enough to challenge the monarchy. They set up a short lived "Peoples' Republic" at Rauthat in the Tibetan border. They ran it for six months before the government troops could  
31  
scatter them.

Meanwhile, king Mahendra announced the holding of general elections in 1959. Despite some opposition among its members, the CPN participated in the elections. Though it fielded 47 candidates, only 4 communist candidates (from the constituencies of Lalitpur, Rauthat Central East, Rauthat North Dostia and Palpa East) could be elected in the 109 member  
32  
House of Representatives. The failure was attributed to the sectarian luke-warm attitude to the elections and also to the lack of funds.

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31. Hemen Ray, "Communism in Nepal". Contemporary Review, 212 (1224), January 1968, p. 51.

32. Nepal Election Commission, Results of the First General Elections to the Pratinidhi Sabha, Nepal (Kathmandu, 1959)pp. 1-46.

The disappointing results in the elections led to a growing criticism of the moderate leadership. Nevertheless the moderates managed to retain control of the party at the party plenum held at Janakpur. With regard to the methods and policies to be followed in Parliament, it was decided to support all 'progressive' measures taken by the government as well as press for, what it called, the solution of the immediate problems. It was opposed to the "pro-Indian" foreign policy of the Nepali Congress government.<sup>33</sup>

The liberal phase of the CPN was however shortlived and in a sense ended with the royal coup of December 15, 1960. The coup came as a surprise but the experience of the Party cadres during the period 1952-56, when the party was underground, helped the Party to conceal quickly any sign of its activities. As a result, the damage to the CPN was not much. However, it entered a phase of intense inner-party rivalry and struggle.

The moderate faction led by Keshar Jung Raimajhi supported the royal take-over on the plea that the King intended to save Nepal from Indian domination. It alleged that the Koirala government was inclined to sell the country to India.<sup>34</sup> Another faction led by

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33. Joshi and Rose, no. 2, p.334.

34. Gurung, no. 3, p.14.

Pushpa Lal opposed this line and advocated united  
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struggle against the royal take-over. Soon after,  
Pushpa Lal fled to India along with his close  
followers.

The CPN held its Central Plenum secretly at  
Darbhanga (India) in March, 1961. It was attended by  
54 delegates representing 24 district units of the  
Party. The central issue was the attitude towards the  
King who had engineered the coup. The pro-King faction  
led by Raimajhi maintained that the CPN should limit  
its immediate objectives to the following demands:

- (i) restoration of fundamental rights;
- (ii) release of political prisoners;
- (iii) withdrawal of the ban on political parties;  
and
- (iv) election of a new parliament in the near  
36  
future.

The anti-King faction led by Pushpa Lal demanded  
nothing less than the restoration of the constitution  
and a popularly elected government. The faction  
advocated united struggle with other 'democratic  
forces' including the Nepali Congress. A third minor

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35. *ibid.*

36. Lok Raj Baral, Oppositional Politics in Nepal  
(New Delhi, 1977), pp. 83-84.

faction, led by the Piuthan Party unit, demanded the election of a constituent assembly to draw up a new constitution, and the eventual establishment of a republican form of government. For all practical purposes, the second and third factions were aligned against the moderates'.<sup>37</sup>

However, as it was dominated by the 'extremist' faction, it eventually passed a resolution for a constituent assembly : 18 votes were cast in favour of the Raimajhi line and 24 in favour of the Pushpa Lal proposal.<sup>38</sup> Thus the Darbhanga Plenum ended in a stalemate, although the Raimajhi faction was able to retain control of the central committee and denounced Pushpa Lal as an "anti-Party" leader, actively conspiring against the central leadership and indulging in "factional activities" to undermine the unity of the Party.<sup>39</sup>

The Darbhanga Plenum had decided to hold a Party Congress within nine months in order to oppose the "autocracy of the King" as well as to get rid of the "revisionist" trends within the party. When it could not be held in time owing to the conflict between the 'moderates' and the 'extremists', a group of CPN

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37. Rose, no. 12, p. 375.

38. Baral, no. 25, p. 84.

39. Ray, no. 21. p.28.

workers took initiative by forming an "inter-zonal committee" as the preparatory body for the proposed  
40  
Congress.

The Third CPN Party Congress was convened at Banaras (India) in 1962. It denounced the Raimajhi faction as 'royalist' and elected Tulsi Lal Amatya, a member of the 'extremist' group, as the CPN General Secretary in place of Raimajhi. Disciplinary action was taken against some top leaders for provoking activities against other leading party members. Some were expelled from the party. In the Congress, three political lines came to the fore. These were:

- (i) Establishment of Supreme Sovereign Parliament  
- proposed by Tulsi Lal Amatya;
- (ii) Restoration of the very Parliament  
- proposed by Pushpa Lal; and
- (iii) election to the Constituent Assembly  
- proposed by Balram Upadhyaya  
on behalf of Mohan Bikram.

It was Tulsi Lal Amatya's line which was eventually passed. It got 82 percent of the votes. The Congress passed a resolution for 'National Democracy' as against 'New Democracy' proposed by Pushpa Lal. The National Democratic programme emphasised a limited role for the monarchy, alliance with petty feudal elements, ceiling on land holdings  
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and, above all, peaceful change within the society.

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40: Baral, no. 25, p. 84.

41. Chauhan, no. 7, p. 811.

'New democracy', proposed by Pushpa Lal, advocated replacement of the monarchy by a people's republic, struggle against all kinds of feudal elements, transfer of land to the tiller, and above all, articulation of class contradictions and continuation of armed  
42  
struggle.

During this period, the Sino-Soviet schism deepened and had its impact on the communist movement of Nepal. On the other side, the uneasy peace between the group led by Tulsi Lal Amatya and Pushpa Lal could not last long. The third Executive (Extended) Committee meeting held at Varanasi in April 1963 found their differences mounting. In the interim, it became clear that Pushpa Lal had come to enjoy the confidence of the majority of the Central Committee members. In the new circumstances, Amatya was alleged to have started violating the principle of democratic centralism, to have refused to call Central Committee meetings and to have started establishing liaison with the 'renegade' Raimajhi group supported by the  
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'revisionist' Soviet leadership.

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42. *ibid.*

43. Dixit, no. 14, p. 10.

In 1965 the Central Committee (CC) met despite the opposition of General Secretary Amatya. A requisitioned meeting of the CC decided to hold the third Party Conference in May 1966. In the intervening period, a CPN convention was called which dissolved the Central Committee and replaced it with a Central Organising Committee with Pushpa Lal as its Secretary. The tasks of the Committee were to prepare documents for presentation at the Third Party Conference scheduled for May 1968.

The 1968 CPN conference elected Pushpa Lal as General Secretary and approved his call for 'New Democracy', class struggle and armed revolution. The elimination of feudalism and the overthrow of the government dominated by the King constituted the immediate and concrete goal. Towards this end, the Party solicited the assistance and cooperation of all 'democratic and progressive' political forces. The Conference also made certain organisational changes. It replaced the Central Organising Committee by a Central Committee and established five Zonal Organising Bureaus which were to work under the authority of the Central Committee. In foreign policy, the party supported the Chinese

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44 Chauhan, no. 7, p. 812.

45. Ibid.

position in the international communist movement. Thus the Third Party Conference of 1968 led to further division within both the Party and the Nepalese communist movement.

In the meantime, the Raimajhi faction also held its third Party Congress at Kathmandu in 1967. A 21 member Central Committee was elected. It criticised the 'extremist policy' of the Pushpa Lal and Tulsi Lal faction. The Congress rejected the policy of armed struggle and supported the Soviet Union's position in the international communist movement.<sup>47</sup> A split also took place within the Raimajhi faction because of the "class collaborationist" policy followed by it.

The struggle of the people of Nepal against the monarchy based on a partyless Panchayat system became more intense. Influenced by the Naxalbari Movement and the Cultural Revolution in China a militant, revolutionary peasant struggle emerged in the Jhapa district of Nepal.<sup>48</sup> The communist movement began to take an organised shape with the mobilisation of students, peasants and the intelligentsia on the basis of the New Democratic programme. Although King Mahendra started to curb the growing activities of the

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46. Ibid.

47. Raval, no. 5, p. 63

48. Gurung, no. 8, pp. 16-17.



Nepalese communists, it was only after his death in 1972, when his son Birendra took over, that a stern attitude was taken towards the growing militancy in the Nepalese communist movement.

The new King Birendra pursued a new approach to his opponents including the communists; and the communist movement also acquired a different character under his dispensation. Thus, it is in this background that the period 1949-72, that is, from the time of the formation of the CPN (1949) to the end of King Mahendra's reign (1972), is significant for an analytical study.

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## IDEOLOGY

The Marxian concept of socialist revolution implies that the collapse of capitalism and the establishment of socialism in its place is inevitable and in accordance with the laws of history.<sup>1</sup> But the most significant factor in the Marxian theory of socialist revolution is the historic role played by the proletariat as the builder of a socialist society.<sup>2</sup>

Although working class is the most decisive force which brings about the socialist revolution, yet it does not act alone. In as much as its interests coincide with those of all working people, the working class as the leader of the revolution can enter into alliance with other working people. Lenin in his book "Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution" (1905) developed this idea of proletariat being in alliance with the other labouring and exploited classes. He wrote:

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1 Political Economy (Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1978). pp. 329-30.

2 Karl Marx and Frederick Engels; Manifesto of the Communist Party (Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975). p.74; see also Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. selected workers in one volume. (Moscow, 1977), p. 327.

"The proletariat must carry to completion the democratic revolution, by allying to itself the masses of peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution, by allying to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie."

3

The "working class" or proletariat refers to the ordinary propertyless class of wage-workers in a capitalist society. There is, in Marxian term, an exact technical definition of the working class, as those who neither own nor control the means of production. Moreover, Marxists consider it as a motive force of the society's renewal in the process of its transition from capitalism to socialism and communism. The "working people" includes, apart from the working class, also other toiling and exploited masses who may own and control the means of production to some extent, but nevertheless exploited by the ruling classes. Thus "working people" may include large sections of the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie etc.

In the backward society (which still has the pre-capitalist remnants), the socialist revolution has to pass through two stages, namely, bourgeois democratic

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3. V.I. Lenin, Selected Works, Vol: I (Moscow, 1946)

and socialist revolution. But it is the central tenet of Marxism-Leninism that the proletarian revolution can not succeed without the leadership of the working class. Hence the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is this belief in the dictatorship of the proletariat which distinguishes the Marxist-Leninist from the social-democrats. Lenin stated: "only he is Marxist who extends the acceptance of the class struggle to the acceptance of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is where the profound difference lies between a Marxist and an ordinary petty (and even big) bourgeois. This is the touch-stone on which the real understanding and acceptance of Marxism should be tested".<sup>4</sup>

As mentioned earlier, during the period of socialist revolution, there is an alliance between the working class and all the working people pledged to the cause of socialism, but special feature of such an alliance is that the working class has the hegemony under the leadership of the Communist Party.

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4. V.I. Lenin, "The State and Revolution" in Selected Works, Vol.II (Moscow, 1947), p. 163.

The Marxists also had a clear understanding with regard to the role that the proletarian party should play both before and after the revolution. The working class ~~party~~ is considered as the organising, leading and guiding force of the revolutionary working class movement. Stalin wrote about Lenin's views about the role of the party, "The proletariat needs the party not only to achieve the dictatorship; it needs it still more to maintain the dictatorship, to consolidate and expand it in order to achieve the complete victory of socialism."<sup>5</sup>

The dictatorship of the proletariat under the guidance of the Communist Party may, however, take different forms. In the Soviet Union it assumed the form of Soviet power. There power was concentrated mainly in the hands of two classes, namely, the workers and the peasants. In China, the dictatorship of the proletariat took the form of what had been called a People's Democratic Dictatorship. Under the People's Democratic Dictatorship of China, unlike the case in the Soviet Union, a multi-party system under the leadership of the Communist Party of China was retained. The people's democratic front included the working class, the peasantry, the middle strata of urban population and a part of the national bourgeoisie.

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5. J.V. Stalin, The Foundations of Leninism (Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1977), p.115.

Generally, it was believed that the socialist revolution could only take place in an industrialised society. But to bring a socialist revolution in a agrarian society. Mao Tse-Tung propounded the concept of "New Democracy" in 1940. It advocated a joint dictatorship of the 'revolutionary' classes under the leadership of the proletariat, anti-feudal and democratic.<sup>6</sup> The "New Democracy" emphasised land reforms and the establishment of "People's Republic".

The leaders of the CPN were also influenced by the concept of 'New Democracy'. They adopted it as a party's programme of action to bring about the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution and by forming a joint front including workers, peasants, middle classes, national bourgeoisie and all democratic people under the leadership of the working class.<sup>7</sup>

A serious ideological differences existed across the CPN on the question of their attitude towards the King and the Nepali Congress. While the Raimajhi faction considered the Nepali Congress as its primary enemy. The Nepali Congress, in the opinion of Raimajhi faction, represented the interests of 'reactionary and imperialist India' which was more dangerous than the

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6 Mao Tse-Tung, Selected Works Vol. II (Peking, 1976) pp. 326-28

7 Bheem Raval, Nepal Ma Samyawadi Andolan: Udbhav ra Vikas (Communist Movement in Nepal; Origin & Development) (Kathmandu, 1990).

King. The Pushpa Lal faction considered the King as the primary enemy who represented the interests of feudal landlords. It also advocated the frontal attack on monarchy for the establishment of 'New Democracy'.

The differences within the party came into open when the 'moderate' faction led by Raimajhi supported the King's action abolishing the parliamentary system and banning the political activities. However, it may be because of tactical reasons, it was branded as 'royalist'. The third CPN Party Congress held in 1962 passed the resolution on the concept of National Democracy proposed by Tulsi Lal Amatya. The Pushpa Lal faction denounced it as being 'revisionistic'.

Raimajhi and his supporters expelled from the party, during the third congress, started running a parallel party. It convened its third National Conference in 1966 and adopted the 'National Democratic Programme'. After being released from jail in 1969, Man Mohan Adhikari and his supporters also had been the followers of the concept of 'New Democracy'.

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8 R.S. Chauhan, Struggle and Change in South Asian Monarchies (New Delhi, 1977), p.204.

9 Ibid.

10 Raval, no. 7, p.63

11 Ibid, p. 120

Thus, Pushpa Lal and Man Mohan Adhikari factions emerged as the followers of the 'New Democracy', while Tulsi Lal and Raimajhi the followers of 'National Democracy'.

It is in this perspective that during the period from 1949 to 1972, mainly two programmes of action for Nepalese revolution were debated. These were - New Democratic Programme and National Democratic Programme, which in turn reflected the conflicting ideological position within the Nepalese Communist movement.

#### 2.1 The CPN and National Democracy:

The twentieth Congress of the CPSU, convened under the leadership of Khrushchev in 1956, adopted the concept of "National Democracy". It advocated for the peaceful co-existence, peaceful transition to socialism and non-capitalist path to socialism.<sup>12</sup> In November 1960, 81 communist parties of the world, including that of China and Nepal, attended a conference at Moscow in which the programme 'National Democratic Revolution' was adopted despite the opposition of the Chinese Communist Party. This led to the intensification of the Sino-Soviet schism that began especially after 1956. The representatives of the CPN agreed to this Programme.<sup>13</sup> Accordingly, the third CPN Party Congress

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12 Ibid, p. 122

13 Ibid.



held in 1962 adopted this programme, against the "New Democratic Programme" proposed by Pushpa Lal.

The Raimajhi faction, already branded as "royal communist", believed that the "establishment of 'National democracy' was only possible under the leadership of the King." He emphasised "the struggle for the democratic rights is the precondition for the National Democratic Revolution."<sup>14</sup>

The CPN faction led by Tulsi Lal Amatya by presenting the "National Democratic Programme" claimed that it was committed to transform the Nepalese society from feudal to socialist society. It would represent the interests of workers, peasants, youth, students, women, middle class, national bourgeoisie, and all<sup>15</sup> working people of the country.

The "National Democratic Programme" held that Nepal was at the stage of anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and bourgeois-democratic revolution and the immediate task of the Nepalese Communists was not the establishment of socialism, but to reach the stage of "National Democracy" through a national front. The bourgeoisie would have a place in this national front.

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14 Ibid. 123

15 Communist Party of Nepal, Tritiya Mahaadhiveshan ko Rajnaitik Prastav (The Political Resolutions of the Third Congress)(Varanasi, India, 1962), pp.43-4.

This is because the national bourgeoisie has the capacity to play its anti-imperialist and anti-feudal role. The National Front would be based on a broad cooperation of all national and democratic forces, namely, the workers, the peasantry, students, middle class and national bourgeoisie. In this broad based front the working class would have no exclusive leadership. It advocated for the whole or partial leadership of the CPN in the National

<sup>16</sup> Front. But later, Tulsi Lal Amatya published a political document "Which Path?" which emphasised on the joint leadership of the National Bourgeoisie and <sup>17</sup> working class.

The Amatya faction criticised the King for its take-over of the power in December 1960 and ban on the political parties. It urged all political parties and revolutionary forces to launch a united struggle against the King's dictatorial regime and demanded the establishment of a supreme sovereign parliament. It denounced Panchayat system as "deception". In spite of these criticisms, it however, did not believe in revolutionary overthrow of Monarchy. It believed in peaceful change in society. This faction also branded the rival faction led by the Raimajhi <sup>18</sup> as "revisionist".

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16 *ibid*, pp. 54-5.

17 Tulsi Lal Amatya, Kun Bato? (Which Path?) (New Delhi, CPN Publication, 1976), pp. 43-4.

18 *ibid*, no.7, pp. 43-49.

The leadership of the working class is an important point that demarcates the concept of National Democracy from the concept of New Democracy. Both National Democracy and New Democracy aimed at the completion of the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist and bourgeois - democratic revolution. Both the concepts advocated a broad based alliance of workers, peasants, middle class intelligentsia and the national bourgeoisie. There was also no difference with regard to the future - both the programmes were forms of transition to socialism.

However, there was a vital difference with respect to the outcome. The National Democratic revolution would result in the dictatorship of both the bourgeoisies and the working class, the outcome of the New Democratic revolution would be the hegemony of the working class on the basis of worker-peasants alliance.

The National Democratic Programme, after completing the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist revolution, would reach the stage of the socialism through the National Front. It would involve, firstly, expansion of industries in the government sector; secondly, the elimination of the foreign capital; thirdly, destruction of feudal system and ceiling of land holdings; fourthly, abolition of the centre for

the recruitment of Gorkhas, abrogation of all unequal treaties, and new treaties on the basis of five principles of co-existence and equality; fifthly, friendship with the socialist countries, opposition to imperialism and colonialism; and sixthly, restoration of all democratic rights and overall development of the Nepalese society.

The Amatya faction claimed that with the implementation of these measures the task of the National Democratic revolution would be completed and the country would then be set firmly on the road towards socialism.

## 2.2 The CPN and New Democracy:

The concept of the New Democracy was followed by Pushpa Lal faction of the CPN, also called the extremist faction of the CPN. It denounced the "National Democracy" as a "revisionistic" concept and alleged that the latter completely deviated from the Marxism-Leninism.

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19 *ibid*, pp. 45-6.

20 Communist Party of Nepal, Nepal Communist Party ko Atharah Varshko Krantikari Sangharsha ko Simhaawalokan Evam Shiksha (A view of the Eighteen Year Revolutionary Struggle of the Communist Party of Nepal and its Lessons (Varanasi, India, 1968), p. 51.

The 'extremist' faction aimed at establishing a 'New Democracy'. This faction claimed that for the complete fulfilment of the basic task of the Nepalese revolution at the present stage, it is essential to transform the Nepalese society from semi-feudalism and semi-colonialism by establishing the 'New Democracy' under the leadership of the working class on the basis of worker peasant alliance.<sup>21</sup> The Amatya faction, on the other hand, wanted a national democratic revolution to be brought through a national front in which the working class will share leadership with the bourgeois so that exclusive leadership of the working class will not be established.

The difference between the aims of the Amatya faction and the Pushpa Lal faction was that while the former faction wanted to establish 'National Democracy' and the latter a 'New Democracy'. The National Democracy would not be established under the exclusive leadership of the working class. It would be under the joint leadership of the bourgeois and the working class. The Pushpa Lal faction characterised it

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21 Communist Party of Nepal, Naya Janavadi Karyakram: Nepal Kranti Ko Ek Matra Sahi Mul Bato (The New Democratic Programme: the Only True Way to the Nepalese Revolution), (Varanasi, India, 1969), pp. 35-6.

as class collaboration and a strategy that would lead to the failure or betrayal of the revolution because it suspects bourgeoisie cooperation in the task of the complete liquidation of feudalism and imperialism, and freeing the people from the grip of monopoly capital.

The Pushpa Lal faction for completing anti-imperialism, anti feudal revolution, sought to develop a joint front. This front was to be constituted on the basis of unity of worker-peasant under the leadership of the proletariat.<sup>22</sup> The enemies of this front were feudal landlords, bureaucratic bourgeoisie within the country, foreign monopoly capitalist blocs (especially Indian monopoly capitalists) and world imperialism<sup>23</sup> outside Nepal.

The chief allies of the working class in this front would be agricultural labourers and poor peasants. The middle peasants are regarded as joint allies because they are not only interested in bourgeoisie democratic revolution but they could also accept socialism. The rich peasants can also be won over to side of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution, the urban and other sections of the party

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22 *ibid*, pp. 35-7.

23 *ibid*, pp. 60-63

bourgeoisie, other than peasantry, are also regarded as allies. The non-monopoly section of the national bourgeoisie can also join this front because of its own class interests, in the completion of the bourgeoisie-<sup>24</sup> democratic revolution.

The New Democratic Programme, after completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, advocated for<sup>25</sup> achieving the following main objectives.

1. With regard to the nature of the new Democratic State, it advocated the establishment of people's republic. The partyless panchayat system, in its opinion, was the dictatorship of the feudal landlords represented by the King. It emphasised the establishment of the people's democratic dictatorship for struggle against feudalism, imperialism and foreign capitalism in the interests of all revolutionary classes' and masses of the people and for the greater democratisation of the society.

2. The economic policy, it advocated, had been towards the direction to eradicate feudalism, nationalisation of foreign capital in order to make

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24 Ibid, pp. 63-9.

25 Ibid, pp. 37-51.

free the national capital from the clutches of semi-colonial economic system, to control the national capital and for planned development to reach the transitional stage of socialist economy.

(i) In the sphere of agriculture, it stressed the need for the abolition of feudal relations of production in agriculture in order to give the ownership of land to tillers for preparing the ground for the socialistic relations in agriculture. It insisted on the seizure of land from the feudal landlords and distribution of the same among the landless people and poor peasants.

(ii) With respect to the industrial policy, it emphasised the need for faster pace of industrialisation in order to reduce the excessive reliance on agriculture; provide the people with alternative job opportunity, for industrial development and self-reliance. In this context, it advocated the nationalisation of foreign capital without any compensation; wider expansion of industries in the government sector; development of national capital in a controlled and planned way; protection to the national capitalist to set up industries in the private sector; set up of small scale cottage industries in the rural sector, etc.



(iii) In the foreign policy arena, it alleged that though the Nepalese government claimed to be neutral, it actually had been in favour of imperialism, feudalism and other reactionary' forces. The 'New Democratic Programme' advocated the foreign policy against imperialism, feudalism and other reactionary forces and in favour of democracy, peace, national liberation struggle, proletarian revolution and socialism. It emphasised the abrogation of the existing 'unequal' treaties with India and conclusion of new treaties on the basis of five principles of co-existence and equality.

There is complete similarity between the analysis of the Pushpa Lal and Amatya faction of the CPN on the question as to which classes should be regarded as allies and enemies of the revolution. The classes that would participate in joint fronts, advocated by the factions, are the working class, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie and non-monopoly section of the national bourgeoisie. Both the factions supported, nationalisation of foreign capital and expansion of industries in the government sectors.

But inspite of these similarities there were crucial differences between both the factions of the CPN relating to the functioning of their respective

fronts. The first basic difference was that National Democratic Programme, unlike New Democratic Programme, did not bestow <sup>26</sup> on working class. The National Democratic Programme emphasised the alliance with petty feudal elements, ceiling on land holdings and above all peaceful change within the society. It also emphasised the establishment of a supreme sovereign parliament against the demand for people's republic role for monarchy (it means it believed in constitutional monarchy). The Pushpa Lal faction advocated the transfer of land to the tiller, refusal to co-operate with feudalistic elements and articulation of class struggle.

There were also differences with regard to the foreign policy. Tulsi Lal faction emphasised the neutral foreign policy. It claimed that the CPN would struggle for the 'dynamic' neutral foreign policy by opposing imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism. Till the country, it asserted, economically dependent on foreign capitalism and imperialism, there was no <sup>27</sup> importance of the 'neutral' foreign policy. The Pushpa Lal faction, on the contrary, insisted that

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26 Communist Party of Nepal, no. 12, p. 52

27 Ibid, no. 15, pp. 39-40.

"the new democratic government led by the working class can not adopt a 'neutral' foreign policy. This is Tito's foreign policy." It stated that, in principle, the successive Nepalese government had followed the 'neutral' foreign policy. In reality, it had always been in favour of imperialism and other reactionary forces of the world. It emphasised that its foreign policy would always be in favour of peace, democracy, national liberation movements and socialism  
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against war and imperialism.

During late 1960s, after being influenced by the Naxalite movement in India, some communist militant youth took a Maoist path to bring about the revolution in Nepal. These were characterised as "left-sectarian" by Pushpa Lal faction. This faction regarded that the Naxalite policy had no relevance unless there was mass base of the party.

Although every faction of the CPN, in general, considered the Marxism-Leninism as its guiding principle for bringing about revolution in Nepal, yet there had been differences within the movement owing to the conflicting position of various factions on several

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28 Ibid, pp. 53-56.

important issues, such as the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'; form of the new State - whether constitutional monarchy or people's republic; land reforms; foreign policy; monarchy and Nepali Congress.

The ideological position of every communist party, however, influenced<sup>by</sup> the strategy and tactics it followed for the case<sup>4</sup> of socialism. In the case of Nepalese Communist movement, it will be dealt with in the next chapter.

STRATEGY AND TACTICS

There is a close relationship between ideology and strategy in Marxist-Leninist thought. The Communist ideology is, by and large, universal in character. However, the strategy of the communist movement has to be formulated specifically for each country/region with the assessment of various socio-economic and political forces operating in that country/region at a particular time.

The communist movement began to evolve its strategy and tactics, after the October Revolution in 1917. Stalin took special interest in developing the Marxian concept of strategy and tactics. He designated this subject as, "the science of the leadership in the class struggle of the proletariat". According to him, strategy is "the determination of the direction of the main blow of the proletariat at a given stage of the revolution, the elaboration of a corresponding plan for the disposition of the revolutionary forces (main and secondary reserves), the fight to carry out this plan throughout the given stage of revolution".<sup>1</sup>

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1. J.V. Stalin, The Foundations of Leninism (Foreign Language Press, Peking, 1965), p. 86.

Tactics, on the other hand, are "the determination of the line of conduct of all the proletarians in the comparatively short period of the ebb or flow of the movement, of the rise or decline of the revolution, the fight to carry out this line by means of replacing old form of struggle and organisation by new ones, old slogans by new ones, by combining these forms, etc."<sup>2</sup>

While strategy essentially remains unchanged throughout the given stage of revolution, tactics change according to flow and ebb of the struggle. Tactics are a part of strategy, subordinate to it and serving it.

It is in this perspective that the strategy and tactics, followed by the Communist movement in Nepal during the period of 1949-72, will be studied in this chapter. But a clear understanding of the views of the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) about the nature of Nepalese society and its basic contradictions are essential to the study of the strategy and tactics for the revolution in Nepal.

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2. *ibid*, p. 88.

The CPN in its first manifesto, published in 1949, characterised Nepal as a feudal, semi-feudal and semi-colonial society.<sup>3</sup> However, a proper class analysis of the Nepalese society was done in the "New Democratic Programme" (1962) written by Pushpa Lal. Tulsi Lal Amatya also wrote on the class analysis of the Nepalese society in his publication "Which Path?" (1965). Both these leaders of the CPN characterised Nepal as a semi-feudal and semi-colonial society.<sup>4</sup>

The CPN asserted that there were two basic contradictions in the Nepalese society:

(i) the contradiction between imperialism (including Indian monopoly capitalism) and the Nepalese nation; and

(ii) the contradiction between feudalism represented by the King on the one hand, and the working people of the country on the other.<sup>5</sup>

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3 Communist Party of Nepal, Nepal Communist Party ko Atharah Varshako Krantikari Sangharsha ko Sinhawalokan Evam Shiksha (A view of the Eighteen Year Revolutionary struggle of the Communist Party of Nepal and its lessons) (Varanasi, India, 1968), p. 9.

4 Communist Party of Nepal, Naya Janavadi Karyaknam:Nepal Kranti Ko Ek Matra Sahi Mul Bato (The New Democratic Programme: The Only True Way to the Nepalese Revolution) (Varanasi, India, 1969), p. 35.

5 Ibid, pp. 35-37.

The CPN asserted that the Nepalese revolution was an integral part of the process of transition to socialism that was taking place in different parts of the world. But this did not mean that Nepal was ripe for this transition. It believed that Nepal would have to go through another revolution as the main precondition for this transition. This revolution was anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, i.e. a bourgeois-democratic revolution.

According to the CPN the main enemies of the Nepalese revolution at the stage of anti-imperialist, anti-feudal were feudal landlords, bureaucratic comprador bourgeoisie and imperialists, including the Indian monopoly capitalists. The chief allies of the revolution were the working class, peasants, petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie.<sup>6</sup>

### 3.1 Anti-Imperialist, Anti-Feudal Revolution:

The CPN asserted that since Nepalese society was semi-feudal and semi-colonial, the principal enemies of the Nepalese revolution were imperialism and feudalism. Therefore the main tasks of the revolution were to overthrow these two class enemies and thus complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

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<sup>6</sup> *ibid*, pp. 58-59, see also, Tulsi Lal Amatya, Kun Bato? (which Path) (New Delhi, CPN Publication, 1976), p. 43.



The CPN believed that unless imperialist rule was overthrown, the rule of feudal land lord class could not be abolished because imperialism was its main support. On the other hand, it understood that unless the peasants were supported in their struggle to over-throw the feudal landlord class, it would be impossible to build a powerful revolutionary movement to overthrow imperialist rule, because the feudal landlord class was the main social base of imperialist rule in Nepal. That is why the Nepalese revolution came to be termed as anti-imperialist and anti-feudal or bourgeois-democratic.

The CPN held that the Nepalese revolution would be different from the democratic revolution of Europe and America. This is because in European countries, the revolution resulted in the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. But the Nepalese revolution would result in the joint dictatorship of the workers and peasants. It would also be different from the socialist revolution which resulted in the dictatorship of the proletariat.

### 3.2 Leadership of the Working Class

The Marxist-Leninists held that it is only the concept of dictatorship of the proletariat that distinguishes the communists from social-democrats. They emphasised that the essence of socialism consists in the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin exposed in his pamphlet Proletariat Revolution and Renegade Kautsky. the "revisionist" outlook of Kautsky, i.e. his admiration for 'bourgeois democracy' in opposition to proletarian dictatorship.<sup>8</sup> Thus, according to Marxism-Leninism, the leadership of the working class is essential for the socialist revolution.

In the Nepalese communist movement also 'revisionism' took shape out of the basic outlook that rejected the role of the working class in the Nepalese revolution. The Pushpa Lal faction of the CPN claimed that the "revisionist" tendency was encouraged by the 20th Congress of the CPSU held in 1956.<sup>9</sup> The "revisionistic" programme of "National Democracy", proposed by Tulsī Lal Amatya, was adopted

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8 V.I. Lenin, Selected Works, vol.II (Moscow, 1947) pp. 369-74.

9 Communist Party of Nepal, no. 3, pp. 89-92.

at the Third CPN Party Congress, held at Banaras in 1962. It advocated the joint leadership of the working class and the bourgeoisie for the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution in Nepal. On the other hand, Pushpa Lal advocated the leadership of the working class for the success of the Nepalese revolution.

The Pushpa Lal faction of the CPN claimed that there could be no guarantee of the competition of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution unless the working class was in the leadership of the struggle and the State. No other class could wield this  
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responsibility.

The faction observed that although industrial workers were numerically a minority in the population, they were increasing in number day by day. It stated that at the end of the second plan, the number of industrial workers had been around 50, 000. But at the end of the third plan it had increased to about 4,00,000. In addition, there was a good number of rural proletariats (agricultural labourers) and other propertyless people in the cities and the  
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countryside.

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10 Communist Party of Nepal, no. 3, pp. 36-7.

11 *ibid*, pp. 63-4.

The Pushpa Lal faction stressed that, in spite of certain unavoidable weaknesses, like for instance, its smallness (as compared to the peasantry), its youth (as compared to the proletariat in capitalist countries), and its low educational standard (as compared to the bourgeoisie), the Nepalese proletariat was more resolute and thorough going in revolutionary struggle than any other class in the Nepalese society. This was because the Nepalese proletariat was subjected to a three fold oppression (by imperialism, capitalism and feudalism). It was a class largely made up of bankrupt peasant masses. This facilitated its forming a close alliance  
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with the peasantry.

But a question was raised among Marxists why should there be the hegemony of the proletariat in the struggle for democracy and socialism ?

Because, as distinct from the working class, its allies occupy a position in social production. It accounts for their inconsistency and vacillation on many issues of the class struggle. They participate

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12 *ibid.*

in the revolutionary movement only after the workers initiate the struggle. It is the leadership of the working class, which speaks for the vital interests of all working people, which can bring together the disunited mass of non-proletarians and make them an effective political force in the revolution.

In the history of Nepal, it was the workers, who first organised themselves in the trade union movement in the relatively industrialised towns of Jogbani and Biratnagar.<sup>13</sup> Man Mohan Adhikari, then a member of Darbhanga District Committee of the Communist Party of India,<sup>14</sup> formed a "workers' Union" in Birat Nagar. The workers organised a strike on 4th March, 1946 for their economic demand and ultimately helped in the emergence of extremism out of the general democratic movement.

However, it is not by the working class alone, but by the entire working people, including the peasant masses, that the socialist revolution is carried out. Once, as a president of a peasants' organisation, Tulsi Lal Amatya took the position that, given Nepal's peculiar conditions, the peasantry alone could provide a revolutionary potential. This position was rejected by other

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13 Mohan Dhvaj Gurung, Notes on the Communist Movement in Nepal (Varanasi, 1977), p.3.

14 Rajendra Nepali, "Nepal Ma Communist Andolan Ko Prishthabhumi" (Background of the Communist Movement in Nepal), in Jhilko, vol.2, no.2047(1989) p.11.

Nepalese communist leaders who accepted the Marxist-Leninist position that the working class, supported by the peasantry, must be the instrument of revolutionary change.<sup>15</sup>

### 3.3. Worker-Peasant Alliance

According to the Marxist-Leninists, a worker-peasant alliance is an inalienable part of the strategy of the working class revolution which applies to the whole world. That is why Lenin further developed this and raised it to the slogan of "revolutionary dictatorship of the working class and peasantry".<sup>16</sup> It is this principle of Marxism-Leninism that had been the basis of the success of the revolution in Russia, China and Vietnam.

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15 Bhuvan Lal Joshi and Leo E. Rose, Democratic Innovation in Nepal: A Study in Political Acculturations of Nepal (University of California press, Berkley, 1966), p. 456.

16 V.I. Lenin, "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in Democratic Revolution", Selected Works, vol. I (Moscow, 1946), p. 402.

Stalin raised the issue of the revolutionary potentialities of the peasantry and pointed out what Leninism said about it. He wrote:

Are the revolutionary possibilities latent in the peasantry, by virtue of certain conditions of its existence already exhausted, or not: if not, is there any hope, any basis, for utilising these possibilities for proletarian revolution, for transforming the peasantry, the exploited majority of it, from the reserve of the bourgeois revolution in the West, and still is even now; into a reserve of the proletariat; into its ally? Leninism replies to this question in the affirmative, i.e. it recognises the existence of revolutionary capacities in the ranks of the majority of the peasantry, and the possibility of using these in the interests of the proletariat

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dictatorship.

But what is the basis on which the working class can exercise its leadership by forming an alliance with the peasantry?

According to Marxism-Leninism, the promises made to the peasants by the bourgeois are never fulfilled and the peasants come to realise it. The support extended by the proletariat is encouraging. Historically, it has been seen that it is only with the proletariat's assistance that the peasantry has won land and democratic freedom in most countries. Therefore, it is this support that forms the basis for the alliance of the working class with the peasantry

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17 J.V. Stalin, "Foundations of Leninism", in Problems of Leninism (Peking, 1976), p. 54.

and other sections of the working people under the leadership of the working class.

In Nepal, after the end of the Rana regime, various forms of exploitation of the feudal system continued to exist, some in original and some in new forms. The CPN held that the Land Reforms Law might curb the feudal monopoly holding of land, but then, it would only change the nature of exploitation; it further stated:

the land reforms has not been enacted in the interest of the toiling peasantry, nor will it bring any change in their economic conditions. It will not do away with the exploitation and oppression of the peasantry nor check their growing economic ruin. It may facilitate the development of capitalism in the countryside and emergence of a 'kulak' class as an additional main  
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stay of the autocratic regime.

The CPN also believed that so long as the peasants had no broad-based popular organisation of their own and as long as they did not mobilise themselves under the leadership of the working class, no land reform would be effective.

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18 Report of the Third Executive (extended)  
Committee of the Communist Party of Nepal  
(Nepal Communist Party, Varanasi, 1963), p. 15.



The CPN maintained that in Nepal the peasantry constituted approximately 95 percent of its population. It was divided mainly into three categories - poor, middle and the rich peasants. The CPN claimed that the agricultural labourers and poor peasants were the strongest motive force of the Nepalese revolution, the natural and most reliable ally of the working class. The middle and rich peasants were also to be united with. The middle peasants were not only interested in bourgeois-democratic revolution but they could also accept socialism. The rich peasants could also be won over to the side of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution. Although, on the one hand, rich peasants were engaged in the exploitation of agricultural labourers and had aligned with the landlords, yet on the other hand, they were themselves labourers and hence were exploited by the monopoly manipulations of the landlords. Thus, having a vacillating character, they could also be won over to the side of the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

The CPN stressed that only under the leadership of the working class could the poor and middle peasants achieve their liberation, and only by forming

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19 Communist Party of Nepal, no. 3, pp. 64-66.

an alliance with the poor and middle peasants, could the proletariat lead the revolution to victory. In Nepal, various peasant struggles were organised by the Communist Party of Nepal.

Thus, the strategy of the formation of the worker-peasant alliance, which was characteristic of world communist movements, became an integral part of the Nepalese communist movement too.

#### 3.4. Form of Struggle

During the period 1949-72, four major factions of the CPN emerged. Every faction wanted to organise and lead revolution in Nepal. There were differences among them on the form of struggle to be adopted for the completion of the revolution.

As early as in 1949, the CPN set forth a programme of 'New Democracy' in which it emphasised armed  
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struggle to overthrow the feudal Rana regime.

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20 K. Dixit. "Communist Movement in Nepal",  
Frontier, vol. 3 (17), July 18, 1970, p.9.

In the first CPN Party Congress held in 1954, it advocated the line of armed struggle of the peasants. But the second National Conference held in 1955, passed the line of peaceful and legal activities. The Third CPN Party Congress convened in 1962 adopted a new programme of "National Democracy" which was advocated by Tulsi Lal Amatya. The new programme emphasised peaceful change in society.<sup>21</sup> The Raimajhi faction of the CPN also supported the line of peaceful change in society.<sup>22</sup> But the Pushpa Lal-led faction of the CPN advocated armed struggle, especially, the armed struggle by the peasants.<sup>23</sup> Later on, being influenced by the Naxalite movement in India, the Man Mohan Adhikari faction emphasised Mao's tactics of guerilla warfare.<sup>24</sup> The concept of forms of struggle

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21 Communist Party of Nepal, no.3, p. 57.

22 *ibid*,

23 Communist Party of Nepal, no. 4, p.72.

24 R.S. Chauhan, "Political Parties in Nepal", in Haruluro, Fukui, ed..  
Political parties of Asia and the Pacific  
(Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 812.

also included the tactics of forming the United Front and relationship with other political forces.

A. United Front Tactics -

The importance of United Front tactics for communist movement could not be overstressed. Robert A. Scalapno wrote: " The United Front tactic is essential in order to develop a mass base and to harness both the nationalist and reform issues to the communist cause. Even should guerilla warfare prove necessary or desirable, there should be no abandonment<sup>25</sup> of political action or the united front technique."

In Nepal the CPN formed a united front with various political groups. These were:

(i) Jatiya Janatantrik Saymukta Morcha (People's Democratic United Front): This alliance was formed in 1951 by the CPN, Nepal Praja Parishad and several organisations associated with and controlled by the CPN, such as the left wing group of peasants, labour, students and youth. Tanka Prasad Acharya of the Nepal Praja Parishad served as the President of the Front. The main objectives of the United Front were to

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25. Robert A. Scalapino, "Commission in Asia : Towards a Comparative Analysis", in Robert A. Scalapino, ed., Communist Revolution in Asia: Tactics, Goals and Achievements (University of California, 1969) p. 43.

liberate the nation from the clutches of Anglo-American imperialism, Indian capitalism and Nepalese feudalism; to establish a government representative of workers,,peasants and progressive intellectuals; to abolish the feudal system and effect land reforms; to cancel all debts owned to landlords by peasants; to guarantee workers adequate wages, an eight-hour workday, and right to organise and strike; and to create an economic and political climate conducive to  
26  
Nepal's industrialisation.

In the foreign-policy arena, the United Front demanded nullification of the existing treaties stipulating security cooperation with India and Great Britain, withdrawal of the Gorkha army units from Malaysia, establishment of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China and solicitation of assistance from China and other socialist countries. It also charged the Nepali Congress government with working in the interest of the "reactionary" Nehru  
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government.

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26. Chauhan, no. 23, pp. 817-18.

27. Anirudha, Gupta, Politics in Nepal (Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1964), pp. 201-2.

The success of the United Front policy made the CPN believe that it could establish, in place of a "bourgeois-cum-feudal government", a People's democracy on the model of the Chinese People's democracy of workers and peasants. But before this programme could take any shape, the CPN was banned on 25 January 1952, as a result of its alleged complicity in the revolt of the Raksha Dal.

(ii) United Front with Nepali Congress: The line of United struggle with Nepali Congress and other democratic forces was advocated by Pushpa Lal after the royal take-over in 1960. The Darbhanga Plenum of the CPN, convened in 1961, passed this line despite opposition from the Raimajhi faction. Pushpa Lal emphasised the restoration of the dissolved parliament and, if necessary, the launching of a communist led movement to achieve this objective.

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28. Ibid.

29. Even after the "Delhi Agreement", Dr. K.I. Singh did not surrender and continued with armed activities. the interim government headed by M.P. Koirala arrested K.I. Singh and made him a prisoner. Thereafter, on January 22, 1952, some supporters of K.I. Singh in the Nepali Congress military unit, the Raksha Dal, organised a coup against the government. It was alleged that the CPN supported K.I. Singh's demand for an all-party movement as well as the actions undertaken by his supporters. On February 24, 1952, Dr. Singh and several of his followers fled to Tibet and the coup collapsed.

30. R.S. Chauhan, Struggle and change in South Asian Monarchies (New Delhi, 1977) p. 206.

Later on, during the Third Party Congress, the CPN adopted the "national Democratic Programme", and also supported the United Front of all democratic forces including Nepali Congress.<sup>31</sup>

#### B. CPN's Role in 1950-51 Revolution

The Nepali Congress launched an armed struggle against the Ranas in November 1950. The CPN was charged for its failure to participate in this uprising.<sup>32</sup> However, it issued a statement supporting the armed struggle and called upon the people, particularly the peasants, to arm themselves to confiscate the land of the landlords and distribute it among the peasantry. The CPN also appealed for strengthening the people's revolutionary army.<sup>33</sup>

The armed struggle resulted in the "Delhi Agreement". The glory of the kingship was restored and King Tribhuvan was liberated from the control of the Ranas.

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31. Communist Party of Nepal, Tritiya Manaadhiveshan ko Rajnaitik Prastav (The Political Resolutions of the third Congress) (Varanasi, India: 1962), pp. 58-60.

32. Bholu Chatterjee, Place, people and Politics: Nepal in perspective (New Delhi, 1980), p. 91.

33. Gurung, no. 13, p. 10

The King promised to hold elections for the constituent assembly within two years. A coalition ministry consisting of the Ranas and the Congress under the premiership of Mohan Shamsher was formed. Mr. B.P. Koirala was made Home Minister.

The CPN criticised the Delhi Agreement and alleged that by accepting it, the Nepali Congress had betrayed the revolution. According to CPN, this Agreement in fact changed the whole course of revolution. Because of the interference of the Indian government, the CPN regarded the Nepali Congress as a 'stooge' of the Indian government.

But even while the CPN could foresee correctly the fate of the Delhi Agreement, it was unable to participate in the armed struggle of 1950. In this respect, it was clear that the CPN being hardly one year old could neither organise its own armed struggle which could fight independently at the time of the uprising nor found it politically advantageous to fight

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34. Ibid. p. 11

35. Communist Party of Nepal, no.3, pp. 16-17.

36. Gupta, no. 27, p. 201.



under Nepali Congress command. Having not only withdrawn from the Congress but also having criticised it as a party of the "national bourgeoisie" the CPN leaders could not bring themselves to join the armed struggle initiated by the Nepali Congress. On the other hand, the party being still in its formative stage, was not in a position to wage an armed struggle by itself against the Ranas.

C. CPN's Role in Parliament (1959-60)

The CPN, despite the opposition of one of its factions led by Pushpa Lal, participated in the general elections of 1959. The Pushpa Lal faction opposed participation in the general elections because the King did not concede its demand for the constituent assembly. The CPN contested 47 seats, but only four of its candidates could be elected to the House of Representatives. The Party was able to get only 7.2 percent of the votes polled. The disappointing results were attributed to weak organisation or no organisation outside the Kathmandu valley and the lack of funds.<sup>37</sup> After winning the majority of seats, the Nepali congress formed the government.

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37. Chauhan, no. 23, p. 809.

The CPN held its plenum at Janakpur in June 1959 in order to evolve the methods and policies to be followed in Parliament. It decided to support all 'progressive' measures taken by the government as well as to press for, what it called, the solution of immediate problems. It also warned the government not to deviate from its neutral policy towards Tibet and not to submit to Indian policies of interference in the internal affairs of Nepal.

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The CPN was critical of the Nepali congress government on various issues: For instance, it portrayed the budget of the Nepali Congress government as a betrayal of its announced intention to establish a "socialistic" society. It also criticised the government on the Gandak agreement with India, on the import of Indian vegetable oil and on police firing on peasant agitation held by the CPN and several other issues. With regard to the Gandak agreement, the party alleged that instead of preserving the national interest, the government had compromised Nepal's territorial integrity and overlooked the agricultural

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38. Joshi & Rose, no. 14, pp. 329-30.

and industrial advantages of Nepal. It demanded the cancellation of the agreement and its replacement by a new one and also accused India of acting like the East India company in making Nepal agree to the Gandak project. The party even staged a big rally on February 13, 1960, against this agreement.

The CPN came out sharply against the government's economic and agrarian policy. It neither could directly come out against the abolition of the birta system, nor could it, with other opposition parties, oppose in principle the programme of industrialisation. It, therefore, attacked the manner in which the government was formulating its economic and agrarian policies, calling them inadequate and unscientific. The birta abolition Bill attempted to impose a ceiling on the holdings of big landlords with compensation. But the party insisted that the affected landlords should not be given compensation. The Central

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39. Halkhabar, January 21, 1960; also Nepal Samachar, February 14, 1960.

40. R.S. Chauhan, Political Development in Nepal (New Delhi, 1970) pp. 123-27.

41. *Ibid.* 124.

Committee of the party called these reforms an "eye-wash" which had been taken "half-heartedly".<sup>41</sup> Most of the CPN's criticism of the B.P. Koirala government was directed at its foreign policy, which was alleged to be pro-India. It placed the highest priority on the struggle against reactionary revivalists - i.e. landlords, Rana supporters, and other vested interests.

Lok Raj Baral wrote:

the CPN contributed to the institutionalisation of political opposition, particularly at a time when disgruntled politicians and feudal elements had been engaged in pulling down the established parliamentary government. When the King dismissed the parliamentary government, there were few to shed tears over it. Yet it suited the CPN to shed tears on the political situation after imposition of a ban on political parties and suspension of fundamental rights".<sup>42</sup>

Above all, it can be said that the CPN stood as an effective opposition to the government inside the parliament as well as through direct agitation. The party acted both as an ideological and 'opportunistic' critic of the government. In the balance, it was probable that it fared better than any other opposition group during the tenure of the Nepali Congress

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42. Lok Raj Baral, Oppositional Policies in Nepal (new Delhi, 1977), pp. 39-40.

government. This was because other oppositional political forces such as Gorkha Parishad, National Democratic Front and others focused on the issue of nationalism rather than on more genuine issues of the Nepalese people. The CPN stressed the issues of agrarian reforms and liquidation of the feudal system.

D. CPN's Attitude towards the Nepali Congress

According to Marxism-Leninism, a political party is more or less an expression of classes or class interests. The communists characterise a political party only on the basis of its class character.

Since the formation of the CPN, its relations with the Nepali Congress had not been cordial. It alleged that the Nepali congress followed a policy of "compromise" with the feudal Ranas. The CPN held that the Nepali Congress leadership represented a clique of the "national-capitalist bourgeoisie" composed of the Subarna Shamsher - B.P. Koirala group and was also a  
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tool of the reactionary Nehru government.

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43. Gupta, no. 27, p. 201.

Since its birth, the CPN had been advocating the line of united struggle against the Ranas. After the change of 1950-51, the Rana rule gradually came to an end and a weak parliamentary form of democracy was established under the leadership of the King. Consequently, the feudal forces also got organised <sup>44</sup> under the leadership of the King.

The CPN made a sharp attack on the Royal conspiracy and indulged in armed activities also. As a consequence of the attack on the Party by the Nepali Congress leadership, a section of the CPN leadership <sup>45</sup> regarded the Nepali Congress as the main enemy. Thus the differences within the CPN began. Two factions emerged, namely - the moderates, led by Dr. Kashar Jung Raimajhi and the extremists, led by Pushpa Lal. The Raimajhi faction considered the Nepali Congress as the primary obstacle to the progress of the communist movement in Nepal.

After the Royal take-over in December 1960, Pushpa Lal advocated the line of United struggle for restoration of the parliament with all the democratic and revolutionary forces including the Nepali Congress.

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44. C.P. Mainali, New Democratic Movement in Nepal (A collection of papers and interviews) (kathmandu 1991) pp. 3-4.

In the third Party Congress held in 1962, there was a debate on the issue of united struggle with the Nepali Congress against the King's action. It held the view that the Nepali Congress had a dual character. First, it was a bourgeois party and second, it also had relationship with the imperialists and Indian monopoly capitalists. However, the congress passed a resolution for a United Front with Nepali Congress because of its opposition to the King's dictatorship.<sup>46</sup> But the Raimajhi faction, which was expelled from the party during the third Party Congress, opposed this line and openly supported the King.<sup>47</sup>

Thereafter, the Man Mohan Adhikari-Mohan Bikram group considered both the Nepali Congress and the king as representatives of the same class.<sup>48</sup> But the Pushpa Lal faction rejected this view and claimed that the Nepali Congress was playing a progressive role by opposing the dictatorship of the King.

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46. Communist Party of Nepal, no. 31, pp. 58-60.

47. Political Report of the Fourth Conference of the Communist Party of Nepal (placed by Pushpa Lal and adopted by Conference) (Varanasi, 1972), p. 26.

48. Ibid, pp. 29-30.

Thus, the communists in Nepal followed various strategies and tactics. There were differences within them regarding the leadership of the working class. While the followers of the National Democratic Programme emphasised the joint leadership of the bourgeoisie and the working class, the followers of the New Democratic Programme advocated the leadership of the working class on the basis of worker-peasant alliance. The differences with regard to the appropriate ~~tactics~~ to be followed vis-a-vis the monarchy and the Nepali Congress, badly affected the movement and as a result led to a divide within the party. The Nepalese communists followed various modes of struggle: They participated in election; organised armed struggle, strikes, demonstrations etc. Despite the several weaknesses of the party and the adverse situation in the country, the communists became a formidable force in the politics of Nepal.

However, differences of strategies and tactics became a source of its weakness from the very beginning. Subsequently, the character of leadership and organisational split further threatened the movement. In the following chapter, we will discuss these issues.



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE, SOCIAL BASE AND LEADERSHIP

4.1. The CPN's Organisational Structure:

"There cannot be revolution without a revolutionary party" - so insisted Lenin, the able and successful architect of a true revolutionary working-class party, which accomplished the October Revolution of 1917 in Russia. According to the Marxist-Leninists, to be a good vanguard of the working people in their struggle for social liberation, the party must be well organised. Infact, the better it is organised and better the membership understands its demands, the more successfully can it itself adopt and implement its plans and policies. Depending on different conditions, the party organisations and its method of functioning among the masses differ. Yet there have always been some common features in every party which had directed the struggle of the working people for the construction of a new society.

The Communist Party of Nepal (CPN), in the beginning, started working as a legal party.

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1. Ernest Mandel, The Leninist Theory of Organisation: Its Relevance for Today (Antar Rashtriya Prakashan, Baroda, 1977), p.1.

Thereafter, the party was banned in 1952. It had to go underground and continued with its activities by infiltrating in various mass organisations of workers, peasants and women. The Party had to struggle only for economic demands rather than political struggle. The party-directed agitations among peasants, especially in the eastern region. According to the CPN's claims, the CPN affiliate Akhil Nepal Kishan Sangh (All-Nepal Peasant Organisation) had, by 1954, 43,000<sup>2</sup> members and 103 village level committees. The party itself resumed above ground activities under a new name, Jana Adhikar Suraksha Samiti (Civil Liberties Defence Committee). The declining popularity of the post-1950 government offered the CPN an opportunity to mobilise the disgruntled masses, who voiced their discontent through a series of strikes and demonstrations especially in Kathmandu. The Party won about 50 percent of the votes and 5 seats in the<sup>3</sup> Kathmandu Municipal elections of September 1953. Thus, the functioning of the party through these mass organisations benefitted it and its reputations and its strength also increased.

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2. Anirudha Gupta, Politics in Nepal (Allied Publishers, Bombay, 1964), p. 203.
  3. R.S. Chauhan, "Political Parties in Nepal", in Haruluro, Fukui, ed., Political Parties of Asia and the Pacific (Greenwood Press, 1985), p.808.

The ban on the party was lifted in 1956 and again it became legal. It continued with its activities as legal party until the royal take-over in December 1960. Thereafter a split within the CPN took place and this process of factionalism continued for a long time. However, during the period (1949-72) the CPN, in its party Congresses and in several other meetings, debated the organisational matters along with other policy matters.

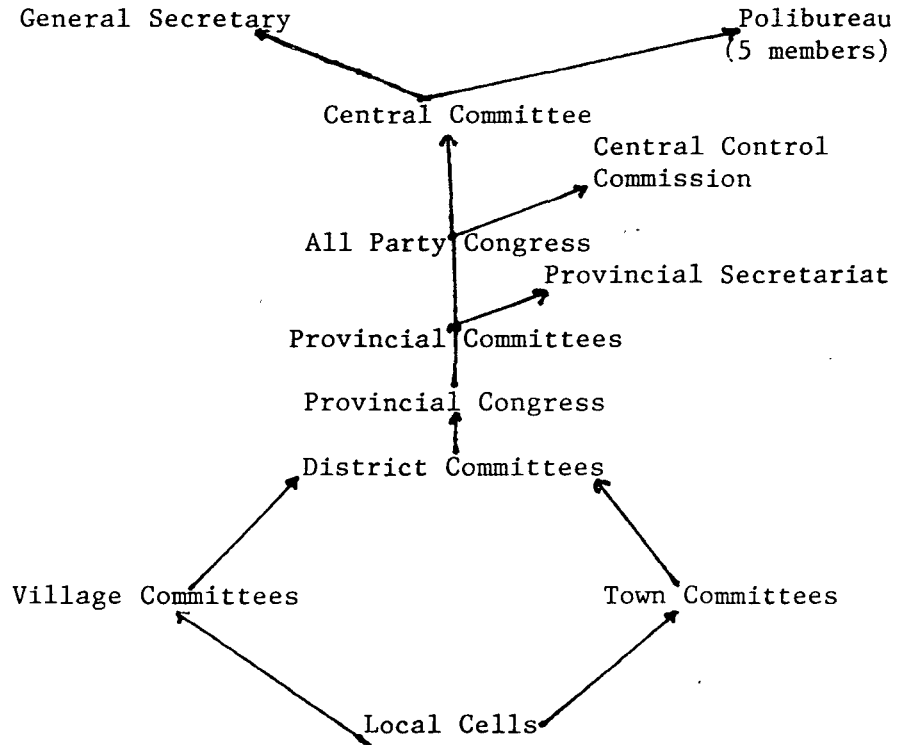
The CPN during its First Party Congress in 1954, adopted a constitution, outlining the party's organisational structure (see Chart - I). Later on, during Central Committee meeting in the last week of September, 1960, the CPN proposed some changes in the party structure which were to take place in the Third Party Congress.<sup>4</sup> But the Party Congress could not be convened by the scheduled time owing to dissolution of the parliament by the King in December, 1960. It was only in 1962, where it adopted a new constitution, outlining the new Party structure (see Chart - II).

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4. Asian Recorder, Vol.VI, no.42, 1960, p.3589

C H A R T - I

Organisational Structure of the  
Communist Party of Nepal Under the  
5<sup>th</sup>  
1954 Party Constitution.



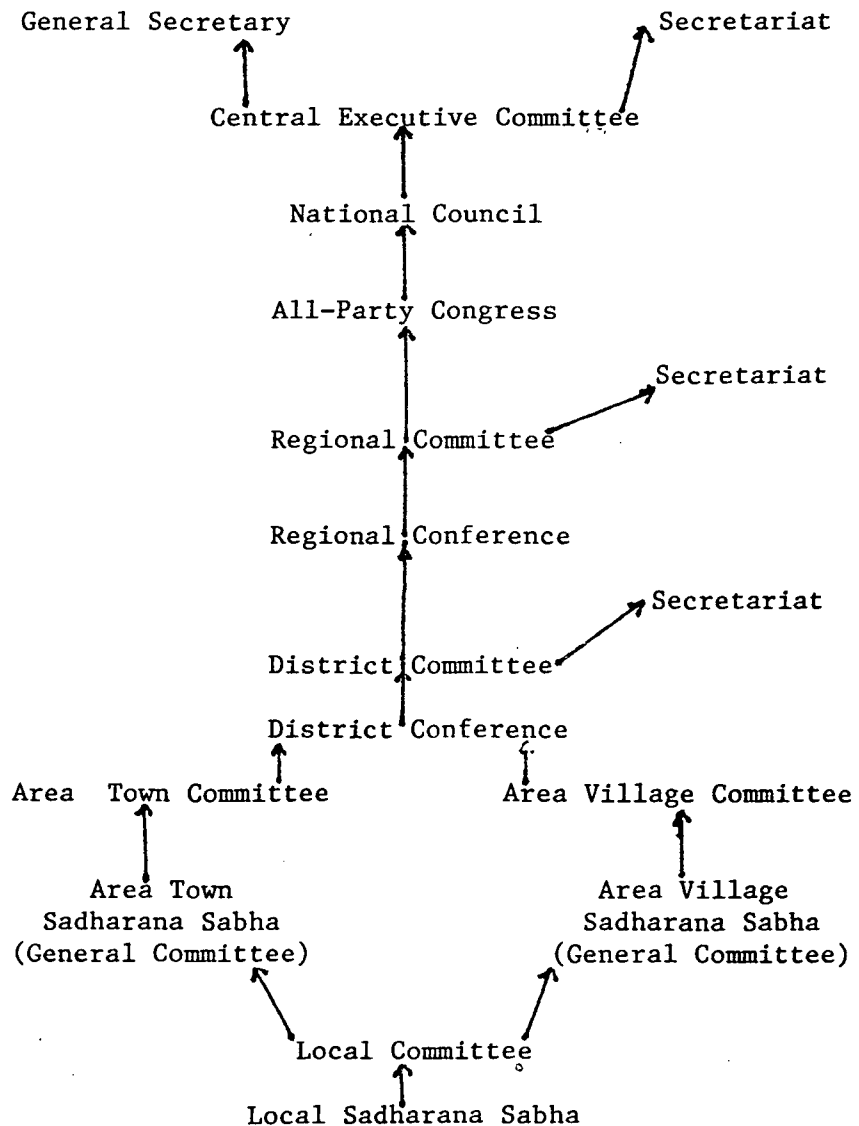
- a. The size of the Central Committee was left to discussion of the All-Party Congress. However, at that time it had 17 to 19 members.
- b. The Central Control Commission was given the task of maintaining Party discipline, guaranteeing that all Party units implement the decisions of the higher-level committees.
- c. There were seven Provincial Committees: (1) East Kosi; (2) West Kosi; (3) North Gandak; (4) South Gandak; (5) Middle Gandak; (6) West Gandak; and (7) Karnali.

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5. Leo E Rose, "Communism Under High Atmospheric Conditions", in Robert A Sealapino, ed., The Communist Revolution in Asia: Tactics, Goals and Achievements (Univ. of California, 1969), p.368.

C H A R T - I I

Organisational Structure of the CPN under the 1962 Party Constitution adopted by the Third CPN Party Congress.  
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6. Communist Party of Nepal, Nepal Kammunist Party Ko Vidhan (Constitution of the Communist Party of Nepal) (amended and adopted by Third Party Congress) (Varanashi, 1962), pp. 6-17.

### Principles of Democratic Centralism:

The rules of the CPN party constitution adopted at the Third Congress held in 1962 indicated that the structure of the CPN was based on and its internal life was guided by the principles of democratic centralism. It was purely on the Leninist lines. Democratic Centralism means centralised leadership based on inner-party democracy and democracy under the guidance of the centralised leadership.

In the sphere of the party structure, the principle of democratic centralism<sup>7</sup> signify:

- that all leading party bodies shall be elected from top to bottom;
- that the leading party bodies shall periodically report on their work to the party organisation immediately below and all lower bodies shall likewise report to their higher committees immediately. The leading committees immediately. The leading committees, shall pay constant heed to the opinions and criticism of lower party committees;
- that decisions of higher bodies shall be strictly binding upon lower bodies;
- that party discipline and subordination of the minority opinion to the majority opinion shall be strictly observed; and

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7. Ibid. pp. 5-6.

- that all party organisation shall work in conformity with the principle of collectivism and every communist shall be responsible for the fulfilment of his duties and party assignments.

It further stated that while organising the units the party would pay heed to the administrative areas, 14 regions and 75 districts. But it would be done paying attention to the concrete situation. The permission of higher body was essential for the formation of a new unit or disorganising the unit. It also mentioned that for the district committee at least 25 members and three area committees were essential. In the absence of this, the area committee would be supervised by regional committee.

The CPN's Third Party Congress convened at Banaras in 1962 adopted a new constitution by outlining the organisational structure (see chart 2). It made far reaching changes in the party structure. It was very similar to the organisational structure of the Communist Party of India. The Central Committee and politbureau were replaced by a 51-member National Council and Secretariat. The provincial committees

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8. Ibid. p.6

were dissolved and regional committees were established. Below the National Council were district committees and branch committees in that order.

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The organisational structure of the 'moderate' faction led by Raimajhi included district committees; provincial congress; provincial committees, with a provincial secretariat; All Party Congress, with central control commission; central committee with 15 full and 7 alternate members, the politburo, whose most important members were Keshar Jung Raimajhi and Kamar Shah; a general secretary, again Raimajhi.

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The changes in the organisational structure also took place when Pushpa Lal alleged that Tulsi Lal Amatya started violating the principle of democratic centralism and refused to call the Central Executive Committee meeting. During a convention it dissolved the central committee and replaced it with a

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9. Asian Recorder, vol.8, 1962, pp.4699-700.
  10. Yearbook on International Communist Affairs 1971(California, 1971), p.653, see also, New Age (New Delhi), 12 January 1969.
  11. Communist Party of Nepal, Nepal Kammunist Parti Ko Tishro Sammelan ko Eitihasi Mahatva (The Historical Significance of the Third Conference of Communist Party of Nepal), (Varanasi, 1969), p.3.



Central Organising Committee with Pushpa Lal as its Secretary. The new committee's task was to prepare documents for presentation at the Third Party Conference schedule for May 1968.<sup>12</sup>

The 1968 CPN Conference elected Pushpa Lal as General Secretary. It replaced the Central Organising Committee and established the five zonal organising bureaus as arms of restored central committee.<sup>13</sup>

Thereafter the CPN made a considerable progress. The party had been able to work in 12 zones out of 14 zones and in 50 districts out of 75 districts.<sup>14</sup> Thus, it can be said that inspite of some weaknesses, the Communist Party was highly organised. It was not a loosely knit body like the Nepali Congress.

#### 4.2. Social Base of the CPN:

"Almost all of the important communist parties of Asia have a substantial petty bourgeois intellectual element in their membership, indicating the vital

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12. *ibid*, pp. 7-8.

13. Chauhan, No.3, p.812.

14. Mohan Dhvaj Gurung, Notes on the Communist Movement in Nepal (Varanasi, 1977), p.18.

significance of capturing as many of the educated elite as possible. This element, to a large extent, constitutes the middle level leadership of the society, a group commanding the respect of the masses."<sup>15</sup>

In the beginning the CPN's rank and file came from among peasantry especially landless and lower-middle class peasants. And the rest of the ranks was composed of students, lower middle class intelligentsia and business community in the cities.<sup>16</sup> But after the royal take-over in 1960, the growing strength of the party was paralysed when the CPN, with other political parties, was banned. Consequently this led the CPN mainly limit to the petty-bourgeois section of the society. In this context, it would be relevant to reproduce the table presented by Scalapino in terms of the socio-economic background of the members of the CPN<sup>17</sup> from which they came.

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15. Robert A. Scalapino, "Communism in Asia: Toward A Comparative Analysis" in The Communist Revolution in Asia: Tactics, Goals and Achievements ed. Robert A Scalapino, (Univ. of Cali., 1969), p. 40.

16. Gupta, No. 2, p-210.

17. Scalapino, no. 12, pp. 38-9.

Worker	Farmer	Intellectual or (petty-bourgeois)	Other bourgeois
Very weak	Very weak	Very strong	Medium

This table shows that the members of the Communist Party mainly came from the petty-bourgeois intellectual class. The CPN's base in the peasantry and the working classes was very weak which has been the backbone of the Communist Movement all over the world.

The Communist Party of Nepal was the only political organisation functioning in Nepal, despite the ban on all political organisations, because of its well-knit underground machinery. There was no concrete information about its strength because of its division into various factions. However, from the limited sources, the strength was estimated at about 10,000<sup>18</sup> members, an increase of 4,000 members in the 6 years. When the party was outlawed in December 1960 it had a<sup>19</sup> membership of 6,000 and 2,000 cadets. Therefore the size of the Communist Party continued to vary. Later the extremist faction claimed that the strength of the<sup>20</sup> CPN had increased very significantly. However, the

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18. Hemen Ray, "Communism in Nepal", Contemporary Review, 212(1224), January 1968, pp. 25-30.  
19. samiksha, 11 June, 193.  
20. Gurung, no.14, p. 18.

number of the party activists was not so much as it was claimed. It was estimated in 1967, that there were not more than 500 active workers<sup>21</sup> in all the factions of the CPN.

The CPN also worked through various pro-Communist organisations like All Nepal Peace Council, Kisan Sangh (Farmers' Association), Mahila (Women) Association, Nepal Trade Union Congress and Students' Organisation.

The King's ban on all political organisations including the CPN did not affect its activities in comparison with other political parties. It was because of its well-knit underground machinery and the support given by Raimajhi faction of the CPN to the King's regime. As a consequence the policy followed by King Mhendra gave the CPN a decisive advantage. The Communists thus succeeded in infiltrating in the officially sponsored organisations of peasants, labour, women students and such others. Especially the extremist faction of the CPN took the greatest<sup>22</sup> advantage of this opportunity, as it was evident from this report:

Infiltration is so deep in all sections of the governmental organisation that communist workers may reach any of their pockets of influence within<sup>23</sup> 48hours.

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21. Rose, no.5, p.385.  
22. Dainik Nepal, April 15, 1964.  
23. Nepal To-day, vol.7, no. 7, March 1, 1968, p. 1260.

The CPN gained a sizeable support in the election<sup>24</sup> of the National Panchayat in 1963, 1965 and 1967. The extremist faction of the CPN had also been able to gain considerable support among the students in the country. For instance, the pro-extremist CPN student organisation, the All Nepal National Free Students Union found itself competing with other student organisation affiliated to other political forces in the country. The teachers and high school students were also involved in the communist activities.

However, with regard to the strengthening position of the CPN, it was considered that the communist influence was due to the thoroughness with which the royal regime had destroyed the base of the Nepali<sup>25</sup> Congress and other political organisations.

Region-wise, the CPN's activities were concentrated in Kathmandu and the Terai region. Moreover, its activities spread in the Dharah, Rautahat and Saptarai districts of the terai region and the hill districts of Palpa, Dang, Pokhra and Dhenukuta<sup>26</sup> districts.

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24. Rose, no. 18, p. 384.

25. Ibid.

26. Ray, no. 15, p. 30.

#### 4.3. Leadership:

The leadership plays an extremely important role in the success of any socio-political movement. The socio-economic background together with regional, ethnocentric and other considerations determine the composition of the leadership. According to Marxism-Leninism, the leadership of the working class (or proletariat) is a sine quo non for the success of the socialist revolution.

There had been intense factionalism within the Communist Party of Nepal. The inadequacies of the leadership, and its division on what were essentially tactical rather than ideological questions rendered division within the party, absorbing the workers' energies and attention.<sup>27</sup> The opportunism of leaders also had its impact on the activities of the CPN. This opportunism rendered division among the followers and supporters of the communist ideology. For instance, Mr. Sailendra Kumar Upadhyaya had been the minister in the partyless panchayat system in 1970 who had been a top leader of the CPN before 1980.

But perhaps such factionalism inevitably stems from the nature of the leadership. The socio-economic background of the leaders: regional, ethnocentric and other such aspects play a significant role.

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27. Rose, no. 18, p. 382.

In socio-economic terms, the leadership of the communist party of Nepal came pre-dominantly from the middle class or in Marxian terms, from the petty - bourgeoisie. In this regard it would be relevant to reproduce the table presented by Scalapino in terms of the socio-economic background of the top leaders from which came.

Worker	Farmer	Intellectual or Petty-bourgeoisie	Bourgeoisie
Very weak	Weak	Very strong	Strong

Note: Top leadership as used here, refers to members and alternate members of the politburo and central committees and to those occupying the positions of comparable importance. Strength is assigned on the basis of a five-terms scale: Very weak, weak, medium, strong and very strong. Strength relates to numbers and importance within the party, not to whether the representation is great or less than the numerical proposition of the class in the society at large.

This table does not provide a true marxist analysis of the CPN leadership. For example, the farmer (or peasantry) has many categories i.e. poor, middle and rich peasants. However, it gives a broad

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28. Scalapino, no.12,, p.12, See also, Lok Raj Baral, Oppositional Politics in Nepal (New Delhi, 1977), p. 91.

picture of the socio-economic background of the leadership. The table shows that the leaders of the CPN (factions) came mainly from the petty-bourgeoisie section of the society. The working class and peasantry had very weak position in the leadership of the communist party. It was also asserted that the peasants and workers could not enjoy any representation even at the lower levels of the CPN hierarchy.

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As far as region-wise representation is concerned, most of the leaders came from a few regions of Nepal like Kathmandu, the industrial town of Biratnagar, Jhapa, near the Indian border; and several towns along Indian railways, such as Janakpur, Birganj and Nepalganj.

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However, on the other hand, the 'extremist' faction of the CPN led by Pushpa Lal claimed that there were three central fronts - Kissan (peasants), youth and students, and intellectual under the Central leadership of the Party.

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29. Chauhan, no. 10, p. 813.

30. ibid.

31. Gurung, no. 11, p. 18.



The leadership of the CPN could not succeed to mobilise the peasantry which comprised more than 80 percent of Nepal's population and the working class. The party's effective influence was largely confined to petty-bourgeoisie (intellectual), students and those in service. However, it can be attributed to the adverse situation in which the party had to function in the underground and outside the country after 1960.

It was considered that the character of the leadership must be held responsible for the perpetual and debilitating ideological divisions within the party and failure to move against the feudal rulers. Instead of facing the pressing domestic issues, such as the eviction of tenants by their landlords, non-implementation of promised land reforms, unemployment and inflation, the party began and ended up with denunciation of American imperialism, Indian expansionism and other such issues. Consequently, the impact of the CPN on Nepal's political system, policy making and society remained negligible.

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32. Chauhan, no. 10, p. 814.

Above all it can be said that despite the intense factionalism within the CPN and the unfavourable situation in which the party had to work, the party was better organised than other political forces. Its policy of infiltrations into the mass organisations succeeded very much. With respect to its social base, much of its strength came from petty bourgeois sections of the society. This character of the leadership of the CPN, limited the target of party's effective influence mainly among the intellectuals, students and those in services. Regionwise, CPN's activities were mainly confined to Kathmandu and Terai. The Party failed to make its base in peasantry (which comprised more than 80 percent of population) and working class and to develop the leadership from these classes which had been the backbone of the Communist movement all over the world.

Apart from these, the external factors also had their impact on the Communist movement of a particular country because after all it used to be a part of the world communist movement. The impact of the contemporary developments in the World Communist Movement on the CPN's politics will be studied in the next chapter.

THE CPN AND EXTERNAL FACTORS

Every communist party claimed itself to be a part of the international communist movement which sought to establish proletarian internationalism. Accordingly, the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) had supported the world communist movement and also its slogan "proletarian of all countries, unite".

The CPN since its very inception supported the anti-colonial and national liberation movement of the people of the colonial countries. The CPN put emphasis on the co-operation between the Nepalese and the Indian communist parties. It opposed the recruitment of the Gorkhas in the foreign armies that served the interests of imperialism and worked against the liberation movement of the people especially in Burma, Malaya and other such countries. But the split in the international communist movement between Soviet Union and China had its impact on the communist movement in other countries too. The CPN could not remain unaffected.

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1. Communist Party of Nepal, Nepal Communist Party Ko Atharah Varshko Krantikari Sangharsha ko Simhaawalokan Evam Shiksha (A View of the Eighteen Year Revolutionary Struggle of the Communist Party of Nepal and its Lessons) (Varanasi, India, 1968), pp. 9-10.

### 5.1. Sino-Soviet schism and the CPN:

The split in the world communist movement proved to be extremely serious. The Schism widened rapidly after the 20th congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) held in 1956. At this Congress a number of views concerning the contemporary international communist movement were advanced which were later denounced by the Chinese communists as being revisionistic. In particular, the complete negation of Stalin on the pretext of 'combating the personality cult' and the thesis of three peacefuls - peaceful coexistence, peaceful competition and peaceful transition to socialism were considered to be violations of Marxism-Leninism.<sup>2</sup>

In November 1960, 81 communist and workers parties of the world, including that of China, attended a conference at Moscow in which the 81 parties' document, known as Moscow Declaration was adopted. It also welcomed the resolutions including that of 'National Democracy', passed at the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956.

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2 Peking Review, 13 September 1963, "the Origin and Development of Differences between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves, comment on the Open Letter to the Central Committee of the CPSU, in William E. Griffith, Sino-Soviet Rift (Cambridge, Massachusset, 1964), pp. 28-43.

It is not intended here to go into the details of the origins and ramifications of the Sino-Soviet differences. Some of the basic issues raised referred to the global strategy of the communist camp vis-a-vis the capitalist world. The major issues in dispute between the Soviet Union and China on which there was controversy could be summarised as follows:

1. The CPSU believed that there was a real possibility that war could be avoided because the balance of world forces had turned against imperialism and the world socialist forces were becoming the decisive factor. The CPC, on the contrary, believed that imperialism was the inevitable source of wars. It asserted that so long as imperialism existed war could not be eliminated.<sup>3</sup>

2. With respect to national liberation movements, the CPC criticised the Soviet Union with failing to support national liberation struggle because of the latter's apprehension that local wars might precipitate larger conflicts. The CPSU's position was that liberation struggles must continue and would be supported. However, the CPSU emphasised that a sharp distinction must be drawn between internal wars and wars between

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3 Ibid, p.21.

states. The wars of national liberation, in the opinion of CPSU must not be promoted from outside. It considered National liberation wars as conflicts<sup>4</sup> between people of an area against their rulers.

The CPSU proclaimed that "peaceful co-existence of the socialist and capitalist countries is an objective necessity for the development of human society." The CPC, on the other hand, said "the contradiction in the world should be correctly handled and the principle of peaceful coexistence should apply to relations between countries with between social system. It further stated that this principle should never be extended to apply to relations between the oppressed and the oppressing countries or between the oppressed and oppressing classes. For an oppressed nation or people the question is one of waging a revolutionary struggle to overthrow the rule of imperialism and reactionaries; it is not, and can not be, a question of peaceful co-<sup>5</sup>existence with imperialism and the reactionaries."

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4. Ibid, pp. 21-22.

5. The Great Debate: Selected writings on Problems of Marxism-Leninism Today (People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1963), pp. 63-64.

Thus the CPC emphasised a global revolutionary posture. It viewed the 'inevitable' world wide victory of socialism as resulting primarily from peaceful and successful economic competition with capitalism .

4. The CPSU developed the doctrine of 'national democracy' as a transitional phase to socialism in under-developed countries. Under 'national democracy' the national bourgeoisie, in its opinion, would play an objectively 'progressive' role especially in the accomplishment of the principal tasks of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution. Therefore the national bourgeoisie in the opinion of CPSU, should be given political and economic aid. While explicitly rejecting this view, the CPC took a pessimistic view of the national bourgeoisie and preferred to support communist parties. It also demanded that Soviet economic aid be given to China and not to such 'pro-  
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imperialist' national bourgeoisie states as India.

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6 Griffith, no. 2, p. 23. See also Robert A Scalapino; "The Sino-Soviet Conflict in Perspective", The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, vol. 351, January 1964, pp. 1-64.

The great debate which ensued between the Soviet and Chinese Communists became intensified towards the end of 1960s when the Chinese leadership intensified its struggle against 'revisionism'. This added a new emphasis to their internal as well as external policies. The CPC declared in 1967 that a capitalist restoration had taken place in the USSR and that a similar experience must be avoided in China at any cost. The intensification of the criticism of the USSR took place after the Czechoslovakia event in 1968 and armed clashes on the Sino-Soviet border on the Ussuri river. The Chinese revived the term 'social-imperialism' which Lenin had used to denounce the 'revisionists' of the second International. By 'social-imperialism', they meant, quoting Lenin, "socialism in words, imperialism in deeds, the growth of opportunism into imperialism."<sup>7</sup> They argued that since capitalism was being restored in the Soviet Union, its international expression was imperialism. Soviet leaders, on the other side, accused the Chinese of 'great nation chauvinism'.

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<sup>7</sup> Manoranjan Mohanty, The Political Philosophy of Mao Tse-Tung (Macmillan, Delhi 1980) p. 123-25.



During the Ninth Congress of the CPC held in April 1969 the delegates/resolutions presented the redefined world-view of China. It emphasised that the contradiction between the oppressed nations on the one hand and imperialism and 'social imperialism' on the other had become the principle contradiction in the world. By developing the three world view, it divided the world into three camps. The Soviet Union and the United States, as making up the first world and also striving for world hegemony by subjecting other countries to their aggression, interference, control, subversion and plunder etc. The developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and other region make up the Third World. The developed countries composed of Europe, Japan, Canada and others between the two make up the second world.

Thus the split within the world communist movement especially between the Soviet Union and China had been a very important issue for the communist and communist parties all over the world. The CPN could not remain unaffected.

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8. Ibid, pp. 126-27, See also "Three World" Peking Review 20 (45), November 4, 1977, pp. 11-14.

The Pushpa Lal faction of the CPN claimed that at the time of the curious debate in the international communist movement, four members of Politburo of the CPN (Raimajhi, Kamar Shah, D.P. Adhikari and Tulsi Lal Amatya) had supported Khrushchev, While Pushpa Lal had opposed the decision of the 20th Congress of the CPSU . But officially the CPN shied away from taking any position on these contentious ideological issues. Furthermore, neither Peking nor Moscow took any step to encourage the CPN leadership to take a clear stand with regard to this controversy.

The influence of the split within the international communist movement, however, was not visible on the CPN, until its third party congress held in 1962. The party, at this Congress, adopted the programme of 'National Democracy' to bring about revolution in Nepal. The Pushpa Lal faction denounced it as being 'revisionistic'. But with the intention of maintaining unity in the party, it did not go all out against the official position.

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9 Communist Party of Nepal, no. 1, pp. 90-1

10 Hemen Ray, "Communism in Nepal," Contemporary Review, 212 (1224), January 1968, p. 29.

None of the CPN leaders took an explicit pro-Soviet or pro-Chinese position till 1965, although their general predilections were evident in some of their policy statements. Raimajhi faction, for instance, sided with the Soviet Union on the test ban treaty and Soviet interpretation of the documents of the Moscow Declarations of 1960.<sup>11</sup> Pushpa Lal and Tulsi Lal (even adopting the Soviet thesis of 'National Democracy') were known to have pro-China leanings. The 1968 CPN Conference held by Pushpa Lal faction supported the Chinese call for the unity in the international communist movement and condemned the alleged Soviet attempt to divide the movement.<sup>12</sup>

Thus the ideological schism that emanated within the CPN, way back in 1955, regarding the tactics to be adopted towards other political forces like the monarchy and the Nepali Congress, further deepened with the Sino-Soviet rift over various ideological issues including that of 'National Democracy' in the transition towards socialism especially in the under-developed countries.

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11. Leo E. Rose, "Communism under High Atmospheric Conditions: The Party in Nepal" in Robert A Scalapino, ed., Communist Revolution in Asia: Tactics, Goals and Achievements (University of California Press, 1969), p. 382.

12. K. Dixit, "Communist Movement in Nepal", Frontier, 3 (17), July 18, 1970, p. 12.

5.2. The CPN and its relationship with the Communist Parties across national boundaries:

Since the dissolution of the communist international in 1943, there had been no guiding centre for the communists either in the formal or informal sense. The Soviet Union, however, had been the country from where the communist parties of the world took inspiration. But after the Sino-Soviet split, there was no question of guiding centre for the world communist movement and proletarian internationalism continued to operate in solidarity and consultation  
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with the fraternal parties.

It was quite natural that until the Sino-Soviet split, the CPN supported the communist parties which were part of the world communist movement. From the very outset, the CPN considered the Soviet Union as the leader of the world democratic forces and adopted the policy of friendship with the camp of anti-imperialism, democracy, socialism and peace led by the Soviet  
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Union. During the period of cold war, the CPN continued to uphold and propagate the Moscow line of

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13 Communist Party of Nepal, no. 1, p.92.

14 Bheem Raval, Nepalma Samyawadi Andolan: Udbhava va Vikas (Communist Movement in Nepal: Origin and Development) (Kathmandu, 1990), p. 139.

'peace offensive' through the all Nepal Peace Committee  
15  
and its affiliated groups.

The Chinese model of socialism had provided inspiration to a large number of Nepalese Communists. After the Sino-Soviet Split, Pushpa Lal and Tulsi Lal factions of the CPN were known to be pro-China. But until 1968 they did not come out publicly. It was only in 1968 conference, Pushpa Lal supported faction upheld the Chinese position for the unity in the international communist movement. Influenced by the cultural revolution and the thought of Mao Tse-tung, the Nepalese communists tried to establish formal relationship with Chinese communist party. But they  
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could not make much progress in this direction.

The CPN's relation with Indian communist parties had been of great significance. The close relationship between the Indian Communists and Nepalese Communists extends back into the pre-independence period when a few Nepalese were admitted to membership in the

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15. R.S. Chauhan, "Political Parties in Nepal", in Haruluro Fukui, ed., Political Parties of Asia and the Pacific (Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 808.

16. Raval, no. 14, p. 140.

Communist Party of India (CPI). This occurred most widely in a few urban centres such as Calcutta, Banaras, Gorakhpur and Patna, where there were a number of Nepalese students, and in the tea plantation areas of Darjeeling district, where there were large communities of migrant Nepalese workers among whom communist-dominated labour unions had made some  
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inroads.

The Nepalese communist leaders used to take guidance from and consultation with their Indian counterparts. As Leo Rose wrote:

Communist verbiage in Nepal tends to be a close reflection of that currently preoccupying the communist movement in India, for the arguments and symbolism used are frequently borrowed directly from the Indian Communist Party even though they may not be particularly relevant to objectives  
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conditions within Nepal.

The divergent trends - leftist, centrist and rightist - within the Indian Communist Movement had their implications on the Nepalese communist movement. It was not only that the contemporary Nepalese government had been 'pro-Indian' but the entire communist movement and its leaders also had been

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17. Rose, no. 113, p.364

18. Ibid.

influenced by the Indian communist movement, struggle and various events. For instance, various peasants' movement were considered to be form of the Telengana movement of 1949 led by the undivided Communist Party  
19  
of India.

After the ban on political activities in 1960, their political-refuge in India served the CPN leaders to strengthen their ties with their Indian counterparts. The splits took place in the CPI in 1964 and 1967. The Nepalese communist leaders, even after the split within the CPI, continued to have close ties despite wide subsequent differences in their tactics and ideology. As Leo Rose said, a leader of the 'extremist' reportedly pro-China, faction of the CPN in exile in India had his closest personal relationship with a leader of the moderate, 'pro-Soviet' and 'anti-  
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China' wing of the CPI.

But an interesting thing to mention here is that the pro-Soviet faction of the CPN led by Raimajhi did

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19 Shakti Lamsal, "Nepal Kammunist Party Ko Pratanam Adhiveshan: Kehi Samjhana" (First Party Congress of the Communist Party of Nepal: Its Understanding), Jhilko, vol.2, no. 2047 (1989), pp. 48-49.

20 Rose. no.11, p. 365.

not establish final relationship with the "pro-Soviet" Indian Communist Party. Mr. Ajoy Ghosh, the then General Secretary of the "pro-Soviet" CPI warned the pro-Soviet faction of the CPN led by Raimajhi that "he should not make the Nepal communist party a King's party".<sup>21</sup>

Later on during the period of Naxalite Movement in India, the Nepalese established their relationship with the Naxalite leaders in India.<sup>22</sup> Apart from this, the CPN leaders were also reported to have been financed by the Indian communists. The Naya Sandesh reported "the Nepal communist Party leaders, though maintaining a neutral stand on the Sino-Soviet dispute, were being<sup>23</sup> financed by the Pro-Soviet Indian Communist Party".

### 5.3. The Sino-Indian Border Dispute and the CPN

The Sino-Indian border dispute of 1962 had its impact on the communist activities. The termination of the Nepali congress led movement in December 1962 in

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21 R.S. Chauhan, Political Development in Nepal (1950-70) (New Delhi, 1970), p. 298.

22 Nepal Today, vol. 7, no.16, July 15, 1968, p.1351.

23 Naya Sandesh, December 28, 1963.



the wake of the flare-up of the Sino-Indian border dispute into actual fighting, placed the extremist faction of the CPN led by Pushpa Lal in a quandary. Pushpa Lal's policy had been based on the proposition that "the overthrow of King Mahendra should be the primary goal of the CPN, even if the immediate result was a regime dominated by the Nepali Congress".<sup>24</sup>

With the termination of the militant campaign against the royal regime, the policy adopted by Pushpa Lal was considered to be "unrealistic" and ineffective. It was claimed that a number of CPN workers in exile in India became disillusioned and returned to Nepal and presumably claimed to have made peace with the Raimajhi faction.<sup>25</sup>

The Sino-Indian conflict contributed to the development of a serious rift within the extremist' faction i.e. between the followers of Pushpa Lal and Tulsi Lal Amatya.

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24 Joshi and Rose, no. 7, p. 455.

25 ibid, pp. 455-6.

A meeting of the Central Executive (extended) Committee of the CPN was held in exile in the month of April 1963 under the Chairmanship of Pushpa Lal, to consider the situation and to devise new tactics. It asserted that the central secretariat called off the proposed democratic movement on the ground that "neutral" foreign policy of Nepal was being made insecure by virtue of its geographical position<sup>26</sup>. It further stated that Nepalese mind was also diverted from the movement to see the outcome of the Sino-Indian clash. The rift between Pushpa Lal and Tulsi Lal first came into open at this time. The resolution on organisation and tactics submitted by Pushpa Lal was adopted after some criticisms made by Tulsi Lal.<sup>27</sup>

This resolution discussed "cardinal" issues pertaining to consolidation of the party, advancement of democratic struggle and establishment of all democratic and patriotic forces. The broad based United Front which the Committee visualised included the entire "democratic" and "patriotic forces" within and outside the country. Tulsi Lal Amatya viewed it as

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26 Report of the Third Central Executive (extended) Committee of the Communist Party of Nepal (Nepal Communist Party, Varanasi, 1963), pp. 4-5.

27 Rose, no. 8, p. 379.

a "revisionist" line, likely to betray his model of "national democracy". He argued that alliance with other democratic parties should be sought only when these advanced the Party's long-term political goal, national democracy, and not merely for short-term expediency.

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Therefore, it can be said that as a consequence of the Sino-Indian Border conflict, the CPN was compelled to withdraw the proposed democratic movement with the Nepali Congress against the dictatorship of the King. Partly at least because of this conflict, the 'extremist' faction experienced a further split. Pushpa Lal adopted an attitude critical of China while Tulsi Lal took a pro-China position. However, after some time, these two leaders were able to reconcile their differences; and both tended to take pro-China position and continued to operate from Indian territory. The 'cardinal' relationship at the government to government level between Nepal and China caused to neutralise the oppositional role of the CPN.

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Other pro-China communist leaders like Man Mohan Adhikari glorified the King as, "Usurper of the

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28 Lok Raj Baral, Oppositional Politics in Nepal (New Delhi, 1977), pp. 85-86

29 Ibid, 179.

rights of the People" and until the death of King Mahendra, tried to keep the policy of equidistance between the King and the Nepali Congress.

5.4. The Chinese Cultural Revolution, Naxalite Movement in India & the CPN

The Chinese Cultural Revolution called the "great proletarian cultural revolution" began during the middle of 1966. As was claimed, it was introduced to remove the bureaucratic degeneration of the communists in China and was aimed at making the young generation aware of the Marxist-Leninist doctrines to eliminate all feudal and bourgeois influence among the Chinese people.

The main objective of the Chinese cultural revolution was stated as :

to struggle against and crush those persons in authority who are taking the capitalist road. to criticise and repudiate the reactionary bourgeois academic authorities and ideology of the bourgeois and all other exploiting classes and to transform education, literature and art and all other parts of the superstructure that do not correspond to the socialist economic base, so as to facilitate the consolidation and development of the socialist system.

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30. Mohan Dhwai Gurung, Notes on the Communist Movement in Nepal (Varanasi, 1977), p. 16.
31. Baral, no. 28, p. 30
32. August 8, 1966. , "Decisions of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution", adopted at Eleventh Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee held in Peking from August 1 to 12, 1966, reprinted in Cultural Revolution in China (National Book Agency, Calcutta, 1966), p.2.

The Chinese cultural revolution had been a great inspiration for a large number of communists all over the world including Nepalese communists. It had its impact on the activities of the communists in Nepal. In particular, it attracted the petty-bourgeois section of the society and the peasantry especially the poor 33 peasants. It also attracted the revolutionary youth.

Reportedly, the cultural revolution inspired the 'radical' to take the position that Mao's strategy alone could liberate Nepal from the clutches of its feudal lords. Man Mohan Adhikari, in the first editorial of the party-paper Nava-Jagaran declared, "we shall be guided by the brilliant light of the thought 34 of Mao Tse-Tung. He further stated: For victory we need three things: "First, arms; second, arms; and third and last, arms. Every communist should understand the truth that political power emerges from 35 the barrel of a gun".

Posters bearing Mao's portraits and his quotations appeared on public walls. Opponents of the party became the target of assault and their homes were raided. Attempts were made to indoctrinate and recruit army officers for service in the anti-government armed 36 struggle.

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33. Communist Party of Nepal, no. 6, pp. 29-30.

34. Samiksha, July 24, 1970.

35. Chauhan, no. 11, p. 812

36. *ibid*, pp. 812-13.

Meanwhile the Naxalite movement in India began in 1967 by taking inspiration from the Chinese Cultural Revolution and the thoughts of Mao Tse-Tung. This too had its impact on the communist activities in Nepal.

During 1967, the Chinese Communist Party prescribed people's war as the answer to the problems of national democratic revolution in the third world countries especially in India, Burma and Indonesia. The order in which these countries received the attention of the Chinese Communist Party was significant. In India it synchronised with the Naxalbari uprising.<sup>37</sup>

In 1967, some 'radical' members of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) were influenced by the cultural revolution and the thought of Mao Tse-Tung. They saw the Maoist line as the only correct line for the revolution.

This was the rationale for the Naxalite movement in India which took place at Naxalbari, a district village under the sub-division of Darjeeling in North West Bengal. These Maoists started a "policy of annihilations of the class enemy" i.e. killing landlords, money lenders and the organs of law and order who protect these classes. They also tried to redistribute land among the landless.<sup>38</sup>

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37. Mohan Ram, Maoism in India (Delhi, 1971), p.10.

38. ibid, pp. 39-71.

The Nepalese Communist movement also could not remain unaffected from this Naxalite movement. It is apparent that from the very outset the CPN emphasised armed struggle to overthrow the feudal regime in Nepal. Influenced by the Cultural Revolution in China and the Naxalite movement in India, the 'radical' communists of Nepal drifted towards the Maoist line of people's war. The Jhapa district committee took decision for the 'guerilla warfare' to annihilate the class.

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The influence of the Naxalite movement spread particularly in the eastern region of Nepal. It was stated :

Apart from the proximity of the trouble spot to the Naxalbari area of the Indian Union, the temporary residence of some important Nepali communists - in-exile in the nearby North Bengal town of Siliguri has given credence to the theory of emergence of a new Nepalese Naxalbari in these eastern ditricts.

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The Nepalese communists met with many Indian Naxalite leaders for guidance. The Indian Naxalite leader Kana Sanyal was reported to have entered eastern

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39 Raval, no. 14, p.80

40 Nepal Today, vol. 7, no. 16, 15 July 1968, pp. 1351-2.

Nepal with more than 100 followers. The group held consultations with Communists and students. The latter were advised to forment disturbances within educational and industrial centres keeping Dharan and Biratnagar as bases.<sup>41</sup> They also tried to convince the local Maoists that the moment was opportune to exploit the discontent prevailing among the people as a result of the food scarcity and disturbances especially in Jhora areas.<sup>42</sup>

The Nepalese Maoists were reported "not only propagating Maoism but also collecting subscriptions forcibly, conducting raids on the houses of anti-social and feudal elements."<sup>43</sup>

Because of its proximity to Naxalbari, Jhapa district of eastern Nepal was influenced very much by the Naxalite activities. Some militant Nepalese communists practised it in Jhapa district. Several landlords were killed by the communists in this district.<sup>44</sup>

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41. Arati, May 23, 1971.

42. The Weekly Mirror, March 13, 1972.

43. Samiksha, September 11, 1970.

44. Gurung, No.30, pp.16-17.



The militant movement soon swelled and engulfed the larger part of the Himalayan Kingdom. A new trend in the communist movement, organised from underground, sprang up. This rising political trend gained quite a substantial support of the masses. But the movement suffered from extreme 'left-deviations' and lacked the mass base and mass mobilisation.

Meanwhile, King Mahendra had become worried from the on-going activities of the communists. He came to recognise them as the main threatenning force instead of the Nepali Congress which had been earlier its main opposition. On the other side, the communists were also branded as the "forces of subversion", as it was evident from this report :

.... Communist activities in Nepal have assumed a shape and magnitude that can hardly be ignored any longer. The King's concern at this development is indicated by the appeal he has made to patriotic and democratic elements for cooperation; the anxiety of the Congress is evident from the eagerness it has shown for such cooperation in its ready response to the

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King's appeal .....

Therefore, in an effort to prevent the expansion of communist activities and also to create a balance between the opposition forces i.e. Nepali Congress and the Communists, King Mahendra granted pardons in 1968 to imprisoned and exiled leaders of the Nepali Congress, such as, B.P. Koirala, Ganesh Man Singh and

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45. Asian Recorder, Vol. XIV, No.23, June 10-16, 1968, p.8365.

46. Nepal Today, Vol. 7, No.13, June 1, 1968, p.1319.

others. Hundreds of the CPN and congress supporters in the Terai area were arrested under the Public Security Act in 1971.

However, it was the new King Birendra who started crushing the militant activities. Several communists owing allegiance to Mao Tse-Tung were arrested, and many communists were killed in police firing. Consequently, serious differences cropped up once again in the communist movement and led the ground for another split in the movement.

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## CHAPTER - 6

### CONCLUSION

The communist movement in Nepal emerged out of the general democratic movement of the Nepalese against the Rana autocracy. There were, however, various other factors which contributed to its emergence. Among these were the - growth of the international communist movement, i.e. success of the Chinese revolution, victory of the Soviet Union in the Second World War, growing influence of the Indian communists and their impact on the Nepalese revolutionaries; the oppression of the Ranas; 'the Semi-feudal, semi-colonial' character of the Nepalese society; and Nepali Congress's 'compromising policy' with the feudal landlords represented by the Rana regime.

During the period 1949 - 1972, the CPN had been able to function legally only for 7 years. The party led a 'radical' movement for socio-economic transformation in the society. Since its very inception, the CPN had strived to organise the masses by adopting suitable forms of struggle to protect the interests of the exploited people and for greater democratisation.

The CPN, however, had been riddled with intense factionalism because of conflicting ideological positions within the party ; the strategical differences especially with regard to the leadership of the working class; differences with regard to the tactic to be followed towards the King and the Nepali Congress; impact of the Sino-Soviet schism, Cultural Revolution of China and Naxalite movement in India; role of 'reactionary' forces; and, the character of its leadership.

The programmes of 'New Democracy' and 'National Democracy' reflected the conflicting ideological positions and differences within the communist movement in Nepal. The Pushpa Lal and Man Mohan Adhikari factions had advocated 'New Democracy', while the Tulsi Lal Amatya and Raimajhi factions mainly had advocated 'National Democracy'.

The main elements in the concept of 'New Democracy' were 'dictatorship of the proletariat', transfer of land to the tillers; people's republic; articulation of class struggle; foreign policy in favour of peace, democracy and socialism and against war, imperialism and other reactionary forces in the world.

One of the advocates of 'National Democracy', the Tulsi Lal Amatya faction, emphasised the joint leadership of the working class and the national bourgeoisie of the state; alliance with petty feudalistic elements, ceiling on landholdings; supreme sovereign parliament as against the demand for people's republic; limited role for monarchy (by which it meant a constitutional monarchy); 'dynamic' neutral foreign policy and; above all, peaceful change within the society. The Raimajhi or 'royalist' faction, on the other hand, believed that the establishment of 'National Democracy' was only possible under the leadership of the King.

The ideological differences hindered the growth of the Nepalese communist movement. It divided the supporters of the movement. As a result, the party could not provide a strong opposition to the 'dictatorship of the King'.

With respect to strategy, the leadership of the working class had been an essential condition for the success of revolution in any country. However there had been differences within the CPN over this question. The Pushpa Lal faction emphasised the leadership of the

working class in the worker-peasant alliance forged under the guidance of the communist party. The Tulsī Lal Amatya faction did not advocate the exclusive leadership of the working class. It emphasised joint leadership of the working class and bourgeoisie. The Raimajhi faction accepted the leadership of the King to reach the stage of 'National Democracy'. But all the factions of the CPN understood that the character of the Nepalese revolution would be anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and democratic.

The CPN's tactics, particularly towards the King and the Nepali Congress, rendered division within the movement. The CPN from the very beginning, believed that the Nepali Congress was the representative of the 'National Bourgeoisie'. It also believed that the Congress was adopting a 'conciliatory' attitude towards the feudal landlords. The differences emerged within the CPN after the second party conference held in 1955 where the supporters of Raimajhi accepted constitutional monarchy. The Raimajhi faction claimed that the King represented the 'national bourgeoisie' while the Nepali Congress represented 'reactionary and imperialist India'.

The split took place within the party after the abolition of the parliamentary system in 1960 when the Raimajhi faction supported the King's action. The Pushpa Lal faction, on the contrary, advocated united struggle with other 'democratic' forces, including Nepali Congress, for the "restoration of the very parliament". Tulsi Lal also supported the line of united struggle with other 'democratic' forces including the Nepali Congress. Later on, Man Mohan Adhikari rejected the policy of united struggle with Nepali Congress because of the latter's "anti-communist bias". He advocated a policy of keeping equidistance between the King and the Nepali Congress because he considered both to be representatives of the same class i.e. the 'National Bourgeoisie'.

External factors also influenced the communist movement of Nepal. The Chinese model of socialism, from the very beginning, inspired the Nepalese Communists. For instance, the concept of 'New Democracy' propounded by Mao Tse-Tung, was adopted by the CPN as its programme of action to bring about the revolution. The Sino-Soviet schism intensified the division within the party. The concept of 'National Democracy', propounded by Khrushchev at the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956 and also passed by the

Moscow Conference held in 1960, was adopted at the Third Party Congress of the CPN held in 1960. In the Congress Tulsi Lal proposed this concept. Pushpa Lal faction called this 'revisionistic'.

The Cultural Revolution in China and the Naxalite movement in India also had an impact on the Nepalese communists. Consequently, a militant trend emerged in the communist movement of Nepal. It attracted the petty bourgeois sections of the society and peasantry towards the communist movement. They inspired the militant communists to take a position that Mao's strategy of people's war alone could liberate Nepal from the clutches of its feudal landlords. These Nepalese 'Maoists' practised the strategy of guerilla warfare in Jhapa district. It resulted in the killing of several landlords. These militant activities attracted a lot of people and spread to a larger part of Nepal. Although these Maoist' trends gained quite a substantial support of the masses, they lacked a large enough mass-base and mass mobilisation. As a result, it could not succeed and the King brutally crushed the movement.

The Nepalese communists' relations with their Indian counterparts had been of great importance. Several Nepalese, before the formation of the CPN, had



been members of the Communist Party of India. They used to take guidance from their Indian counterparts. The political refuge of the Nepalese Communist in India after the ban of the political activities in Nepal in 1960, strengthened their ties with their Indian counterparts despite their ideological and tactical differences. The Nepalese communist adopted an attitude of imitating the Indian communists, even if the tactics and strategy were not relevant to the domestic situation of Nepal. The CPI(M-L) leader Kanu Sanyal reportedly met the Nepalese 'Maoists' and instigated them to adopt the Maoist strategy of guerilla warfare. From this it can also be concluded that, to a large extent, the reflection of the divergent trends in the Indian Communist movement could also be seen in the Communist movement of Nepal.

The CPN was organised on Leninist lines with democratic centralism as its guiding principle. It was organised from local cells at the base to the politburo at the top, with village and town committees, district committee, provincial committees and a central committee at intermediate stages. However, the third CPN Party Congress held in 1962 made substantial changes in the organisational structure of the party. The Central Committee and the politburo

were replaced by a 51-member National Council and Secretariat. The provincial committees were dissolved and regional committees were established. Below this there were district committees and branch committees in that order. Later on also some organisational changes took place within the Pushpa Lal faction.

The party cadre and leadership came mostly from the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie, i.e. intellectuals, students and those in services. Neither the peasants nor workers assumed much prominence in the party.

The ban that the King imposed on the political activities in December 1960, came as a blessing in disguise for the CPN. It gave an opportunity to the CPN to infiltrate in various official and semi-official bodies and organisations of the students, peasants, workers and women. However, till 1972, none of these organisations could be dubbed as frontal organisation of the Party.

The Communist movement in Nepal had been ideologically a revolutionary as well as a radical movement for socio-economic transformation of the society. The CPN strived to raise the consciousness of the masses against feudalism and imperialism. It organised labourers, peasants, women, intellectuals and

other democratic people of the country to intensify the movement against the Ranas and the monarchy. It led several armed struggles of the peasantry. It opposed 'Indian expansionism' in the national interest and defended national sovereignty. The 'extremists' had waged a long struggle against the absolute monarchy which was run in the name of partyless panchayat system.

The CPN opposed imperialism and war in favour of peace and national liberation. It regarded USA as the leader of imperialist forces which was out to suppress the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America. It supported the brave struggle of the Vietnamese people against the American aggressors. It protested against the visit of the U.S. Vice-President to Nepal, and demanded the expulsion of hippies and Peace Corps volunteers.

From the above analysis, it can be concluded that by the time of the death of King Mahendra the Nepalese communists had become the most organised, aggressive and vocal force in Nepal. And, by the late 1960s, despite the 'royalist' faction they had become an important oppositional force to the absolute monarchy.

The communist movement of Nepal, however, had

various shortcomings and weaknesses, as a result of which the communist could not emerge as an alternative political force in Nepalese politics. These can be summarised in the following points:

1. Lack of proper understanding of the character of the Nepalese society;
2. Imitation of the foreign communist parties especially of India and China;
3. Party rganisation - factionalism, weak class composition (i.e. domination of petty bourgeoisie instead of workers and peasants);
4. Character of Leadership - domination of the petty bourgeoisie and very weak position of the working class and the peasantry, lack of communication and cooperation between the leaders and cadres within the party;
5. Mistake to consider the Nepali Congress as the primary enemy and need for putting emphasis on united struggle with the Nepali congress against tne absolute monarchy;
6. Lack of mass mobilisation on important issues such as land reforms, unemployment and inflation; undue importance given to issues such as

imperialism, 'Indian expansionism' ; and

7. Lack of fund.

Despite several weaknesses and the division over tactical and ideological questions, in the final analysis, it can be said that the communists in Nepal became a strong, vocal and threatening, if not an alternative force, and to a large extent, played a significant role in the political developments of Nepal.

However, an important factor in the success of the CPN's struggle for the restoration of democracy and abolition of the dictatorship of the Partyless Panchayat system represented by the King was the united struggle of the CPN, Nepali Congress and other democratic forces in Nepal.

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