



People's Multiparty Democracy in the Light of the International Communist Movement

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Summary

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Divergent ideological interpretations have emerged regarding People's Multiparty Democracy (PMD), propounded by Comrade Madan Bhandari. Influenced by their own prejudices, bourgeois intellectuals dismiss PMD as merely a 'tactical manoeuvre' designed to facilitate an eventual return to one-party dictatorship. Meanwhile, dogmatists and ultra-leftists within the communist movement denounce it as 'revisionism', 'liquidationism', or a Nepali variant of 'Eurocommunism'. An objective rebuttal of these misconceptions and criticisms requires a historical examination of the practices, mistakes and ideological tendencies of the international communist movement through the lens of Marxism. Marxism is neither a rigid doctrine nor a collection of prophecies; it is a scientific method for understanding, interpreting and transforming society. Revolutionaries in every country must, therefore, chart their own revolutionary course in accordance with their specific national circumstances.

History demonstrates that, from its earliest stages, Marxism established itself through continuous ideological struggle against various revisionist, reformist and anarchist tendencies. During the periods of the First and Second Internationals, figures such as **Proudhon** (reform through cooperatives), **Lassalle** (gradual reform within the existing state), **Bakunin** (anarchism and absolute opposition to the state), **Bernstein** (abandonment of class struggle and revolution), and **Kautsky** (reformism) pursued revisionist approaches that sacrificed the fundamental interests of the proletariat and the long-term objectives of revolution for immediate and short-lived gains. Following the death of **Engels**, reformism and accommodation with the bourgeois state gained ascendancy within the Second International. **Lenin** waged an uncompromising ideological struggle against these tendencies, ultimately leading the October Revolution of 1917 and establishing Soviet socialism.

Following Lenin's death, however, **Stalin's** leadership of the Soviet Union was characterised by excessive centralisation, repression within the Party, and a narrowly nationalist outlook that sought to impose the Soviet model as the only legitimate path for communist parties throughout the world. These tendencies generated profound divisions and disputes within the international communist movement. His successor, **Khrushchev**, in the name of opposing Stalin, embraced an absolutist approach to peaceful transition and allowed ideological differences with China to escalate into a military and interstate confrontation. Under **Brezhnev**, stagnation and external intervention intensified. Eventually, **Mikhail Gorbachev**, through hastily introduced reforms under the banners of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, moved beyond the framework of socialism. These reforms ultimately dismantled the seven-decade-old Soviet system and brought about the dissolution of Soviet socialism.

The emergence of **Eurocommunism** in Western Europe during the 1970s represented another ideological departure. By abandoning the Bolshevik Revolution, class struggle, the revolutionary role of the proletariat and Leninist organisational principles, it embraced a path of gradual reform within the capitalist system. Similarly, **social democracy (democratic socialism)**, which emerged from a combination of traditional utopian socialism and liberal capitalism, favoured class collaboration over class struggle and placed its faith in private ownership and the capitalist welfare state. Its position was further weakened by the rise of neoliberalism in the 1980s.

It is therefore fundamentally mistaken to equate PMD with either Eurocommunism or social democracy. Whereas these tendencies compromised with the capitalist system and abandoned Marxism-Leninism and the revolutionary project, PMD upholds Marxism-Leninism as its fundamental ideological guide and retains the revolutionary objective of ending feudal and imperialist oppression.

At the opposite end of the ideological spectrum, **ultra-left deviation (left-wing adventurism)** has proved no less destructive to the communist movement than right-wing revisionism. Through revolutionary rhetoric, appeals for extraordinary sacrifice and romanticised visions of revolution, ultra-leftism can rapidly gain influence in semi-developed societies dominated by petty-bourgeois social forces. Yet it places absolute reliance on armed struggle before objective conditions have matured, alienates potential allies while multiplying adversaries, and ultimately drives the movement towards self-destructive confrontation. Historical experiences, including the grave turmoil associated with China's Cultural Revolution, Peru's **Shining Path**, and the genocide perpetrated under **Pol Pot** in Cambodia, demonstrate the devastating consequences of such ultra-left practices. Rather than advancing the revolutionary cause, these experiences extinguished even existing democratic rights, strengthened military dictatorships or right-wing forces, and inflicted immense damage upon the communist movement.

In the aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse and the failures of ultra-leftism, the international communist movement has increasingly begun to abandon the dogmatic pursuit of a single, rigid model in favour of an approach grounded in '**unity in diversity**'. Countries such as China and Vietnam have adopted socialist market economies and economic liberalisation suited to their particular national circumstances, achieving some of the world's highest rates of economic growth alongside remarkable advances in poverty reduction and technological development. Similarly, in South America, including Brazil, Argentina and Colombia, left-wing forces have attained governmental power through electoral processes and contributed to

strengthening social justice and democracy. These experiences reinforce a fundamental proposition: **socialism is neither the reproduction of poverty nor the equal distribution of destitution.**

The international relations of the twenty-first century have likewise undergone far-reaching transformations. National interests are no longer confined to territorial security; they now encompass human rights, economic prosperity, environmental protection and multidimensional diplomacy. China's unprecedented rise has brought the post-Cold War unipolar order to an end, reshaping US–China relations towards a more equal balance of power and an increasingly multipolar world. Through organisations such as **BRICS** and the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)**, the four-century-long dominance of the West is being progressively challenged, as the twenty-first century moves towards becoming an '**Asian Century**' and the emergence of a more equitable international order.

Viewed against these historical lessons and the evolving global context, **People's Multiparty Democracy (PMD)**, propounded by Comrade Madan Bhandari, represents a creative application of Marxism-Leninism. Rejecting both right-wing liquidationism and ultra-left dogmatism, it provides a clear political and ideological course for Nepal: to accomplish a people's democratic revolution against feudalism, imperialism and comprador-bureaucratic capitalism, and to advance towards socialism in accordance with the country's specific circumstances.

By embracing multiparty competition, periodic elections, human rights, the rule of law and democratic values, while pursuing the construction of socialism under the leadership of the working people, PMD offers a distinctive revolutionary path. **It represents Nepal's own approach to the democratisation and transformation of the communist movement, reconciling the revolutionary objectives of Marxism-Leninism with the democratic aspirations of the people.**



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