



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on May 26, 2011

Maoism Will Not End Problems in Nepal

The work has not been done, and the composition of that national parliament may explain part of the reason. Consider all the political parties that have seats in the [Parliament of this small nation](#): Nepali Congress (85 seats), Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (83 seats), Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist-Leninist (83 seats), Rastriya Prajatantra Party (8 seats), Nepal Sadbhavana Party (4 seats), Janamorcha Nepal (4 seats), Nepal Workers Peasants Party (4 seats), Tarai-Madhesh Loktantrik Party (4 seats), Rastriya Janamorcha (3 seats), United Left Front (2 seats), Communist Party of Nepal-Unified (2 seats), and Rastriya Janashakti Party (1 seat.)



Out of the 12 parties that hold seats in the national parliament, three are “Communist” by their own designation. There are 283 seats in that body, and 168 of those seats are held by those communist parties. Beyond that, two other parties — Nepal Workers Peasants Party and United Left Front — look very close to being Marxist in orientation. Yet in seven months out of the last year, Nepal has gone without a Prime Minister. In a few days, the nation may have no government at all. The national parliament is about to dissolve without forming a new constitution or a new government.

The options for Nepal appear limited. Although in some nations the monarchy has proven a neutral arbitrator who can mediate differences between parties and groups, Nepal experienced a particularly gruesome massacre 10 years ago by [Crown Prince Dipendra](#), who shot the rest of the royal family and then shot himself. The national political scene is dominated by political parties with professed allegiance to Marxism, a system that has failed virtually everywhere it has been tried. (Just weeks ago, the Communist Party was voted out of power in the Indian province of Bengal — more evidence of the failures of Marxism.)

Ordinary Nepalese are showing increasing frustration with the politicians who have promised to turn Nepal into the Switzerland of Asia. Hari Tamang, who was part of recent student demonstrations, said: “They have broken every promise they have made to the people. When the term was extended last year they promised they would get their act together and complete the constitution but they spent the whole term trying to unseat each other to get in power.” Nepal has electrical power only 10 hours a day and Katmandu gets fresh water only a couple of hours a day every few days. The nation also has frequent fuel shortages, with long lines of drivers waiting for a few liters of gasoline.

The problems of writing a new constitution and forming a new government involve the Maoist Communist Party, one of the three communist parties with seats in the national legislature. It has been unable to reach agreement with the other political parties, although the Maoists did agree last year to extend the deadline for a new constitution by a couple of years, averting a total collapse of the government. Maoists had held most of the positions in government until disputes over the army



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command and the President splintered the national legislature.

Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal, the man who had vowed to turn his underdeveloped country into the next Switzerland, said: "We need to apologize to the people for the delay in constitution writing." Ram Chandra Poudel, a leader of the main opposition party in the national legislature, pointed the finger directly at the Maoists: "We want to complete the peace process soon and promulgate the new constitution but that is not possible unless the Maoists cooperate."

One very sensible cure to the problems of Nepal is the devolution of federal power. Dahal, who told Nepalese that he would make his poor and strife-torn nation into the Switzerland of Asia, inadvertently hit upon the right formula. The reason Switzerland works so magnificently is not because it is mountainous, like Nepal, but because it is formed by a confederation in which what happens at the federal level is simply not that important.

Governments which work well always have this sort of general political structure. Switzerland has long been known as a nation that is neutral but capable of robust self-defense; further, it has a limited government, and what government exists is largely at the cantonal level. The Swiss have proved immune to the enticements of communism, Nazism, and fascism, despite being surrounded by regimes which once embraced those evils.

The Netherlands, at its magnificent inception, was also a confederation. Many peoples — Sephardic Jews, Huguenots, and English Puritans — came to the Netherlands because the seven provinces of the United Provinces (the proper name of the Netherlands) granted these productive and peaceful peoples an unmolested home. The flowering of Dutch culture and wealth coincided with this period of confederated government.

The American Republic began largely along the same lines. The sovereignty of the states which ratified the Constitution was assumed by Americans until the Civil War. The real business of governance took place at the state level, very close to the governed. The Founding Fathers looked at the United Provinces and the Swiss Confederation as good models for a new government.

Nepal is a very mountainous country whose [many different tribes and races](#) have various languages and practices. Its people are generally peaceful, hardy, and tolerant. When the Maoist leader Dahal speaks of turning Nepal into the Switzerland of Asia, he does not mean a nation of many peoples loosely bound together with local political autonomy being the guiding principal of government. He means, instead, that the mountainous terrain of Nepal offers the same opportunities as Switzerland. Maoism, however, murdered millions of neighboring Tibetans and destroyed their ancient culture and traditions. The Chinese Communists had their chance to turn Tibet into Switzerland (both have beautiful mountains and breathtaking vistas). Instead they turned it into a charnel house.

If the people of Nepal want the blessings of Switzerland, then they should repudiate the failed parties of Marx and embrace the notion of local self-government. Ideally, in Nepal, which power reigns in Katmandu ought to matter very little.



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