

National Seminar on

Peace & Democracy

September 14-15, 2004



PEACE
&
DEMOCRACY



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About the Publication

The multiparty system achieved by Nepali people in 1990 is under heavy attack from October 2002. CPN Maoist, a faction of communist party of Nepal started armed rebel from 1996 after participation in two general elections when it realized that its political programme would not get peoples' mandate. This created a situation of unrest, fear and terror in the country.

Instead of creating national consensus to solve the problem, political parties in the parliament continuously engaged themselves in the contradictions, quarrels and divisions even within the parties themselves. As an outcome, the dissolution of parliament in June 2002 and regressive move of the king in October 2002 paved way for more intensified triangular tousel among Palace, Parliamentary forces and Maoists.

This black cloud in political atmosphere has directly affected the labour sector in 2004. We have become worried because of the closures of dozens of enterprises and loss of livelihood of thousands of working families. In this context, based on the conclusion that the first concern for all is peace, GEFONT organized the National Seminar on Peace & Democracy during September 14-15, 2004 in Kathmandu.

In the Seminar, European experiences on Constitutional Monarchy and Women Movement were presented Norwegian socialist party and Left Party of Sweden. From Nepali side, a paper on 'Violent Conflict: Proposal for transformation & Progressive change' was presented and discussed. The seminar papers, comments and recommendations, with the confidence that these will be useful and acceptable in days to come, GEFONT have published this Proceeding.

In relation to this successfully conducted joint programme of Left International Forum - Sweden & GEFONT-Nepal, I would like to extend sincere thanks to Binda Pandey, the Deputy Secretary General, who shouldered responsibilities from coordinating the programme to proceeding publication. My sincere thanks are due to Vice-chair Bishnu Rimal and Deputy Secretary General Umesh Upadhyaya for their contribution & involvement from initial idea generation to final editing. Similarly, My thanks go to Secretaries - Buddhi Ram Acharya, Pemba Lama & Ramesh Badal and Principal Secretary Kabindra Shekhar Rimal for their contribution during the programme and Mr. Mukunda Kattel and Mr. Bal Krishna Kattel for their kind support to translate this publication. I would like to thank to the entire gefont family for involvement during the whole process.

Finally I would like to express my thankfulness to the participants, both nationals & internationals, for their participation and active involvement.

Mukunda Neupane
Chairperson
GEFONT-Nepal

GEFONT organises National Seminar

Peace & Democracy

Summary report of the programme

The GEFONT organised a 2-day National Seminar on Peace and Democracy in Kathmandu on September 14-15, 2004 in association with Swedish Left International Forum. CPN UML General Secretary had been invited as the Guest of Honour. The programme was designed in 5 major sessions including a brief inaugural ceremony.

Speaking on the Inaugural session, the Chief guest General Secretary Com. Madhav K Nepal said- "The topics chosen for the deliberation is very pertinent and timely in the given situation of Nepal. After recent steps to restore constitutional processes through the formation of all party government, there is impassionate hope among the people that the peace will come at the earliest in the country." He further added- however, despite repeated appeal for discarding violence and coming to the peace process, Maoists have not shown any positive gesture or flexibility so far. Their sincerity for peaceful settlement through full commitment to the principle of pluralism and parliamentary democratic system is yet to be tested."

Com. Nepal was in opinion that 'Nepal today is passing through most difficult phase in its modern history.' He further added- 'the youths are compelled to leave the country in the fear of Maoists forcing them to join their armed forces. Due to the fear of killings and hijackings, cadres of political parties are compelled to take asylum in the capital city without any options of solving hand-mouth problems. Obstructions to the free movement for jobs or works in the farms and other places and blockade to the transportation of even essential commodities including food have made the livelihood problem of the people very serious. It has increased vulnerability in the society.'

'The big problem faced by us at the moment is how to create conducive environment and bring Maoist's in the negotiating table at the same time ensuring maximum flexibility among all concerned so that the dialogue and understanding could be converted into lasting peace in the country.' Com. Nepal was discussing in detail the common minimum programme of coalition government where the UML is one of the major partners.





"Among the demands of the Maoists, new constitution through the constitutional assembly is the major one. They have given prominence to the processes in their demands. There is no consensus yet about this. Our party believes that if various interrelated issues associated with constitutional assembly are clarified, then there should not be problem to go for constitutional assembly. For facilitating the peace process in a more concrete way, our party has also forwarded the peace road map." The chief guest concluded this inaugural speech 'wishing a very fruitful' national seminar.

Among the other speakers in the session was president of NTUC Laxman Basnet, General Secretary of DECONT Khila Nath Dahal and the Chairperson of Employers' Council Mr. Rohini Thapaliya. On the other hand, Vice-Chairperson - Socialist Left Party of Norway Henriette Westrin and General Secretary of Young Left of Sweden Tora Breitholtz were international speakers.

"I thank you heartily for the invitation to take part in your peace and democracy conference" says Henriette addressing to the Seminar. "Democracy and war are questions closely connected to each other. There are innumerable examples that show us that people being deprived of the possibility to take part in democratic processes, take the dramatic step to terrorism, a warfare which is often a result of oppression, but once more strikes other people than the oppressors. When children are hold as hostages or bus passengers are

blown up, more fear and hatred are spread, and conflicts are built up instead of being solved."

In the Seminar, which was jam-packed with media persons the Vice president of Socialist Left Party of Norway further added-" No human being is more value than others. Every inhabitant of a country has a right to use his influence and a right to be free from fear for war and oppression."

"Several times The United States has tried to create "democracy" and "peace" with bombs and bullets, the last examples being Afghanistan and Iraq. War does not give peace. Occupation does not give peace. And war does not give democracy " she concluded her speech.

Representing Young Left of Sweden Tora Breitholtz expressed impressive remarks on the occasion. "I can scream" she shouted loudly and said-' No! I won't take it no more! I don't accept being discriminated, touched and abused! I will hit back the next time you hit me! But as long as I scream alone, a lot of those men won't listen to me. That is why I want you, all the ladies in this room, all the women in this world, to scream with me."

She concluded her speech by saying- "Democracy is something that we will always have to fight for. We know that nothing will be given to us, unless we fight. Because, true democracy doesn't make a halt at any doorstep, not

even the doorsteps of our homes. True democracy means participation, equality and dignity for all. It should give possibilities for ordinary people to control the economy, the society and our own lives. True democracy implies women's liberation and socialism. Nothing less than that would be enough and even though questioning the foundation on which society is built never is easy, that is what I do. I question it because I have to. Because, I see the vast possibilities that lie ahead of us."

GEFONT Chairperson Com. Mukunda Neupane chaired the session where Secretary General Binod Shrestha delivered the Keynote speech and Deputy Secretary General Binda Pandey was the master of ceremony.

Next Session was the core session. Theme of the session was Armed Conflict in Nepal: Issues of Social transformation & Progressive way-out for peace. Standing Committee member of the cpn (uml) Com. J.N. Khanal had presented the theme paper where central committee member of Swedish Left Party Com. Kalle Larsson had chaired the session. uml Standing Committee member Com. Sahana Pradhan was the panellist to comment on the paper.

In his deliberation Com. Khanal said- "the change of 1990 was the greatest one in the history of Nepal in twentieth Century. After the political change in 1990, people expected that there would be overall reforms and reformation of state, society and economy."

"But that didn't realise in real sense" Com. Khanal thus proposed several points for Social transformation in three areas package of Restructuring the state, Restructuring the society and Restructuring the economy.

As the panellist to comment, Com. Sahana was in opinion that Com. Khanal's paper was interesting. However, she pointed out necessity of amendment and clarification on different issues. She was demanding more detail on 'violent conflict' related story.

"There are more than 36 countries in world facing

violent conflict, as one of the knowledgeable personality, I was expecting deliberation in detail on that by Com. Khanal" she said. Com. Sahana however differed her opinion on presenter's proposal on women seat reservation-"One third representation of women in local bodies and 20% in national bodies to be increased gradually later on". 'Com. Khanal too, is bearing exploitative patriarchal values' She criticised.

Summarising the voices raised from the floor Com. Khanal responded them. Com. Kalle Larsson-Chairperson of the session concluded the session sharing his gratitude and sincere thanks. Com. Kalle said- "9 males & 7 women participants from the floor consumed 35 & 24 minutes during their intervention. I guess it is logical and rational."

Next Session was under the Theme- Multi-party Democracy and Constitutional Monarchy: An European Experiences. UML Central committee member and women leader Com. Bidhya Bhandari chaired the session where as International Secretary of Socialist Left Party-Norway Com. Monika Andersen made a presentation. Com. Modnath Prashrit- the Standing Committee member of UML was invited to comment on it.

"The issue is extremely important", Com. Prashrit said- Europe has vivid history. It has faced extreme tyranny of the Kings, beheaded them and in this advanced century, they are still enjoying constitutional monarchy". He was comparing Norway and Nepal- "What lesson is for us from the Europe?" Com. Prashrit said- "Unlike Europe, we have short history of democratic movement, we have to walk a long way ahead! Europe need not to study Nepali Monarchy, but we must have to learn from the struggle & role of Monarchy of Europe".

Concluding her remarks Chairperson of the session Com. Bidhya said- "I would rather compare present Nepali King with the king of France Ludwig XIV, who was claiming himself as the State!"

I learned more from the paper, from the comment and thought provoking intervention from the floor she said.





The Minister for Women, child and social welfare Com. Astha Laxmi Shakya chaired the Fourth session of the seminar. National board member of the Swedish Left Party Com. Ulla Andersson presented a paper on European Experiences on women's participation in the social transformation and democratisation. Gauri Pradhan, Chairperson of Alliance for HR & Social Justice was the commentator of the session.

" I am not a woman, but an activist and the advocate of the women rights" Gauri started by saying- " The paper is wonderful". He discussed on issues raised by the paper and added conception of Women & Development, Women in Development and the issue of Gender mainstreaming. He further discussed on the difference between Feminism and Femalism. He categorised Feminism as Feminism & Neo-Feminism. " In my opinion Feminism is against men where as Neo-Feminism is between women & men; thus as a man I could be the Neo-Feminist!"

Speaking from the Chair, Minister Astha praised paper and the presentation. She acknowledged all of the participants for their interesting intervention. "Class discrimination & Gender discrimination both are inter-connected, we have to carry out our struggle together", she concluded.

Last session was wrapping-up session, which was chaired by GEFONT Vice-Chairman Bishnu Rimal. There were one each panellist from Nepal, Norway and the Sweden.

Monika Andersen from Norway said- we got genuine chance to share our experience between three countries at once with such diverse representatives. Nepal & Norway hard to compare; as socialist you are fighting for the rights and in Norway we are struggling to maintain achievement of our yearlong struggles.

Com. Kalle Larson said- why we are opposing constitutional monarch even though it is symbolic? Swedish has three reasons. First, our principle doesn't allow this; second, we do not want to spent public expenditure to certain hereditary family and third, no family should have privilege He wa in opinion that who knows one day comrades from Sweden, Norway and Nepal will get opportunity to discuss socialism & how to limit Royal rights in Rana Palace! We did it comrade—next time may be we will organise such seminar different palace!

UML central committee member Com. Bhim Rawal extended his thanks to the GEFONT first. He said the papers from Sweden & Norway were useful. He further discussed Conflict in Nepal and shed light on uml 9-point proposal for peace & democracy.

Finally, Com. Bishnu Rimal concluded the whole seminar with extending GEFONT's gratitude to all of the well-wishers. "The paper were wonderful, deliberation were interesting and excellent" Com. Rimal said- 'it has helped us to enrich our knowledge.'

Solidarity speech in inauguration

Com. Madhav Kumar Nepal
General Secretary - CPN (UML)

Chairperson, Distinguished
Participants, Ladies and
Gentlemen

to extend my sincere thanks to the organizers for this opportunity. The topics chosen for the deliberation is very pertinent and timely in the given situation of Nepal. After recent steps to restore constitutional processes through the formation of all party government, there is impassionate hope among the people that the peace will come at the earliest in the country. However, despite repeated appeal for discarding violence and coming to the peace process, Maoists have not shown any positive gesture or flexibility so far. Their sincerity for peaceful settlement through full commitment to the principle of pluralism and parliamentary democratic system has yet to be tested. On the other hand, broad consensus has yet to emerge even among the constitutional forces about the specific ways to settle the Maoist problem. Some argue that status quo approach will be enough while others advocate in favor of military solution. Nevertheless, there is growing consensus among the major political forces and civil society that the dialogue has to start immediately making progressive social transformation an integral part of the peace process. There is increased realization that without drastic reforms in the state institutions including political ones and governing structure for abolishing all forms of discriminations and creating more equitable society no lasting peace will be possible in the country. I will focus my remarks on these interrelated issues.



Chairperson,

Nepal today is passing through most difficult phase in its modern history. The violent conflict started and intensified by the Maoists is crossing eight years. In these years more than ten thousand people have died. Every day dozens of people are killed or kidnapped, intimated and tortured. The survived people are compelled to live in panic and sorrow. Human rights violation has become a routine phenomenon. People have been deprived of the right to survive and live peacefully. Maoists are also continuously smashing the physical infrastructures created in the country. They demolish schools, hospitals, telephone towers, powerhouses, bridges and factories. The youths are compelled to leave the country in the fear of Maoists forcing them to join their armed forces. Due to the fear of killings and hijackings, cadres of political parties are compelled to take asylum in the capital city without any options of solving hand mouth problems. Obstructions to the free movement for jobs or works in the farms and other places and blockade to the transportation of even essential commodities including food have made the livelihood problem of the people very serious. It has increased vulnerability in the society. The economy is also badly affected with intensification of crisis one after another. The industries are threatened to close





down or destroyed. As a result the entire industrial sector is collapsing. The tourism industry a major source of foreign exchange earnings is in doldrums. On the other hand, the burgeoning security expenses has led to curtail the size of the development budget drastically hindering the socio-economic development further in a country where almost half of the population lives in the abject poverty. Now the external aid dependency has increased tremendously owing to compulsion to mobilize budgetary support even for meeting the wages and salaries of the employees. Thus, the economic cost of violent conflict is also so high that it is beyond Nepal's capacity to afford or bear. At the same time, the military solution is neither feasible nor it helps to address the deepening conflict in the society. Similarly, the terrorist type tactics embraced by the Maoist to kill or intimidate the people opposing them is not acceptable to the civilized plural society. The intolerance to the dissent views is the manifestation of their tyrannical outlook and character. In this 21st century, the one party dictatorship is not acceptable to the people. This simply means that there is no alternative to the peace. Therefore, we are continuously urging Maoists to accept the path of peaceful political competition and renounce violence. The big problem faced by us at the moment is that how to create conducive environment and bring Maoist's in the negotiating table at the same time ensuring maximum flexibility among all concerned so that the dialogue and understanding could be converted into lasting peace in the country.

Chairperson,

As we all know, there are two distinct views or approaches to deal with the problem of violent conflict similar to the one we are facing today in Nepal. They are often said to be negative and positive peace approaches. Negative peace simply denotes the settlement of war or absence of it. It is a condition in which active organized military type violence is resolved. This view suggests that peace is found wherever war or other direct forms of organized violence are absent. Positive peace is more than the mere absence or ending of war and violent conflict. It refers to the social condition in which exploitation is minimized or eliminated and there is no subtle phenomenon of underlying structural violence. The structural violence is typically built into the very structure of political, social, cultural, and economic institutions. Structural violence unusually has the effect of denying people important rights, such as economic well being, social, political and gender equality. When people starve to death or even go hungry, a kind of violence takes place. When people are denied education, health facilities, opportunities to work or freedom of expression for their legitimate right a kind of violent psychology or trend manifests in the society. In a nutshell, structural violence is a serious form of social oppression. Attention to negative peace is simply a process of peacekeeping or peace restoring. It is a conservative approach and hence seeks to keep things the way they are.

It has thus the potential of generating more serious violent conflict in the future. By contrast positive peace focuses on peace building in which the priority is given on the

establishment of non-exploitative social structure by bringing drastic reforms in political, economic, social and cultural fronts in which the root cause of violent conflict lies. In Nepal's context the lasting peace is possible only through the processes of positive peace in that the roots of structural violence is addressed.

Indeed, when the new Constitution in 1990 was drafted after the restoration of democracy some of the root causes of structural violence or social contradictions were addressed. It envisages welfare oriented economic and social system. For ensuring social justice, it also prohibits discriminations in the name of religion, caste, race and sex. It envisages decentralized system of democratic governance for better delivery and strengthening of democracy from the grass roots. But in the course of enforcement serious lapses remained. In a feudal based discriminatory society, the kind of reforms at the institutional and policy level were required for deepening the democratic practices at the grass roots could not be pursued or enhanced. Even various progressive reforms forwarded or implemented by our party while in the opposition or government were either discarded or distorted. There was no democratic culture or practice in the ruling party that could ensure political consensus or policy coordination on major issues for representing the voices of the oppressed. In stead, an authoritarian tendency was enforced in the name of majority that blocked reforms in the areas that were essential to follow the directives or provisions embodied in the constitution. Thus, neither a process of empowering have-nots through more equitable development process nor strengthening of democratic practices through institutional reforms could be enhanced. Unfulfilled objectives of sustained high growth and improvement in living conditions of the deprived people led to widen social conflict and contradictions in the society, which was used by Maoists to expand their organizational networking and intensify violent conflict.

Nepal is a very diverse country in terms of ethnicity, religion, language and culture. There are more than 110 races in Nepal. Despite constitution prohibiting discrimination in the name of caste, creed, sex and

religion, the unjust social structure is continuously perpetuating. The caste, region, culture and gender based discriminations are still pervasive. Therefore, no effective countervailing institutional mechanism could be developed and implemented to check the excesses among the deprived. The lower caste people are still compelled to survive with humiliation and inhuman treatment by the dominant privileged class. The domination through language and culture is also pervasive. Such a practice is perpetuating despite Nepal's commitments for ensuring the fundamental rights of the citizens. Therefore, all the exclusionary practices and violation in human rights worked in disguise to expand organizational networking by the Maoists. The most important lesson that can be derived from the democratic experience of Nepal since 1990 is that even in a democratic system if there are no proper responses channeled through opposition parties and various stakeholders especially of the voiceless and deprived constituting the overwhelming share in total population, they seek alternative channels to express their frustration and anger. This is happening in Nepal. Despite Maoist's ultra leftist ideology being the principle reason for the armed struggle, they used institutional failures to expand their organizational networking and intensify violent conflict.

Chairperson,

The CPN (UML) represents the left democratic forces. It wants progressive transformation of the Nepali society through peaceful but drastic reforms in the political, social and economic fronts. Therefore, our party since the inception of restoration of democracy has tried continuously to introduce progressive reforms in political, economic and social field. We fought upto the final drafting of the constitution to keep the security forces under the government without successes. We wanted to incorporate some bold measures in the constitution for abolishing all kind of discriminations that could obstruct the deepening of democratic system. We strongly pressurized then interim government formed after the restoration of democracy to take actions based on the recommendations of a Commission against those who had done excesses during the previous regime. This was not done. In our view this could



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have helped immensely to initiate democratic culture in the state apparatus. We despite being in the government for only nine months had initiated programs that could help begin new socio-economic transformation process in the society. These were discontinued or blocked as already pointed out. We struggled continuously in the parliament and outside with the aim of compelling government to come forward with some progressive programs to resolve deepening political, economic and social crisis in the country. But in the name of majority our voice was never heard. Even the agreed agenda were never implemented seriously. Only with deepening crisis, the liberal democrats have realized that seeking solution to the Maoist problem in isolation will be a mistake from the standpoint of consolidating democracy in the country.

The present all party government led by Nepali Congress (democratic) in which our party is one of the major in coalition has committed to initiate peace process with the Maoists. The high-level apex body for peace has been already formed and the formation of peace secretariat is in the process. A new peace fund has also been created. The budget of this year has made restoration of peace, resolution of social contradictions and progression as the major bases of budget preparation for reorienting the development course accordingly. The minimum common program agreed by the political parties represented in the government have forwarded both short and long term programs in which commitment to bring some drastic reforms in political, economic and social fronts has been made.

In this context, it will be worthwhile to mention that our party since last several years is pressurizing all democratic forces to agree upon such reforms in political, economic and social fronts that could facilitate addressing the discriminations and ensuring new social transformation process in the society. Our party since time and again had demanded the reforms or amendment in the constitution. In the process we had forwarded a 22-point program followed by 35-point program. Similarly, the major political parties including our party fighting to bring the constitution in the right track had agreed upon 18-point program. Democratization of security forces as well as declaration of Nepal a secular state are some of the major points included

in it. Similarly, 33 percent reservation to the women in the elected bodies in a time bound manner and implementation of programs empowering the disadvantaged, ethnic minorities, women & so-called untouchable community and severe punishment to those who practice untouchability have been included in this agreed agenda.

Among the demands of the Maoists, new constitution through the constitutional assembly is the major one. They have given prominence to the processes in their demands. There is no consensus yet about this. Our party believes that if various interrelated issues associated with constitutional assembly are clarified, then there should not be problem to go for constitutional assembly. For facilitating the peace process in a more concrete way, our party has also forwarded the peace road map. In this new road map, a round table discussion has also been proposed which is one of the demands of the Maoists. The round table discussion will enable to bring consensus among the major political forces to delineate the areas where changes and drastic reforms would be required for bringing lasting peace in the country. We have also proposed the involvement of UN for facilitating the peace process and ensuring free and fair elections. We believe that our proposal together with the minimum common program, which commits to follow maximum flexibility approach in fulfilling Maoist's demand will enable to initiate peace process with the Maoists. Our party is very serious for resolving the problem of violent conflict and therefore pressurizing both government and Maoists to agree on initiating peace process as soon as possible. For this the role of the civil society, human right activists and the peace loving people or institutions of the world will be equally vital and important. Specially, the kind of tactics with frequent changes in the approaches or tactics has been embraced by the Maoists not only creates obstructions but also generates doubts about their sincerity for peaceful settlement of their armed violent conflict. I hope your deliberations on the subject will contribute to create favorable environment for not only initiating peace process but also exploring the development alternatives that could help bringing lasting peace in Nepal. I once again thank organizers for this opportunity and wish your deliberations very fruitful.

Thank you all!

Com. Henriette Westhrin

Vice President, Socialist Left Party of Norway



Dear comrades and friends,
I thank you heartily for the invitation to take part in your peace and democracy conference.

International cooperation between political parties is very important for our party. We try to have a broad contact with political parties all over the world.

This opportunity gives us a possibility to become acquainted with comrades from a country and a part of the world with which we have had minimal cooperation -until now.

First I want to give a little introduction of the party Monika and I represent.

The Socialist Left Party of Norway defines our selves as a red and a green party. Red for socialism and green for the protection of the environment. We also define our selves as a feminist party. On the last polls we obtained 15 per cents of the votes.

When we participated in the last parliamentary elections in 2001 we obtained 12,5 per cent of the votes, and our group of Parliamentarians increased from nine to twenty three members. - However, the actual government in Norway is centre-right

government, conducted by a prime minister from the Christian Peoples Party.

In 2003 we had local elections in Norway, and here in the capital of Oslo, the Socialist Left Party obtained 20,3 per cent of the votes. They say that the trend always start in the capitals, so hopefully this trend will be running all over the country soon. - In 2005 there will be new elections for the Parliament and hopefully the results will give us the opportunity to change the right wing direction for our society.

We have entered into an agreement with the social democratic party on a potential government cooperation after the next parliamentary election. We consider the possibilities to be very good. For the first time the social democrats have accepted to govern our country together with another political party, so we will have a very exciting time until the general election next autumn.



The struggle for peace and democracy must be fought domestically In every country, and across the borders of the countries.

It is along time since war was fight between soldiers. The real losers and those who suffer, whether it is going on between groups internally in a country or between countries, is the civil population. Those who never ask for a war, ore never takes part in it, are the real losers.

Democracy and war are questions closely connected to each other. There are innumerable examples that show us that people being deprived of the possibility to take part in democratic processes, take the dramatic step to terrorism, a warfare which is often a result of oppression, but once more strikes other people than the oppressors. When children are hold as hostages or bus passengers are blown up, more fear and hatred are spread, and conflicts are built up instead of being solved.

It is important that forces working for peace and democracy always emphasize that increasing oppression does not lead to peace, but to more terror. Occupation, imprisonment or depriving people the possibility of taking part in political life, is not the way to go.

No human being is more value than others. Every inhabitant of a country has a right to use his influence and a right to be free from fear for war and oppression.



Com. Tora Breitholtz

General Secretary, Young Left of Sweden

Comrades and friends, honoured speakers and guests
It is a great honour for me to be able to adress you at this occasion. I am grateful and very happy to have been given this opportunity.

Several times The United States has tried to create “democracy” and “peace” with bombs and bullets, the last examples being Afghanistan and Iraq. War does not give peace. Occupation does not give peace. And war does not give democracy.

In spite of the situation here in Nepal being different from that of northern Europe, we have values in common.

It is important to find allied that can support you across frontiers and parts of the world.

The western democracy must be preserved and developed. The fight for democracy will never reach a goal.

We can never sit down to rest and say we have got the final result; we have got the society we want. We must develop ourselves, continually, and constantly work for improvements. When one goal has been reached, we must start reaching the next one.

Therefore the struggle for peace, democracy, and economic equalization is a fight that can never be won if we do not cooperate across the borders.

Once again I want to thank you for letting us come, and which each other good luck with the conference.

Questioning the foundation on which society is built, is never easy. It couldn't be. Opposing the nature of the capitalist world is not something that one can get away with. Generations before us have fought battles to bring us where we are today. It wasn't easy. There were always those who tried to oppress them, trying to restore the inhumane, raw and unfair orders of the world.

That is why we will always have to keep up the fight for democracy, equality, dignity and social justice. That is why we have to support each other in order to be successful. That is why I want to express my happiness and my pride, to be here with you today.

Being a young woman, is not easy in this world. Being a young woman fighting is definitely not easy. I can scream. I can scream No! I won't take it no more! I don't accept being discriminated, touched and abused! I will hit back the next time you hit me!

But as long as I scream alone, a lot of those men won't listen to me. That is why I want you, all the ladies in this room, all the women in this world, to scream with me.

Comrades,

It took me 20 hours to get here from Sweden. My country seems to be at least half a world away. Many people would say that Sweden is also far ahead on the road of democracy and justice. It might be true, but I refuse to believe that there is nothing more to fight for. In Sweden every citizen has the right to 12 years of education free of charge, but still the children of working class people end up with less resources. In Sweden, a big part of the population study at universities, but even though the majority of the young students are women, nine out of ten professors are men. Our country is one of the richest in the world, but still people who come to Sweden looking for a refuge are deported back to terror, torture and suffering.

The government tells us that the economy is recovering and expanding, but still they tear down the common welfare system with low taxes for the rich, privatisations and decreased public expenses. My country, as well as yours, is a class-society. Our capital, Stockholm, and all the major cities in Sweden are under occupation. The attractive, central parts of the cities are occupied, by the economic elite. They build fashionable ghettos for themselves while young people can find no place to live on their own. While employers and businessmen complain that the wages are too high and that they will have to move their enterprise abroad if we don't do anything about it, hundreds of thousands of Swedes cannot afford to see the dentist or buy their children new clothes for the winter season.

Comrades,

This day is a special day to me. This day is the one year anniversary of the greatest political victory of my life time. On the 14th of September, 2003 the Swedish referendum on the EMU/euro ended in a decisive No vote.

The pro-euro forces were formed by the joint political and economical establishment. The No vote was represented by diverse groups, organisations and movements with much smaller resources - but with the best arguments and the support of the people.

The results showed that working class voters, women and youth were the strongest opposers of the EMU project. The No-vote was a vote from below, directed towards the ruling elite. For no-voters the question of democracy and the loss of national auto-determination played a crucial role. Some people claim that a federal, supranational European Union would bring new possibilities to fight back the United States of America when they try to conquer the world with their multinationals and military forces. But the European Union itself is built to support the European multinational companies and the economic elite - not the people. The EU is forming its own military forces. Supranational power blocks and competition between capitalists is not the solution of global inequality, war and poverty. Democracy and justice is.

Democracy is something that we will always have to fight for. We know that nothing will be given to us, unless we fight. Because true democracy doesn't make a halt on the doorstep of transnational corporations. True democracy doesn't make a halt at any doorstep, not even the doorsteps of our homes. True democracy means participation, equality and dignity for all. It should give possibilities for ordinary people to control the economy, the society and our own lives. True democracy implies women's liberation and socialism.

Nothing less than that would be enough. And even though questioning the foundation on which society is built never is easy, that is what I do. I question it because I have to. Because I see the vast possibilities that lie ahead of us.

And days like today, when we get the possibility to meet with all of you it is actually not that hard. International solidarity and exchange gives us inspiration, hope and strength, and through the shades of differences, we realise: We are one.

On behalf of the Left Party of Sweden, I want to thank you for giving us the opportunity to come here. We hope that this conference will be successful and bring you strength in your struggle for democracy, peace and social justice.

Thank you all for listening.



Peace & Democracy





Mr. Laxman Bahadur Basnet
Chairperson, NTUC

I feel the need for a brief introduction of the conflict before I speak on peace and democracy. The conflict is between



Mr. Khilanath Dahal
General Secretary, DECONT

Democracy was restored in 1990. The King became constitutional and followed the spirit of the Constitution. But there remained some problems to decentralize democracy and to make advancement in the areas of economic development and social justice. Since democracy could not address socio-economic problems of the people, the autocratic forces take an opportunity to justify their points. Many reasons could underlie the conflict. The Maoist conflict might be there philosophical expression, but it drew strength from the failure of democracy.

the employer and employee, and amongst other actors as well. Therefore, we must first be informed of the nature of the conflict.

We are amidst conflict right from 1951. The King is presenting himself as a 'donor' with the help of tricky laws. I don't think so. But after October 4, the King has taken all the executive powers. It is the King who declared the election in Pokhara. Voices are being heard that the King is also set to declare of the elections for constituent assembly.

The 1990 Constitution has clearly stipulated that the people are a sovereign power. If the people are sovereign, the King does not have any executive powers. The King should give up executive powers to restore peace.

The carrier of democracy is the political parties in the 'high politics' whereas local bodies, trade unions and civil society organisations take democracy at the 'low politics' of society. The key challenge today is to strengthen these organisations. Failure to do so will result in the change of the government formed as a result of an understanding between the parties and king. It is vital therefore that all forces that believe in democracy should unite to resolve the problems ad institutionalise democracy.

The issue of conflict is linked to a number of issues. Politically, it is seemingly geared towards structural change. There are socio-economic issues but it has it started with a demand for structural change, which needs to be addressed. This poses a challenge to the political parties to expedite their political activism to address this problem as well as to defend democracy.

The conflict has heavily weighed on the workers. If a constituent assembly election can solve this problem, then we should not hesitate to go for this. If we fail to listen to the voices from below and keep ourselves focussed only on a political solution at the cost of socio-economic justice, we may be caught into disputes again. While working with conflict, the issue of employment and economic advancement should merit a priority consideration.

Mr. Rohini Thapaliya
Chairperson, Employers' Council, FNCCI



Peace is a prerequisite for a nation's prosperity. Only in an environment of peace can people entertain their rights. Peace is also required for the protection of human rights of the people and for political stability of the country.

Peace is fundamental to the promotion of democracy. For peace to prevail, law and order is a must. The absence of law and order invites instabilities. Instabilities hit the building blocks of democracy. So peace and democracy are complementary to each other. Following the restoration of democracy in 1990, peace and democracy could not be institutionalised. Five years after the exercise of democracy, the law and order situation started to wane and political instability surfaced. Democratic exercise started to take a wrong path bringing the development and socio-economic process to a halt.

The country is caught in the armed conflict now. Law and order is at its worst, and the whole political, social, economic and educational sectors have been badly affected. There is an environment of fear and insecurity everywhere. Industries have been badly hit; some five- dozen industries have been closed down due to conflict. Hundreds of workers have been out of work and the right to operate industries has been violated. Women, children and people at large have been victimised and displaced.

In such a situation, the dialogue and partnership between the employers and trade unions will surely have a positive impact.

Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industries, the apex body of industrialists and entrepreneurs, is committed to the establishment of peace and institutionalisation of democracy. We are involved in the economic and social development of the nation through the operation and development of industries. Politics is not our direct concern. However, political instability and the absence of peace are not less painful to us. We feel that everyone, including the industrialists and entrepreneurs, is responsible to protect the country from plunging into further crisis.

We are in a difficult time. All of us should solemnly promise that we do good for the nation. Forgetting individual ambitions and haughtiness, we should collectively work now. Let us correct the past mistakes, learn from experiences around and commit ourselves to the restoration of peace and institutionalisation democracy. The Chamber of Commerce is always available to be part of this effort, so am I personally!



Peace & Democracy



**Concluding Remark of
Com. Mukunda Neupane**
Chairperson of GEFONT

We are in the most difficult times. Nearly nine years have elapsed since the government and Maoists are fighting a war. The war started from Rolpa and Rukum and extended to east. Today there is no sector untouched of it. Students, teachers and industrialists are caught in the quagmire of terror. Every one of us is seriously concerned as to how to restore peace, consolidate democracy, democratise the state and protect the achievements of the 1990 movement. Everyone calls on the need for the democratisation of the state and voices against militarization. To democratise the state and protect it from slipping into militarization, all constitutional forces should come together to solve the crisis caused by Maoist. Why are constitutional forces failing to come together and move collectively? The problem stands here. On behalf of the trade union movement, I would like to request the political parties to democratise the state. When democracy becomes weak, the state is plunged towards militarization.

The main function of the state is to control the enemy and protect the people and their rights. When a peaceful democratic process is halted, then the nation takes recourse to militarised path. To stop militarization, therefore, it is a must that democratic forces come together. Why cannot all the four parties in the government and the rest four in the street come together to solve the Maoist problem? This is the question of all people at all levels. I hope all the responsible



party leaders will take this question seriously and move ahead collectively to solve the problem through dialogue and understanding. I also request journalist colleagues to take this voice of the workers down to the people at large.

There is a Chinese saying that one needs to identify themselves first, then the enemies. There is a need for an objective analysis of the social contradictions. The political parties should also introspect themselves as much they ask Maoists to do.

The small arms being used today are enough to terrorise and kill unarmed people. The Maoists should be told clearly that if sophisticated arms enter into the country from abroad, no party will be saved from the fire.

We are united in talks, but in practice we are divided. Four parties are in the government and other four are in the street protesting the government. We would like to call upon all the eight parties to come together and initiate collective actions to solve the problem facing the nation.



Violent Conflict in Nepal

Way-out for Social Transformation and Progressive Change

DISCUSSION PAPER

Presented by **Com. JN Khanal**
Standing Committee Member- CPN (UML)



Contemporary Nepali society is passing through a crisis. Violence & counter violence have victimized every organ of the nation. More than 10,000 persons have lost their life where nearly 80% were the innocent weaponless persons. During the violence, thousands & thousands have become disabled. The country has no representatives of people in the concerned bodies from central to local level. Infrastructures have been smashed under destruction and development works are stopped. There is no presence of state security posts in rural areas. The question is being raised whether the nation is heading towards a failed state. It is clear that in this course of violence & counter violence, neither Maoists nor the state can win immediately. Both the parties should realize this and come forward for national consensus for conflict management & transformation.

In order to reach such a consensus, enquiry should be made on causes and objective grounds for possible resolution. After the change in 1990, the need of restructuring and change in state and socio-economic structure could not be addressed up to now. How to restructure the state & society should be viewed in light of our realities and challenges.

Nepal after the change of 1990

The change of 1990 was the greatest one in the history of Nepal in twentieth Century. After the

political change in 1990, people expected that there would be overall reforms and reformation of state, society and economy.

It was extremely necessary to change:

- The highly centralized state-structure which used to work against people & democracy
- Corrupt & inefficient bureaucracy
- Political administrative division of 5 Regions, 14 Zones & 75 Districts
- Transformation & empowerment of local bodies
- Transformation of the country in resemblance with fast changing world where WTO had just emerged
- National economy dominated by traditional agriculture, lack of infrastructures, poor market access and policy deficiencies
- Extremely difficult living conditions of people with more than 40% under poverty line
- Discrimination based on gender, caste/ethnicity, language, culture, religion & geographical region

Therefore, Nepali society was at a crossroad of change in 1990. Peoples from every segment, class, community, caste, gender, ethnicity, religion and location were expecting dignity, equality and their





role in the society, but the leadership could not lead them to the desired track. As a result, the anti-democratic feudal autocratic forces started to revive & push the country towards retrogression on the one hand and ultra-leftist forces based on their subjective approach ignoring the objective reality of the country moved for armed struggle on the other. CPN(Maoist) in their 9 years of armed insurgency have two visible impacts. Firstly, the issues raised by CPN-UML and some other parties for social transformation and restructuring of politics & economy have been proved urgent and even the rightist status quoists have started to feel the necessity. Secondly, they have hindered the natural course of change, caused development process to stop, promoted militarization, pushed the country towards a position of failed state and creating ground for foreign intervention & absolute autocracy. At this juncture, we should try our best to minimize the second and move forward for the first.

Social transformation in three areas:

The force, which came into power after the first election as a result of change in 1990, was not capable to transform the society in a democratic manner in spite of cooperation from opposition, instead the force in power hurdled the process. The successive governments, too, could not feel seriously the urgency of restructuring. The problem became more intensified and existing social conflicts burst into the armed insurgency of Maoists. Now the country is under bloodshed and violence. Violation of humanitarian norms and human rights has become a common phenomenon from both the Maoist side and the state. Inevitable at present is the permanent peace & development through overall restructuring.

a. Restructuring the state:

Centralised ruling system established by Ranas, was adopted by the king during panchayat autocracy in his own interest. It was to be replaced after reestablishment of democracy and the nation was to be developed as the common home for the entire people. All should be represented in democratic Nepal which needs following tasks:

1. Overall review of the structure of state machinery and change the centralized system through a process of transforming it into common home
2. Devolution of centralized power and establish the sovereignty of people in the real sense
3. Division into 10 Regions and transfer of central government rights to the regional bodies.
4. Structure of regional government with 40 districts and deducted number of village units from existing 4,000 VDCs (Municipalities in accordance with the need to narrow the gap between rural and urban areas)
5. Representative system through House of representatives & national Assembly in center and through Regional assembly, district Assembly, Municipality and Village Assembly
6. Empowerment, institutionalization and full autonomy to local bodies
7. Development of inclusive democracy through proportional representative system in local bodies
8. Direct Election for Executive, not based on legislative
9. National Army and police under direct mobilization of elected Executive
10. Restructuring of judiciary and judicial system
11. Declaration of secular nation



b. Restructuring the society:

Nepal is a multi-caste/ethnicity, multi-lingual and multi-religion nation and hence in democratic Nepal all sorts of discrimination should be eliminated, which require following steps:

1. List out & scheduling of all caste & communities by identification & Evaluation of their origin & sub groupings
2. Equal opportunities for the social, political, cultural & economic development
3. National Assembly as the common national body for all communities
4. Reservation in local bodies for the communities with less than 1 % population and competition among others in local body elections
5. 1/3rd representation of women in local bodies and 20% in national bodies to be increased gradually later on
6. Tri-Lingual Policy – local language in local level, Nepali in national level and English in international level
7. Special provision for dalits & minority communities less than 1% of population in education, health, national service & other services
8. Elimination of superstitions and Promotion to progressive culture and to develop equity based social relation
9. Consolidation of national unity through development of infrastructures and partnership process among peoples of diversities

c. Restructuring the economy:

The change in 1990 could not be translated into restructuring of economy, which has shown adversities in the entire national life, so the process of economic transformation is to be launched as follows:

1. Mixed economy as a coordination of public sector, private sector and cooperatives or collective ownership sector
2. Restructuring of land relation to liberate the peasants from feudal relations
3. Land reform through Redistribution of land
4. Drastic agrarian reforms and promotion to agro-based industries
5. Industrialization based on comparative advantage for the adjustment with globalization and inter-dependence
6. Industrialization to be shaped on the basis of proposed SAFTA among the South Asian Countries
7. Long-term development strategy & economic restructuring to be based on neighborhood changes with especially consideration of Indo-China relationship
8. Powerful national economy with the character of open democratic market system based on comparative advantage & open FDI on our priorities
9. Special programmes for poverty alleviation
10. Special programmes for dalits, backward communities, poor groups and women
11. National vision for short-term & long-term development



12. Saving & investment to be channelised on basic priorities of water resource, agro-diversity, bio-diversity, HRD and natural conservation

Political Solution based on above-mentioned restructuring:

Nepali society cannot move ahead without these changes. But these changes cannot be done without the solution of present crisis. Special process step by step is inevitable in order to restore peace and manage the present violent conflict

1. Result-oriented dialogue is not possible till the wrong notion of revolution only through armed struggle on the one hand and revolt to be suppressed through weapons on the other hand can be erased from Maoists and State
2. Full homework of both the parties and institutionalized process from a new height is essential
3. Efficient use of national & international facilitators and intermediaries

4. Round-table conference for two consensus points - one, political-Constitutional process for new constitution and two, restructuring of Nepali society
5. Formation of all party-all sides interim government including CPN(Maoist), general election and formulation of new constitution
6. Role of UNO may be mobilized from the very beginning as the international facilitator or intermediary, which will ease the dialogue, facilitate the election process and assist in managing the Maoist armed force

The elected government will have to restructure and launch the process of transformation. The process will uplift the Nepali society historically and will develop new democratic relations among peoples and social groups. Resultantly Nepali society will go a step forward. The nine-year violent conflict will be put to an end and Nepali society & nation will be led towards a new future and new possibilities



COMMENTS

Com. Sahana Pradhan

Standing Committee member - CPN (UML)

Com Jhalanath Khanal has rich knowledge on conflict management and about the Maoist violence in the country. He has presented a number of papers in various workshops. The paper he has presented today addresses primarily three issues: violent conflict, social transformation and progressive transformation.

No society operates without violence, but what we are talking is about violent conflict. But this paper does not clearly state the roots of the violent conflict and how it is being manipulated. To make the paper more clear, this aspect needs to be addressed.

In the world, some 36 countries are in the midst of violent conflict now. If the paper had included experiences and examples about these global conflicts, we could have an opportunity to locate the Nepali conflict in a comparative term. The Maoist conflict has been intensified in the last four years. Before the start of the violence, they had submitted 40-point demands, but the government of the day did not pay any attention to the demands, thus allowing the Maoists to launch violent activities. Frustration about democracy has contributed to the violence. The Maoist terror of extortion, abduction and violence could not sustain people's trust.

Current Prime Minister Deuba was Prime Minister when the first round of talks was held with Maoists. All political parties had made their own suggestions as to how the problem had to be solved. But the government could not do proper homework. There is a talk of peace talks now, but the Prime Minister does not seem serious towards the talks.

Right from the establishment of the Communist Party, the issue of structural transformation of feudal relations has been a major demand. The Maoists have taken the same demand now, but they are not clear about the 'how' of it.

The Congress Party did not listen to our suggestions vis-à-vis reforms in the agriculture, industry and business sector. Soon after the 1990 change, the Congress felt that it was



the only party responsible for the country, not the communists.

The paper states that 33 percent seats should be reserved to women at the local authorities and 20 percent in the National Assembly. Such a statement is influenced by patriarchy. The movement of women should determine the percent of women.

Similarly, the paper talks of the constituent assembly in a roundabout way. It would be good to directly speak for constituent assembly given that it has already become a demand in the streets. There are very good references in the paper, the analysis are good and so is the argument. Still, the paper would be a better reference material if the suggestions raised could be dealt with thematically.

DISCUSSION NOTE

- The participation had to be wider in such a programme. It does not seem possible that Maoists would come to dialogue immediately. If any one is arrested, the government does not get any information. To get information on the arrest, one has to go to army officials. It is hard to state who in fact is running the government
- Instead of development region, we should follow the path of federalism. Inclusive democracy is good if it is truly inclusive both in the centre and local levels.
- Constitutional appointments should be done by parliament.
- Agricultural issue should be discussed as the main issue in order to eliminate inequality
- Basic development should be stressed while discussing on economic structures. On the question of ethnicity, women and dalits, the government should make a plan for capacity development.
- Care should be taken to make sure there will be no repercussion when we go for direct election for prime minister. Direct election of the executive will give more power to prime minister making the post holder more autocratic. Given the situation of our country it would be too early now to go for such election. But there should direct election at the local level.
- The situation of violence is very horrible, but our view towards it is very narrow. We focused on the issue of social justice while framing constitution. But we could not develop a proper culture to operate ourselves in the system. Might makes right in our society. The system we have developed does not promote the marginalized groups of people.
- Politics is the sum of hard politics, soft politics and structural transformation. We do not have an alternative to structural transformation. We could not break away from the past. Politics is a democratic process. For structural transformation, we should democratise politics.



- Was there conflict before the establishment of democracy or it appeared only after the establishment of democracy?
- Which one of the 'direct election of prime minister', '10 electoral constituencies' and 'proportionate election' are short-term and long-term activities? These phenomena are discussed in the programmes of People's Multi-party Democracy. Whether they match the PMPD programmes. How does the federal way of governance solve the current conflict and pending problems surrounding religion, ethnicity, women and so on? How does the proportionate election system fit the concern for ethnic assembly? What is the view towards current Maoist violence? The Maoist violence has helped reactionary forces consolidate their position. The incident of October four is instant example of this.
- The issue of political-economy should also accompany social justice issues. The lack of social justice and social discrimination has helped continue and increased violence. Until we have social transformation, conflict cannot be solved. The careful analysis of the shortcomings of the last 15 years will also help identify the root causes of conflict. We are rich in bio-diversity. This aspect should not be forgotten while talking of economic reconstruction. Proposed land reform programmes should be revisited.
- Even after democratic change, the government did not take care of peoples. Every time people had to struggle to make the government work. Person-centric thinking and attitude of those in power is one of main causes of the conflict.
- Political parties should always command people's confidence for the transformation of society. This is possible only when political parties transform their political character and culture.
- Capitalism is said to have weakened. It would be contextual if the underlying causes were also discussed.
- There should be more analysis in relation to ethnic, gender and economic discrimination. There should be policy discussion while talking of women's participation. When policies are clear, women's participation increases. If nothing is given with a faulty premise that women have no capability, they will never get an opportunity to express their capability. Therefore, they should be given an opportunity.
- When talking of peace, politics should not be discussed as the main issue- it should be peace. There should be a clearly defined role of civil society organizations in the peace process.



Thank you. May be the last word on behalf of two delegation from Scandinavian countries, I would like to thank you for sharing your experiences here today. Com. J.N. Khanal, member of standing committee of CPN-UML and Com Sahana Pradhan, member of standing committee of CPN-UML, thanks for sharing and thanks for everybody to participating here by listening and sharing as well.

CONCLUDING SPEECH of Session Chair

Com. Kalle Larson

CCM, Swedish Left Party

I will not try to summarise. I will only say experiences you have described here in paper and in work; we will try to bring home to the public in our countries and western world. Because there is huge lack of information basically no idea about problem what you are facing here.

So, we will try to influence our own government to help with international solidarity the problem you are facing. When came back to practical things, you all should excuse me to behave as dictator with time keeping. But this Scandinavian habit actually. We say 5 O' clock finished means should complete by 5 O'clock. Of course the discussion could be continued, you all know that during the floor session 7-men spoke ant used 35 minute and 5-women spoke and used 24 minutes. Whether men or women, I thank all of you.
Thanks.

Multi Party Democracy and Constitutional Monarchy

A European Experience

DISCUSSION PAPER

Presented by Com. Monika Andersen

International Secretary, Socialist Left Party of Norway



In this speech which have the theme Multi Party Democracy and Constitutional Monarchy I will focus mainly on what is the Norwegian Experience but also take a look at other experiences in Europe. In Europe there has been a historical shift in the countries with Monarchy, from the days of the absolute Monarchy towards a Constitutional Monarchy. Centuries back, the Royal families had an absolute power also in the European countries. You might have heard about Ludwig the 14th of France who stated out: The State is I. – At that time in the 15th century this was the situation. But the Age of Enlightenment and the new ideals from the French revolution inspired the population all over the western world. And principles of sharing the power between various institutions became common, this made that the Monarchs all over Europe lost power.

In Europe there are no longer seen as really legitimate to inherit power, therefore the Royal Families of Europe have been turned in to symbolic persons, more than people in possession of any real power.

As you might know, Norway is a Constitutional Monarchy. The head of the state is our King, and formally it is the King that point out our Government. However, this is only the formal procedure. The principle of parliamentary rule has set precedence in the Norwegian political system. This means that in practice, the Norwegian Parliament has the authority over the executive branch – the government. It also means that the

government is accountable to the Parliament and dependent on its confidence.

However, the principle of parliamentary rule is not mentioned in the country's Constitution, and our Party looks at this as a democratic problem.

The Socialist Left Party of Norway is a Socialist and Republican Party. Our deputies make proposals of changing the constitution every parliamentary period in to a Republic. Today it is not a real problem in Norway that the King is the formal Head of State. But it is a principle for our party that a country should *elect* their own Head of State, and that such a position should not be inherited. SV also stress that it is important that the Parliamentary ground rules and the principle of freedom of information must be given Statues Form and become a part of the Constitution of Norway. Today it is not, it's just a part of the common practice. The suggestion from SV is to change the word "King" in the Constitution and replace it with the word "government". However, kingship goes back more than a thousand years in Norway, and therefore it is not easy to get the people to go along with such a change.- Mainly because people don't see the point about changing something that works.

As I said, The Socialist Left Party of Norway, make the proposal every parliamentary period for





changing the Constitution to make Norway a Constitutional Republic. For a proposal to amend the Constitution it must be submitted to the Parliament during one of the first three years of a parliamentary period which lasts four years. The proposal cannot be considered by the Parliament until one of the first three years in the next parliamentary period. The people then have their say through the election between the two parliamentary periods.

However, I would say that it is possible to make a Multi Party Democracy exist side by side with the Constitutional Monarchy. Due to parliamentarism the King does no longer have any real power in Norway, but the language of the Constitution has not been changed accordingly. In the Constitution one speaks of the powers of the King, when the actual power lies with the Government. It is therefore SV wants to change the Constitution, so that the Constitution of the country really describes what *is* the actual situation - And as I said earlier, our Party wants that the country should have an elected President as the Head of the State and not a king or a queen who inherited their possession. All though the King does not have any real power, he is still the one who formally leads the meeting between the ministers, the cabinet meeting every Friday. And this meeting is held at the Royal Palace.

One important principle in our Constitution is the separation of Powers. The power of the State is divided between several branches of government which are independent of each other and act as checks and balances on each other. The aim of this principle is to prevent the concentration and abuse of power. In 1814, legislative, executive and judicial powers were divided between the Parliament, the King and the courts. - This division is still in use, all though the division now a days really are between the Parliament, the Government and the Courts. With the constitution of 1814 the King lost power, and when the first political parties took place in

the Norwegian Parliament in 1884, the king lost even more power. The Liberal and Conservative parties were formally founded in 1884 and The Labour Party was founded in 1887, but it did not win any seats in the Parliament until 1903. The Socialist Left Party origins from the Norwegian Labour Party, - but this is another long story.

Norway as a country was for many years under the rule of first the Danish and then the Swedish King. As I said in 1814 we got our own constitution, but it was not until 1905 that we had our own king. Achieving our own constitution, Norway had it's one internal policy, but had the same foreign policy as Sweden. In 1905, the Norwegian Government declared the Union with Sweden dissolved. It was close to war with Sweden, but it did not get this far. The Norwegian Government then asked a Danish Prince to become the Norwegian king. - And curiously, it was the Danish prince who actually the one who insisted that there should be a plebiscite about whether Norway should become a Republic or continue to be a Monarchy. 80 per cent of the population voted for Monarchy. - When we in the Socialist Left Party of Norway make proposals in the Parliament about changing from a Constitutional Monarchy in to a Constitutional Republic, we also say that before we want to make the actual change in the Constitution we would like the Norwegian People to give their say in a plebiscite.

Now I will say a little bit about the Parliamentarian Rules which make the Norwegian Multi Party Democracy function, and sometimes makes the situation between the political parties or between the Parliament and the Government a bit stressful.

Information from the Norwegian Government on the web:

"Parliamentarism, or the principle of parliamentary rule, is the form of government which gives the parliament authority

over the executive branch - the ministerial Government. *The Government* is accountable to the Parliament and dependent on retaining its confidence. A number of constitutional usages govern relations between the Parliament and the Government, violation of which incurs political consequences, which may go so far as to require the resignation of a minister or even an entire Government. None of this is spelled out in the Constitution, but the principles have been created by political precedence and are considered fully as binding as if they had been.

Under parliamentary rule the majority in the Norwegian Parliament determines who will fill the offices of the ministers in Government. This does not always mean that a sitting Government will be backed by a majority, but it cannot continue to rule if it is opposed by a majority. It is the latter statement that defines the fundamental characteristic of parliamentarism. If the Parliament votes that the Government does not have the confidence of the Parliament, the Government must resign. It is the lack of the confidence from the members of the Parliament which makes it necessary for the Government to step down.

A Government, for its part, may call *a vote of no-confidence*, and in doing so, threaten to step down if the Parliament does not accept its proposal on a specific issue. In practice, a Government also renders its resignation in the event of an *electoral defeat*, i.e. when the majority in the parliament shifts as a result of an election, thereby creating a parliamentary imperative for the formation of a new Government. “

Going back to talk a little bit about the constitutional monarchy. The Royal Family today have a symbolic role in the Norwegian Society. They get invited to openings and cultural events. They have immunity so they can not be prosecuted with crime. - The King is also the Head of the Church, as Norway has an official religion, Christian - Lutheranism. Our party think that it is wrong that we have a state religion in Norway, and we also make proposals in the parliament concerning making the role of the Religion a private matter, and not a state matter. We want a country with freedom for all religions,

and not a country who gives priority to one religion above one other. Having a State Religion means that the schools which are also public in Norway, also get the task of educating the children according to the Christian belief. We find this problematic in a country with many minority groups represented.

It is also the King that every year opens the Parliament. And he who holds what is called the Throne speech, or the Kings speech. This is not really the speech of the King, but the speech of the actual government. This means, that the content of the speech will vary according to which political party or parties the government consist of. It is the Government who actually writes the Speech. After the speech, there is a debate between the political parties in the parliament, and the King does not participate in this, as members of The Royal Family is not allowed to make official political Statements or participate in the elections. This neutral role of the king makes that he will be holding the throne speech on behalf of the government, whether there is a right wing government or a government from The Socialist Left.

In Norway, women may now inherit the throne; however this was not the case until 1990 when the law was changed. In Norway this did not get a retrospective effect, so it is still the Crown Prince of Norway, two years younger than his sister who is next in line to the throne. For the next generation anyhow, there is the Crown Prince New born daughter who will succeed her farther. The same changes about the right to the Thrown for female members of the Royal family were also made in Sweden, some years earlier than Norway. There the changes in the Law had retrospective effect, and they changed the successors line, making the oldest princess next in line, instead of her younger brother.

Finally, the will of the people will always be important when a country considers the way they govern, whether it is a constitutional monarchy or a constitutional republic. - If you implant a system of government that the people oppose, it will always end in tragedy, whether this is a constitutional republic or a constitutional monarchy- a communist regime or a fundamental marked-liberalist regime.





COMMENTS

by Com. Moda Nath Prasrit

The Standing Committee member- CPN (UML)

This is a very important subject that we are discussing. In Nepal, we have multiparty democracy and constitutional monarchy. The experiences from Europe will help us settle out the debate that is going on in relation to the democracy and monarchy. The monarchy is becoming powerful and heading towards autocracy. Political parties are struggling against this. In Europe, democratic revolution has a long history. In course of revolution even kings were beheaded. The French Revolution is the most decisive revolutions in Europe, which rooted out feudalism. In 1789, monarchy was abolished in France.

There was no monarchy in Norway until 1907. The prince of Denmark was brought to Norway and made king. The

people were asked to decide whether they wanted a monarchical or republican state. The Norwegian people voted for monarchy. As a matter of principle, the king runs the government, but in practice it is the elected government. The Socialist Party in Norway has been demanding an end to monarchy, elected head of the state and written constitution. I have enough to learn from this experience.

There are nearly 275 countries in the world, in which reside 6 billion people. Of them, 90 percent people are in republican states, nine percent in constitutional monarchy and one percent in authoritarian states. King Gyanendra should know that autocratic monarchy has been an issue of the past. The King in Norway has every right, but he does nothing on his own. Nepal's King has no right constitutionally, but he wants to be active. This explains the importance of democratic culture in political dispensation. Even our political parties want to keep them lose to the King and move ahead making him happy. This non-democratic and cowardly state is making the King powerful. The demand for secular state is the common issue of Norway and Nepal.

It has been long since the end of feudalism in Europe. But Denmark, Sweden, England, Belgium, Norway, the Netherlands and other European countries are still constitutional monarchy. The Socialist Parties in the countries hold the views that such unnecessary institutions should not exist for the establishment of socialism. We have traditional monarchy, it is a powerful institution and is said to be historically important. This means we still have feudalism and its worshippers. Europe has a long history of democratic



exercise; similar is the history of republican exercise. But ours is a very short history of democracy. We should learn a lot from Europe in relation to democracy and monarchy.

We also have a history, which shows that monarchies were destroyed many times. As far back as 2,700 years, the kingship of Janakpur (of King Karal) was destroyed. In the 16th century, King Sadashiva Malla was chased away by people for his anti-people policies. The end of the Rana regime also marks the end of hereditary regime. But in all these efforts, there remained the lack of the awareness of the republican culture. Ideological awareness is not enough for sustainable revolution. It is the cultural and social awareness that brings about political and social change. The history of European renaissance teaches us this lesson, one, which played a major role to transform a number of issues associated with conservatism. .

The Industrial Revolution prevented European kings from being autocratic. Europe was quite back in terms of production; therefore they placed emphasis on business and progresses as well in a short span of time. Our country is productive from an agricultural standpoint. Since the agricultural production is subsistence, Nepali people have not felt the need for transformation. The lack of agricultural and cultural revolution in the countries like Bhutan and Nepal, the kings are attempting counterrevolutions at times.

It does not make any difference if the European people do not read the history of Nepali monarchy, but we must have knowledge about European monarchy. It makes a good sense if we discuss about the European movement against monarchy in various forums. The French people struggled for 125 years against the king, the longest movement of its king in the history of world politics. We have only a 70/80-year old struggle against the king. Europe has a 500-year-old awareness, but our political awareness started only from 1930s.

The constitution of England does not have many articles; it does not say much about the role of the king. Nepal's constitution maintains a number of articles and mentions about the king. When people are sovereign, the institution such as army automatically comes under the purview of the people. But we are in problem due improper explanation.

People's awareness in our country is like the flood in a stream that comes all of a sudden and disappears. We are yet to initiate a continuous process for awareness raising. Our struggle is based more on the fits of fury rather than on awareness about issues involved. Even the communist parties are yet to develop as class-based organizations. The parties have not formed along ideological lines. Only now GEFONT is based class structures.

DISCUSSION NOTE

- If there is no problem with monarchy why is the Socialist Party demanding an end to the institution?
- The Socialist Party is demanding an end to monarchy despite the fact that it is not a problem in Norway. But in our country we have so many and so strong socialist parties, the monarchy is struggling to be so despotic, yet why don't they demand for a republican set up?
- Although not said openly, the English monarch is constitutional. But ours is

avowedly constitutional monarchy, but it is trying to be despotic. Why is so?

- Sweden and Norway maintain a similarity in a number of issues. Both are monarchical states, both feel that the debate should be sorted out



through referendum. But the Swedish King does not speak in parliament. The state is secular. The King's role is to represent the country in times of war. We are therefore saying that we do not need monarchy; we are not in favour of a president following the end of monarchy. Swedish left parties feel that the speaker in the parliament should act as the head of the state. The power should go to people's representatives. The King does not represent anyone. Why to use up the money—the tax collected from the peoples—just constructing a palace for the king! This is our position.

- The constitution of Norway and Sweden do not speak about monarchy, but in practice these institutions are constitutional. The level of awareness is quite high. So is the democratic culture. We fought for democracy in our country. Maybe we could not handle it. No one listens if we put our grievances peacefully, to make the

concerned listen we should resort to vandalism. Even the political parties in opposition tried to make the government fail. They could not go beyond this mentality. This is one reason why democracy could not operate.

- The King is not happy at the constitutional provisions. He is saying this through his behaviour. Our political parties stand against hereditary power when they are in the streets, when in government they remain mute about this. So the problem is not that of people, it is that of political leaders. Kings become despotic when people have low level of awareness but in Nepal the King is becoming despotic because of the lack of awareness in political parties and their leaders.
- We are protesting hereditary power here, but in South Asian politics party leaders themselves are heading towards a hereditary culture.



CONCLUDING REMARKS by Session Chair
Bidhya Devi Bhandari
Chairperson ANWA & CCM –CPN (UML)

We have benefited a lot from this discussion. If the paper had still more about European experiences and practices, we could have more to benefit from it. It could further be better if the paper had mentioned about Nepal's experience as well.

The King of Nepal is like Ludwig 14th of France. Visibly Nepal is in the 14th Century of Europe now. The King is trying to control over sovereignty. The 1990 People's Movement ended up in an agreement rather than in a revolution. The King was granted powers, but the current problem has from the King's bypassing of the constitution. CPN (UML) is a pro-republican party. We are maintaining that any decision of its kind should be taken by the people. European constitutional monarchy is operating well even though it is not written in constitution. In Nepal, we have things in writing, but it has not been in practice. Even now there are demands for constituent assembly; the King is fearing that whether this would throw monarchy. Since the people are sovereign, we should listen to them and follow what they decide. The People's Multiparty Democracy—the political programme of UML—sees people as supreme power. The question of power balance should be settled out of public verdict. I feel that the European experience will help us in this regard as well.

4

part four

Women struggle over the years and what we have attained

DISCUSSION PAPER

Presented by **Com. Ulla Andersson**
CCM / National Board Member, Left Party-Sweden



All over the world we have the same structures, women have a lower value than men do, women are subordinate to men power. Those structures form different expressions in different parts of the world and within countries.

If we look backwards we can see that the women struggle in last centuries has gone in 3 waves.

The first wave was between the years 1875 -1921 and about equal democratic rights to vote, same rights to higher education and juridical and civil rights for both married and unmarried women as well as equal law of succession. The struggle was in the beginning led by the Liberal party. The socialists thought that the abolishing of capitalism and the classless society automatically should lead to equal rights for both women and men and that it was best to take just one fight at a time. They thought that the democratic rights for the working class men to vote also should lead to the women liberation. Fortunately they changed their mind after strong pressures from the working women. In Sweden we attained equal rights to vote for women and men 1919. In the elections in 1921 the first woman took place in the parliament, 3,5% of the members in the local councils were women and during this time a lot of higher education's opening for women. There also was some additional law changes to the better for women.

During the second wave 1965- 1980 the struggle was about equal rights between men and women,

by law, for work. No longer should your sex decide your wage. We fought for the right to free abortion, pre-schools for all children, and contraceptives even for men as well as and right to painless childbirth. We fought the double oppression within the family, some thought that the marriage was as slavery for the women (the socialists had problem with that because they thought that the working class family had it better and that the working class women were not so oppressed as women from middle-class and the bourgeois). We fought men violence against women, for help with the childcare when the children are sick and we also fought for sexual liberation and against porno and so on. We wanted to build a society for equality and to reach that we said that the private is political.

Group 8 started the second wave. They built a big organisation started by 8 women, all of them socialists or communists. A majority was political active but very tired to be looked upon as secretaries and those who serve men while men had the right to make decisions. The organisation exists in parts of the biggest cities and in towns all over the country. They were an antiauthority and antihierarchic organisation. They fought with demonstrations, meetings, studies, articles, and music - a lot of music groups by women started during this time.



Peace & Democracy



And what did they attain? During this period the society built pre-schools for more than 100 000 children which was 90 000 more than before. The women participation in the labour market increased a lot - from 36% 1950 until 68% 1970. We got the right to free abortion, pain relief in childbirth. We also got a parent insurance, which means that both parents could be home with pay with their child during their first months. Today that right is extended to 480 days, two of the months are for the mother, two for the father and the rest they can be share, as they want. The women's wages increased to be nearly 90% of men although from 1980 it stopped decreasing and now increases again - today its 84%. The lesbian movement grew. During this time the feminism theory was formulated, women studies, gender and the patriarchy conception introduced. The patriarchy conception made it possible to make a difference between individual men and power structures that keep up a male dominance. So many men joined the struggle. They created a theory that took into consideration both class and sex.

The third wave took another shape. Networks, papers and books become a part of the struggle, many young women begun to take space in media and entered the struggle.

Heterosexuality as norm is questioned and seen as a part of the oppression of women. The women research develops and also the theories. Gender system and gender-contract were introduced as conceptions. The gender system is built on the understanding that men and women are separated in work, at home and everywhere in society. They do different kinds of work tasks and different things at home. The gender

contract says that men and women, girls and boys, have different qualities so the gender system lasts. The gender contract is hidden and converted between the man and the women. Some things are for men and other things are for women - separated the whole time. That makes it possible for the system to live on.

The women representation in the political life increased during these years, but in the elections 1991 it shifted from 38% to 33%. Right before the elections in 1994 a threat was made from women to establish a party for women by women. That led to a representation over 40%. Both the social democrats and the Left party decided to allocate quotas, they decided to stop the situation within the parties where men in practice always had been quoted. 50% women and 50% men on all the election lists to the parliaments on regional level, on local level and on national level.

But still today men often hold on to the most important positions. They are chairmen in the executive committees of parliament in 70% of the cases. In the government 48% of the ministers are women but the finance and Prime Minister are men, in the parliament women are 48% and the same goes for district level. On local level the figure is 42%. The representation in the different juries and boards are often divided after gender boundaries. The gender governing those in power.

The women have taken a lot of the political power but in the private area the men are in power nearly totally. The women are 14% of the members of the boards in the 300

Women participation Sweden, Progress so far...

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| 1845 | Equal inheritance rights for women and men | 1925 | Women gain same rights as men to civil service job (some exceptions) |
| 1864 | Husbands lose regal right to strike their wives | 1927 | Public upper secondary schools open to girls |
| 1873 | Women gain right to take degrees with some exceptions | 1931 | Maternity insurance benefits introduced |
| 1884 | Unmarried women attain majority at age 21 | 1935 | Equal basic pensions adopted for women and men |
| 1901 | Women gain the right to four weeks unpaid maternity leave | 1939 | Gainfully employed women may not be dismissed due to pregnancy, childbirth, or marriage |
| 1919 | All women gain suffrage for municipal elections and the right to hold office at municipal and county levels | 1947 | First women Cabinet Minister |
| 1921 | Women gain national suffrage and the right to hold office at the national level. | Child grant introduces, equal pay for equal work for state employees | |
| Married women get attain majority at the age of 21. the new marriage code gives wives and husbands equal legal status | | 1950 | Both parents declared a child's legal guardians |
| 1922 | The first five women are elected to parliament | 1955 | Three months paid maternity leave for workingwomen on birth of child |
| | | 1960 | Employers and Unions agree to abolish separate wage rates for women over a five-year period |



biggest private companies. There are more men with the name Göran, than women as head of board in the 200 biggest companies - there are only 4 heads of board that are women as a total. In the private sector is 81% of the chiefs men in the public sector are 45% of the chiefs men. Also in the media who are very important in the struggle is it nearly a total dominance of men. The women often works in public sector are 74% of all employees and in the private sector they are 37%. The public sector is very important for the women, it makes its possible for them to work (pre-schools) as they often have the works there and they also get grants from the public sector. The grants and the taxes redistribute money from the rich, often men, to more poor - often women.

We live in the land who are the most equal, but we are not at the goal. A big study - "The women power examination" - concluded that it would take 150 years to be equal at the speed we have in working for equal rights, quilts and possibilities. More representation is not enough although very important - it is an issue of power! Therefore it is very difficult to find a simple solution but we are feminists and we will keep fighting for our rights! In the election of 2002 were 6 of 7 parties in the parliament feminists, which were at least what they said. It's only the Left party who has it in their constitution. The Left party pursued the women questions real hard in the elections -98 and -02. We were the party who really wanted some exchanges, we questioned why men should have the right to

1969	Compulsory schools adopt new curriculum. Encouraged to promote equal opportunities	1994	Gender statistics made part of Sweden's official statistic
1974	Parents entitled to share parental allowances upon childbirth	1995	At least one month of parental leave must be used by mother and one by father
1980	Law against sex discrimination in employment	1997	The first woman bishop
1982	All assault and battery against women even if committed on private property subject to public prosecution. Ban on pornographic "live shows" in places open to public. Public funds to women's organisations. New name- change law at time of marriage, couples decide which name or names they will use	1998	Act on violence against
1983	All occupations open to women including armed forces	1999	Law prohibition the purchase of sexual services
1992	New Equal opportunities Act.	2001	A more stringent version of the Equal Opportunities Act came into force 1 January
		2002	Parental leave: Number of day's increases to 480; 60 of which are reserved for each parent and cannot be transferred.
		2004	The Swedish Government adopts a strategy for the integration of gender equality into the Government Offices.





discriminate women? Women rights are human rights. Because of those believes the party became the third biggest in the election -98. We grew and became stronger. More women united us and became soon the majority of the party-members and they still are.

We're still working with women question. Even if women have a higher education than men, we don't have the same wages as them for the same kind of work. When women begins to work in a male dominated area and if they becoming a majority of the employees, the wages decreases. Because women work have a lower value.

Women don't have the same opportunity to choose between the works as men and there for often stuck with a spare-time job. Most women often have two jobs, the spare-time job and the homework. Because of this women are often more sick than the men. They perform 2/3 of all unpaid work.

Another big question for us in the Left party is that men should take a bigger responsibility for their children.

In the courts after a rape-trial is it still usual to questioned women in painful inquest and miss beliefs. The guilt is still often the women. 1 of 7 rapes are reported to the police, so far this year its been 2 200. The prostitution increase and the men violence against women continue. Over 22 000 cases of woman assault reports to the Swedish police every year. Every 20 minutes a woman gets beaten. But the legislation has improved, and courts and the police organisation are getting educated about oppress and violence against women.

The Left party also works for defending our social welfare, since there are strong forces that want to privatising business, industries and to have a private financed welfare. And instead of paying it with tax money they want to charge for it. This would lead to increasing class differences, which has the hardest effect on the already exposed ones, generally women.

The taxes and the grants redistribute income and wealth between men and women and between rich and poor. That system is under constant attack and in the meantime fundamental for our rights. So our struggle continues. We are a feminism and a socialist party, which means that the socialism we striving for is not only the class less society, but one where men renounce the power and the privileges the patriarchal gives them...

The socialism we striving for mean more than social and economic justice. It means that men renounce the power privileges the patriarchy gives them. The men are spared from the constraint of being a oppressor. We have all both women and men something to win, off course women more than men if the patriarchate abolishing. Feminism and Marxism are booth necessarily tools in the struggle for human liberation.

The purpose with The Left party's feminist political practice is to make it general for the public the gender power order and how it influence the political processes and decisions which forms our society and life's. The purpose is also that in political struggle change these order.

When the question of gender not longer are vital importance for how the resources and power in the society distribute amongst women and men has the feminist struggle reach their goal.

COMMENTS
by Gauri Pradhan
President, Alliance-Nepal

I am not a woman activist, but I support the woman rights movement. Generally I find myself close to the opinions of woman activists.



Com. Ulla in her paper has mentioned the movement of Europe in the context of women's movement. There are different concepts. However, the movement was begun from the cycle of labour.

In the first phase, 18th-20th century, women movement was focused on equal civil and political rights, which at present continues in the name of rights to motherhood and feminism. These issues developed in the twentieth century with the concept of single family. In the history of women's movement, movement for voting rights in Europe is historical. Women first guaranteed with the right to vote in Australia in 1902, Sweden in 1921 and France only in 1947.

Second phase movement continued with the welfare concept. This concept put the women, children and disabled together and addressed them together. In this period, the world saw a change in legal rights, sexual exploitation, occupation, maternity protection, childcare and so on. In 1970s, a new concept 'women in development' was developed and challenged the welfare concept. At home too, a new change germinated as result of women's movement and the State provisioned a 'Woman Development Officer' to streamline development for the benefit of women. Still there was a debate in the globe whether 'women and development' or 'women in development'. This conflicting concept though resulted in some achievements, could not respect women at large. As a result developed a new 'women empowerment, concept.

In the third phase began a study of men's and women's proximity from the social angle. Beijing conference in 1990s is an example of its. This

conference called the world to see women from the eyes of women. The paper presented here built on these background is really comprehensive and makes an analysis how far we are succeed and what is to achieve now.

On the other front, we came to know that women and children were the bearer of heavy cost in the movement for voting rights and revolt against slavery, learnt that history of 'beauty queen' had a nexus to revolt against slavery. We also knew the practice of beauty queen began from enjoying the women defeated in war. Europe has a history that it revolted against exploitation against women in different names. We must take it for granted from Europe.

In the post 1970s, women played a significant role in peace movement in Europe. This established the north-south relation, and it could be described as the movement of environment. And, after all, this movement was for the humanity.

Clara Zetkin started the movement for equal rights. This movement is closely related with the movement against feudalism and imperialism. The concept of equal responsibility of both father and mother to their children is developed after the movement centred on maternity protection, maternity leave and single family.

The concept of women and development or women in development developed to involve women in development sectors. As this concept could not streamline women as expected, now the concept of women empowerment has come to the fore. This concept that has a support of UNO and other





international organisations raises the issues of women equality, women liberation and women participation at a time. In the end of 20th century, a new concept 'feminist movement' has been developed and it advocates physical, psychological and social issues of women.

We hear the difference between women movement and feminist movement. Even, the feminist movement has been divided into 'extreme-feminist' (their claim is they are self-reliant by their own) and 'neo-feminist'. We (male) can also be included in the neo-feminist movement. If women's rights are protected, rights of children will be guaranteed, family disputes and social conflict can be managed. As said women can considerably tolerate pangs, their role in conflict management has been highly sought at present.

There has been given a little room for the heroic deeds of women in the history. It depends on who writes the history and it has often been done by men. So heroes are considerably included in its chapters.

Women have contributed much in the history of women's movement in Nepal. In the battle of Kirtipur, women fought against Prithvi Narayan Shah under the veil of men. But this historical deed has not been mentioned in the history. Similarly, Nepali women have significantly contributed from the period of Yogmaya to the movement of 1950, 1960 and 1990. Even at present, we are in phases of movements and

we must deeply concern to guarantee the rights of women through these movements. Women should not be treated simply in our analysis.

It has been a challenge to us to promote women's participation and guarantee their rights. Both men and women are together in all these rights. But the institution working for transformation, need to be active with clear vision on the issues of women rights and equality in the social and political sectors and leadership. We need to guarantee 50 percent of seats to women in all social and political spheres.

Maoist's movement seems as it is mobilising more women in its movement. But they could not nominate even a single woman in their dialogue team. This adds a question on Maoists, and even on other political and social movements. We need to have more knowledge on women's participation. Women's movement should be the movement of all and it should be the movement for broad social transformation.

No next country is as progressive as Sweden in Europe. But even the country struggled for 150 years for the women's equality. In the issues of education, social security and occupation, Sweden, Norway and Finland are in equal position, where America lags very behind. This could be a dream to us. But this is the reality. Consumerism has been another hurdle to women's movement. We have an understanding that 'class based concept' is enough to deal

the feminism. This is wrong. We need to change this perception.

In Europe, when a wife gives birth to a baby, her husband must be with her. This is because the wife gets a psychological strength while giving a birth in the presence of husband. But in our country, if a husband accompanies, he is forced to leave.

If we develop a concept 'the strength of communist movement lies in the strength of women's movement', this will result in positive outcome. Similarly, we must develop the movement of dalits and ethnic minorities as a contributory movement of women. This leads the society to progress.

DISCUSSION NOTE

- What is the reason of women's low participation in post 1991 Sweden politics?
- Only the role of left parties is discussed here in the context of women's movement in Sweden? What was the role of other parties in women's movement? How could an agreement reach among women of all parties for the joint movement?
- After Sweden endorsed quota system, women's participation in politics reached to 48 percent. But their representation in private sector is very low. We must learn from it.
- What is the reason behind party's popularity after they declare themselves feminist? This could be a reference to us and I would like to know more about it. Despite all mechanism to fight discriminations against women, there are problems. Therefore, the parties should be aware of it and they should think for the special rights to women.
- How could we promote women's participation in peace process? Whether any European experiences for its management?
- Swedish experiences of women's role in legal and political sectors and their participation in education and other sectors could be worthy to us. In addition, the concept, 'father and mother have equal responsibility to nurture their children' is really inspiring. The political parties should not treat only the class concept as a challenge, but also should do the gender discriminations.
- It would be more beneficial to us if we discussed the lesson that women movement in Nepal should learn from the women's movement of Sweden. Women's participation is inevitable in all sectors. We need to lay our heads together in this front what we should do for this.
- Our ultimate goal is equitable society. We could not march forward only voicing women's issues. Women's movement should be a part of class struggle.
- Women cover 37 percent of seats in the parliament of Norway. Local level counts lesser than this. Once they take the responsibility, they do not do for twice. Household works has been the obstacles to Norwegian women to participate in politics. Still the male members do not share the household works equal to women. We have known that the state has played a vital role in Norway and Sweden to promote women's participation in politics. There should be an equal share of men in nurturing children. Even the political leaders should have this experience. Unless we translate these experiences into practice, women participation always hangs back.
- Women should guarantee the right to remarriage along with her children. If a husband dies, woman cannot marry immediately or if she does, she needs to abandon her children. But on the other hand the husband does allege these restriction. We need to change this culture.





CONCLUDING REMARK by *Session Chair*
Astha Laxmi Shakya

Minister for Women, Children & social Welfare & CCM CPN (UML)

This paper is very useful. It will be better if we incorporate the points floated here. We benefit much from such discourse between two countries on women movement. We have been observing 8th March. We have to wage a long movement to

bring a change in social structure bias to women. We have a list of demands and as the paper mentions, we have to launch phase wise movement. But before it, we need to prioritise our demands. The paper mentions the issues of motherhood and gender discriminations, which are very much similar to our issues.

Women movement 'initiated by eight heads' has been a historical movement in the world. At home too, the movement was started by a small group of women. Now we are in the strong position and we have to link this history to the history of the world. Class discrimination and gender discrimination, both issues are important in the front of movement. We have to take up both issues together and crush them together. The paper has strongly raised the issues of rights of working women. We have to learn from it. The day calls the women at large to be united and continue each movement with a clear vision. Women's movement should not be visionless. Finally I would like to end this session. Women of all countries, unite!

Concluding Session

Com. Bishnu Rimal, Vice-Chairperson of GEFONT, chaired this session. He invited three other participants from Norway, Sweden and Nepal to express their opinion and remark on the two days seminar. The remarks are as following.

**REMARKS by
Com. Monica Anderson**
International Secretary of Socialist Left Party of Norway

Dear organiser, comrades and friends,
On behalf of socialist left party of Norway, I would like to express our gratitude to GEFONT and LIF for inviting us to part in this important seminar on Peace and Democracy.

It has been very interesting to be part of this seminar and have opportunity to share experiences between political party, trade union and other organisation from different countries. As Norwegian delegation, we felt very included in the seminar. We would specially like to thanks for all translation both the document and discussion in seminar.

As socialist, we have much to fight. We never satisfied and always have to fight for improving the condition. We are here to share what socialist from Nepal and Norway need to fight much. We the socialist in Norway also need to fight much, however



listening the Nepalese situation and to be few days here in Kathmandu, it remind me that how much we need to do in Norway after going back. The role of socialist in Norway is not only to fight to achieve, but also to protect what we have already achieved.

It is normal to say that our conservative party will protect what we achieved. Norwegian social security system is under attack and the socialists are fighting to protect it. Internationalism is important and cooperation between party, trade unions and feminist movement are beneficial for everybody. Both Henrriete and myself are very grateful to be in this seminar and would like to thanks once again.





REMARKS by
Com. Kalle Larsson
CCM, Left Party of Sweden

Let me start completely agreeing what Com. Monica expressed thanks. I also would like to express thank to translator, organiser and everyone to make this seminar successful.

In the beginning, we all have seen a video here. First one was on democratic movement that was film shown that really happened. I have seen this with my own eyes being here in January, but that film will be very useful to show people in Sweden and Norway to tell them about crisis situation going in Nepal.

Another documentary about witch-hunting reminded Com. Ulla and me about old tradition from our own country. In previous year, one would say that if a woman accused witcheries, they would tie a stone to her feet and sink into pool water. If she sinks, she is not a witch, if she flows, then she would be considered as witch and be killed. So, either way, she will not come out from that situation alive. That tradition has been broken and is not there among Scandinavian countries today.

It is important for us coming from another part of the world to understand that you need short time, list out demand and action to solve the crisis situation in Nepal today. But you also need fundamental restructuring of society in order to fight injustice that lies beneath the problem you faced.

Only one very humble remarks in the situation you facing now. You know the situation better, but another must be remember that it is very easy to talk about social justice and democracy but we have to understand that we must also act,

we must also see the government act, trade union's act that something really happened.

The session on monarchy and multiparty system could also have been named "if it is not broke, why fixed it?" but we would like to fix democracy even though constitutional monarchy is in our country work a lot better than they do here. At least for three-reasons, we in our context like to abolish monarchy.

First, because of principle that is power should not be inherited. Second, money spend on kings house can be better spend for education, healthcare that people really need. Third, there is conservative role, politically just to having a monarchy in our context. We are not here to tell you what to do in your country, of course not. But we have to tell our own position is our own country.

When we come to the session on women struggle and what they attained, we were given historical over view on women struggle in Sweden and Europe. That is in my eyes showed at least two-things. One is women have to organise across the party boundaries to improve their own right, women to work together with other women from other political party to improve your position.

Our experiences also from our context, that is not enough just to fight against class society. We will do that and defeat capitalism sometime. But that is not enough. We will also have to fight against gender inequality to defeat patriarchy. Sometime it is good to go to the basic that discussion about women struggle was a lot that what do we call it whether Feminism or Women's right or Women's liberation. But let us go back to the basic. To see that women have less power, less income and less money than man have. And, that is needed to be changed. It is that analysis and plan of action, is the most important things. It is not necessary what we call.

But, let also remember that power is not ever given to anyone. It has to be taken. That means women should take power and man sometime loose and renounce power. That is the way to exit to create gender equality.

We have also come along discussion now we are sharing things. That's the different than just telling what to do and what not to do? This seminar, we have had this time, has been sharing experiences from what we had done.

So, at last even though in this country you are facing a lot of very serious problem, you must also realise that even in this country you have come a long way. One-way of looking at that we are seating in an old building of Rana's palace. Few years ago, it was not possible for trade union activists, feminist, socialist and communist to entering Rana's palace

and discussing together how to over through patriarchy? What to do to abolish capitalism? We together have also come a long way. Very very shortly, may be next time, we will meet some other palace.

Thanks you!

**REMARKS by
Com. Bhim Rawal
CCM of CPN-UML**

We discuss the issues, challenges and our future plan with prime focus on democracy and peace. Though there is difference between Nordic and us in economic, political, social and cultural circumferences, we have a similar responsibility to accomplish for equality and justice. We are in the verge of difficulty. We have heard the Comrades from abroad that they have marched through the history for justice, and the movement still continues. And, we have a common understanding that we need to plot a joint movement bridging the national borders for the salvation of human beings. In the discourse on peace and democracy, we have placed this concept and the people at the centre.

We should have all information on the state structure for the people's sovereignty and their rights. There should be guaranteed their participation. If the State tramples, tortures and suppresses people's rights, there germinates a conflict.

We have discoursed on State structure too. Feudal structure and monarchy both do not fit in 21st Century. We are clear that we need people's supremacy. Kalle Larsson has mentioned, 'why to fix monarchy with out role?' The same issues we have been raising over here too. This is our parallel thought. We have common understanding that we need to adieu the structural violence. For both of these issues -issues of monarchy and structural violence-, there is a need of participatory system and shared role. Our different mass organisations, trade union, institutions and political parties are agitating for this. The experience of Sweden and Norway shares us the same.

We have felt that these structural environments have backed to prop up the extremist Maoist



movement in Nepal. As the comrades from abroad present themselves in their deliberation, we have also realised that people will get benefited at the elimination of feudalism. The same thought I have tried to summarise here.

In the time of party in government for peace and democracy, the society at large must be mobilised to end the suppression of society. Our party holds staunch thought on this front. We must march forward with long term and short term strategies. Blessings of monarchy and expansionism never result in ending these problems. We have joined the government on the basis of 43-point common minimum programmes and have given the prime importance to peace joining. Peace has been limited and elusive. I hope the democrats and the equality supports of the globe confer solidarity in our struggle for restoring sustainable peace.

Our party CPN - UML agrees with the thoughts expressed by the delegates on the issues of women rights and rights of backward community people in the 2-day discussion programme. PMPD has strongly taken these issues in its programmes.

In a short period of its government, CPN-UML had streamlined women's participation in the local bodies. But we do not hope the existing social structure favours us fulfilling our interest. Therefore, I hope the thoughts expressed in his programme will be vigil to us to accomplish our mission.



Peace & Democracy





CONCLUDING REMARKS by Session Chair
Com. Bishnu Rimal
Vice Chair - GEFONT

Before discussing the programme, I would like to express our expectations.

While Kalle Larsson from Left International Forum and Binda Pandey from GEFONT were regularly laying their heads together about this programme some three months back, we had some expectations. In the context of finalising Peace and Democracy as the theme of this programme, we had presumed the parties at conflict would resort to peace talks and we would penetrate some suggestions for a successful turn of talks. But the talks could not revive. However, still the theme has not gone irrelevant. We recapitulate that peace should be the prerequisite and when talks hold, issue of social restructure should be the major agenda.

This agenda has not only been circumference the GEFONT, but also has been the agenda of people from all walks. So we widened the area of participants in this programme and included different unions, people's organisations, political parties and human rights organisations working for peace; and thus we selected the issues for discussion and the presenters too.

Our country has always witnessed and experienced the autocratic polity after each phase of successful movement. At present too, the country feels the cloud of regression being contorted. So we requested our delegates to present their thoughts on multiparty democracy and constitutional monarchy.

Similarly, we are back in the front of women's participation.

So we expected to listen views on this front too. We tried to ensure sizable stake of women in this programme. But the reality is before us. For this not only women are to blame, we need to remodel our perception. We also expected to include some important elements of deliberative democracy and develop a useful reference material. And, tuning to our expectation, we have had some working papers.

Host organisation, a supporter of socialism, holds a blazing future. And, the debated institution - the monarchy - is regularly dwindling to end. Its cremation is inevitable. Even between the countries vying for socialism have differences and similarities in views. In our understanding, there should be some three/four basic prerequisites for the socialist countries. The first prerequisite is democracy and democratic exercise but it should not be confined only in casting votes. It should be reflected in our behaviour and in our lifestyle. It is the concept of deepening of the democracy- the concept of guarantee of decentralisation, separation of power and people's participation under self-governance in the parliamentary reign and multiparty democracy. Pluralism and open society are its integral parts.

Second, freedom- Freedom is not only the colouring of politics; it is also a release of people from hunger, disease, poverty and all forms of inequalities.

Third, equity- This does not mean to cook food in a big pot and eat together. Neither is to be under the Mao-coat, and put on similar clothes and do things similar. We must sweep the jungle of such thoughts. Society builds on differences and differences exist. So the society guarantees job according to qualification, and value according job. This is a concept of an end of discriminations on the ground of gender, caste, religion etc.

Fourth, socialisation of economy- This does not mean that economy should be nationalised. Socialist countries nationalised the economy of their nation in the past and similar understanding is pervasive among us. But we mean economy should be in the hands of society and people should have access in budget preparation and distribution. Tax paid by he people should feed the people. The programme "Build Your Villages Yourself" launched in the period of UML government is an example of this kind. We must make it real. This is the process of building socialism. It is not that every thing goes right once the socialism dawns. Socialism does not land in a plate itself. It is what we must begin the process to that direction. History of other countries



shows that people have fought for centuries to cremate monarchy, and have they done for the guarantee of women's rights. Ultimately success prevails over failure. So we too have to take the direction of socialism. We ultimately overcome. And, then we, of course, can work for peace in society.

We expected the same to be discoursed in this programme. We expected the same in the working papers. But how far we succeed to make you understand in thoughts and how far we failed, this need to analyse.

The two-day seminar was interesting and live and so were the presentations. We have realised that many things are left to be discussed in the working paper of Nepal. Even the presenter mentioned so. The material would be more solid and bulky if we were able to add more European experiences on monarchy. I hope friends from Europe help us in this front. Many interesting thoughts on women

movements have been floated in the paper. This has been an interesting and important to us.

Finally, I would like to thank the comrades from Norway and Sweden. Similarly, I extend my thanks to the chief guest of inaugural session of this seminar UML General Secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal; speakers Laxman Basnet, Khila Nath Dahal, Rohini Thapaliya; paper presenters Jhalanath Khanal, Monika Andersen and Ulla Andersson; commentators Shahana Pradhan, Modanath Prashrit and Gauri Pradhan; and chairs of the sessions Kalle Larsson, Astalaxmi Shakya and Bidhya Devi Bhandari. I also thank to the participants of this programme from different organisations and friends of the GEFONT, photographer Kabindra Shrestha, friend helping us in microphone and the Hotel Yak and Yati for providing us with space. I would like to inform you all the end all activities of this seminar.

Thank you!



Peace & Democracy



Annex 1: Programme Schedule

First day of the Program : September 14, 2004

First session 9.30 – 12.00 Inaugural session

Master of Ceremony : Binda Pandey, Dy. Sec. Gen

Chairperson : Mukunda Neupane, chairperson

Keynote Speech : Binod Shrestha, Sec. Gen.

Guest Speakers : Mr. Laxman Bdr. Basnet, Chairperson of NTUC

: Mr. Khilanath Dahal, Secretary General of DECONT

: Mr. Rohini Thapaliya, Chairperson of Employer Council

: Com. Henriette Westrin, Vice-chairperson Socialist Left Party of Norway

: Com. Tora Breitholtz, Sec. Gen Young Left of Sweden

Chief Guest : Com. Madhav Nepal, Sec. Gen, CPN- UML

Vote of thanks &

Concluding the session : By session Chair

: *Lunch Break*

CORE SESSIONS**Session-1 13.30-17.00 (Sept. 14)**

Theme : Armed Conflict in Nepal: Issues of Social transformation & Progressive way-out for peace

Chair : Com. Kalle Larsson CCM/National Board member Sweden

Presenter : Com. J. N. Khanal, Member of Standing Committee, CPN-UML

Comment : Com. Sahana Pradhan, Member of Standing Committee, CPN-UML

: General discussion

Sum-Up : By Chair

Session-2 9.00-11.00 (Sept. 15)

Theme : Multi party Democracy and Constitutional Monarchy: An European Experiences

Chair : Com. Bidhya Bhandari, CCM, CPN-UML

Presenter : Com. Monika Andersen, International secretary of Socialist Left Party of Norway

Comment : Com. Modnath Prashrit, Member of Standing Committee, CPN-UML

: General discussion

Sum-Up : By Chair

Session-3 11:00-13.00 (Sept. 15)

Theme : Women's participation in Conflict management, social transformation and democratisation: An European Experiences

Chair : Com. Astalaxmi Shakya, CCM, CPN-UML

Presenter : Com. Ulla Andersson, CCM/National board member Left Party Sweden

Comment : Gauri Pradhan, Chairperson Alliance for HR & social justice

: General discussion

Sum-Up : By Chair

Session-4 : Concluding Session 14:00-16.00 (Sept. 15)

Chair : Com. Bishnu Rimal, VC of GEFONT & CCM, CPN-UML

Evaluating comment : Com. Monika Andersen, International Secretary of Socialist Left Party of Norway

: Com. Kalle Larsson, CCM/National board member Sweden

: Com. Bhim Rawal, CCM, CPN-UML

Concluding Remark : By Chair



Annex 2: List of the Delegates

1.	Com. Shanta Manavi	CPN-UML	GEFONT Delegates
2.	Com. Mahendra pandey	„	31. Amala Shrestha
3.	Com. Urmila Aryal	„	32. Bidur Karki
4.	Com. Prakash Jwala	„	33. Bina Shrestha
5.	Com. Radha Gyawali	„	34. Binda Pandey
6.	Com. Rajan Bhattarai	„	35. Binod Shrestha
7.	Com. Sita Paudel	„	36. Bishnu Rimal
8.	Com. C.B. Gharti	ANNFSU	37. Buddhi Acharya
9.	Com. Shova Pathak	„	38. Chudamani Jangali
10.	Com. Mamata Giri	DYNF	39. Goma Timalisina
11.	Com. Hasta Pandit	„	40. Hari Datta Joshi
12.	Com. Chandra Thani	ANPA	41. Jitendra Shrestha
13.	Com. Dharmadatta Devkota	„	42. Kabindra S. Rimal
14.	Com. Thammaya Thapa	ANWA	43. Lalit Basnet
15.	Com. Goma Devkota	„	44. Madhav Neupane
16.	Ms. Kamala Rai	NTUC	45. Manju Thapa
17.	Mr. T.P. Khanal	„	46. Mukunda Neupane
18.	Mr. Ghana Shyam Subedi	DECONT	47. Pemba Lama
19.	Ms. Kamala Lamichhane	„	48. Ramesh Badal
20.	Mr. Prakash Chandra Mukhiya	CoNep	49. Renuka Pandey
21.	Ms. Radha Silwal	„	50. Sita Lama
22.	Ms. Bishnumaya Bhusal	Women Activist	51. Uddhav K.C.
23.	Ms. Bhagabati Nepal	„	52. Umesh Upadyay
24.	Ms. Sharmila Karki	„	53. Gauri Pradhan
25.	Ms. Shanti Adhikari	„	54. Govinda Nepal
26.	Ms. Kamala Parajuli	„	55. Som Rai
27.	Ms. Bandana Rana	„	56. Kabindra Shrestha
28.	Mr. Gajendra Bdr Shrestha, Hon. Consulate General for Sweden		
29.	Mr. Saloman Rajbangshi	ILO-Nepal	
30.	Mr. Devraj Dahal	FES-Nepal	International Delegates
57.	Com. Ulla Andersson, CCM/National board member Left Party , Sweden		
58.	Com. Kalle Larsson, CCM/National board member Sweden		
59.	Com. Tora Breitholtz, Sec.Gen Young Left of Sweden		
60.	Com. Monika Andersen, International Secretary of Socialist Left		
61.	Com. Henriette Westrin, Vice-chairperson Socialist Left Party of Norway		