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No 3, MARCH 1987

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EAST ASIA

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No 3, MARCH 1987

[Except where indicated otherwise in the table of contents the following is a complete translation of the monthly theoretical and political journal of the Vietnam Communist Party published in Hanoi.]

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BUILDING A TRULY COMPETENT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 1-3

[Editorial]

[Text] The upcoming election of deputies to the 8th National Assembly is an important political event of our people. It must reflect a change in perception and approach in keeping with the spirit of the 6th Party Congress.

Our country's Constitution gives the National Assembly very important and broad functions, tasks and authority. As the highest representative body of the people, the highest executive body of the state and the only body with the power to draft the Constitution and make laws, the National Assembly has the power to decide basic domestic and foreign policies, economic, cultural and social development targets and plans, state budget estimates and the primary rules governing the organization and operation of the state apparatus, social relations and the activities of the citizen. It holds supreme supervisory power over all activities of the state; the power to elect or impeach members of the Council of State and Council of Ministers; the power to establish or disband ministries and state commissions; the power to revise or rescind taxes; and the power to decide the question of war or peace. The Constitution even permits the National Assembly to assume other tasks and powers when deemed necessary.

In view of this large role and broad authority, the National Assembly must be a body that possesses all that it needs to operate effectively, not a symbolic, "form for form's sake" body. True importance must be attached to the National Assembly and the People's Councils on the various levels as befits their role as the highest bodies of power on the central and local levels. We must truly insure that these bodies fulfill their duties and fully exercise their authority, that their duties and authority are not taken over by other bodies and that they are not considered a "troublesome bother, an unnecessary complication." Examined from the perspective of its nature, our National Assembly, the National Assembly of a socialist country, must be a body that truly holds power and acts in a dynamic and creative spirit, a body that spreads socialist democracy, represents the will, aspirations and democratic rights of the people and decides important issues concerning national defense and the welfare of the people, thereby making worthy contributions to increasing the management effectiveness of the state.

However, the practical experience of the more than 40 years of activity of the National Assembly and the People's Councils on the various levels in our country show that it is not easy to maintain and elevate the position and role of such a body. Doing so generally requires that we struggle against misconceptions and incorrect actions.

Therefore, with the country's situation demanding that we take a new approach in all fields, which includes a new approach to the elected bodies, the foremost requirement to be met in this election is to elect a truly competent National Assembly, one that can properly fulfill its duties and exercise its authority, guarantee the exercise of ownership by the laboring people through the state and make positive contributions to the successful implementation of the resolution of the 6th Party Congress.

In order for us to have such a National Assembly, it is first of all necessary to insure that there is close and correct compliance with the standards for persons nominated as a candidate for National Assembly deputy. This is the factor of utmost importance in creating a new quality for the National Assembly. Nominees must be persons who are loyal to the fatherland and socialism, have recorded achievements in production, work and combat, possess the spirit of taking a new approach, are in close touch with reality, understand the thoughts and aspirations of the people, wholeheartedly serve the people, courageously express the opinions and aspirations of the people, set good examples in their way of life, in their compliance with policies and the law, forthrightly struggle to defend the interests of the people and struggle against all behavior that is wrong, all negative phenomena. These persons must be persons who truly possess the skills and qualities needed to perform the duties of a National Assembly deputy well. The National Assembly deputy must possess relatively broad knowledge, possess considerable knowledge of politics and a specialized field, be able to discuss and perform certain jobs and possess work experience and life experience. The National Assembly deputy must not only speak the voice of the people, but must also do practical things that satisfy the requirements and aspirations of the people. While it is necessary to meet the requirement concerning the segments of society represented in the structure of the National Assembly and the requirement that the National Assembly's makeup reflect national unity, this is no reason to lower standards and nominate persons who, although well known, are not qualified or who only represent a sector, circle or age group in a symbolic way. These requirements must not be allowed to obscure the role played by the highest body of state power. The Consultative Conference held to discuss the list of candidates for National Assembly deputy must embody this spirit, must insure that all necessary steps are taken and must not allow anything to be overlooked or any mistakes to be made. It must make every effort to avoid selecting persons just to achieve "balance" and avoid selecting persons on the basis of the subjective desires of a few individuals without listening to the opinions of the people, of worker collectives. The National Assembly deputy must be a person who truly represents the interests of the masses and has their trust. There have been more than a few cases in which National Assembly deputies have been strangers to voters and voters have cast their ballots for them only because they had confidence in the policies of the party, not confidence in the specific person who would represent them in the National Assembly. Deputies who have participated in many legislatures of the National

Assembly and are now elderly and frail must step aside and be cared for in accordance with the policies that apply.

The discussion and introduction of the list of candidates who meet all standards and are larger in number than the number of deputies to be elected are only of significance when the people are thoroughly informed about the objectives and requirements of the election and know the candidates and when the election is conducted in an atmosphere of complete democracy, that is, when voters are truly free to select their deputy and are not pressured in any way. We are confident that, in view of their high political awareness, their constructive outlook and their desire for change, our people will elect worthy National Assembly deputies.

To lead this National Assembly election well, our party must change in terms of both its perception and approach. The quality of the National Assembly to be elected this time depends, to a very important degree, upon the new views and positions adopted in the leadership provided by the various party committee echelons as well as in developing the role played by the mass organizations in the election.

In order to have a National Assembly that is truly competent in practical activities, it is also necessary to change and improve the activities of the National Assembly, the activities of the Council of State, of the different councils and committees of the National Assembly, especially the agenda and format of National Assembly sessions, the activities of National Assembly deputies and the relationship between the National Assembly and the other agencies of the state and social organizations. It is also necessary to change and improve the party's leadership of the National Assembly. These changes will heighten the National Assembly's role and position and make it better able to conduct practical activities.

Deeply imbued with the spirit of change of the 6th Party Congress and clearly understanding the significance and requirements of this election of National Assembly deputies, let all our people display the spirit of socialist democracy, enthusiastically fulfill their high obligation and exercise their treasured right and actively participate in selecting and electing persons to represent them in the highest body of power of the state. This election must achieve the objective of electing a National Assembly that possesses a new vitality, a National Assembly that is truly competent and joins with all the people in successfully performing the tasks set by the 6th Party Congress.

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THE 8TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY--SOME PROBLEMS OF RENOVATION

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 4-6

[Article by Nguyen Huu Tho]

[Text] Once again, voters throughout our country will go to the polls to exercise one of their most important rights as citizens, that is, to elect the National Assembly which is, according to the letter of the Constitution, the highest organ of power of our state. And, also, once again, the significance and practical value of the National Assembly are contemplated by the majority of the people. This attitude is, as a matter of course, totally legitimate, healthy and full of a sense of responsibility as it reflects the ever-increasing political enlightenment of the people who are never satisfied to use their votes perfunctorily and only for form's sake, and who are never pleased with the most rhetorical praises for the National Assembly. The universal desire of the great majority of the people is to see that the National Assembly, together with other people-elected organs at various levels, operates in a realistic manner in accordance with the Constitution; and only by so doing will its existence become meaningful.

In the next part, I will analyze the causes of a situation that is abnormal under our system; but now, I want to recall a historic order coming from the resolution of the 6th Party Congress--"achieve comprehensive renovation" and "consider the people as roots"--which is symbolic of the 6th Party Congress, a congress that marked a turning point of our beloved SRV so that by the year 2000 we will achieve vigorous development that is worthy of our heroic tradition of fighting against foreign aggression for national defense and saves us from humiliation toward our socialist friends who are intensively embarking on reforms as well as toward other Southeast Asian nations having a similar socio-economic starting point to ours.

The 8th National Assembly must faithfully reflect the viewpoints, lines and policies of the 6th Congress; and what is more, the National Assembly must be a vivid representation of the 6th Congress' spirit. It must serve as the place to link the party's aspirations with the objective realities and to carry out deeds that match the party's words first of all by affixing a seal on the demand for renovation and for considering the people as roots, and by embarking on an experimentation with democracy which is being closely watched on a nationwide and even broader scale.

As life is constantly developing, the country is subjected to spontaneous changes within itself as well as to the common trends. This is a law, for not a few concepts and measures that were necessary only yesterday become outmoded and even turn into obstacles today.

It was toward the end of its last term of office that the National Assembly displayed the contradictions between the need to operate as an organ of power that truly represents the trends toward renovation of the nation, socialism and the world, and to be truly the voice of all the voters and the sluggishness wherein the National Assembly is considered as some sort of decorative item. It should be pointed out immediately that no one who is knowledgeable would entertain extremist concepts regarding the issue of democracy. Democracy is the product of a certain society; and the level of realization of democracy by a system is independent neither from its level of economic and cultural development, nor from the domestic and external situation to which that system must adapt itself at each specific point in time. The process of democratization is also deeply related to historical heritage; and it would be an illusion if we choose as our models all too highly industrialized socialist countries that, in some cases, experienced bourgeois democracy for centuries. However, the past shortcomings of the National Assembly did not totally result from the ills of "idealism." We have been seriously affected by these ills in other areas, but as far as democracy is concerned, we have failed to observe the party's maxims and lacked the necessary will power. Democracy is our strongpoint; but in seizing complete administrative power, we have eroded this strongpoint.

First of all, the role of "the highest organ of state power" is violated due to the confusion of the concept of leadership by the party with the National Assembly's functions of making laws and appointing and supervising the executive organ. Party leadership is absolute and comprehensive, but this does not mean that party organs can perform the work of the National Assembly. The activities conducted by the National Assembly in accordance with the platform and resolutions of the party already reflect in the main party leadership. This is a rational division of labor in conditions of a party in power; and the National Assembly, together with other people-elected organs at the various levels, is a link in the chain of dictatorship of the proletariat. Supervision in practice will become confused if the National Assembly fails to discharge its assigned functions which already bear within themselves the party character. The principle of leadership by the party would be unable to develop its effect if the sector over which the party must assume leadership in its particular ways fail to correctly exercise its functions. The National Assembly realizes the principle of leadership by the party through its party faction and considers motivation and persuasion as the main work vehicle to a certain point; but if its non-party deputies maintain their own views, the National Assembly will call a secret ballot to settle the issue.

Second, the methods of selecting the deputies decide the quality of the National Assembly. The National Assembly is a powerful state organ and not a [Vietnam Fatherland] Front Committee despite the fact that when arranging the composition of the National Assembly deputies, we must insure that all social strata, all ethnic minority groups, all circles and people of all ages can have a voice in the National Assembly proportional to the numbers they

represent. Thus, National Assembly deputies must be outstanding persons, typifying all groups and views and thus capable of helping the National Assembly consider for approval the various general policies of the government. They must be fully capable of electing (or dismissing) members of the Council of State and the Council of Ministers; exercising close control over these bodies; and criticizing, molding and even disciplining the whole body or individual members of the executive. Once it has rejected a draft law or resolution proposed by the Council of Ministers or dismissed a member of the Council of Ministers, there is no appeal beyond the National Assembly's functions and authority.

Each locale and each sector is fully authorized to nominate candidates for election to the National Assembly. Nomination must be made following consultation with the VFF Committee. Here, consultations mean discussions, not imposition. Mass organization executive committees, associations and voters have the right to nominate candidates in accordance with the basic standards: namely, loyalty to the socialist Vietnamese fatherland and acceptance of the Communist Party's leadership role.

Within these limits, voters are fully empowered to entrust their aspirations to people they trust. This way, there will be long lists of candidates. There will be no problems to cause concern as the voters themselves will make the selection. It would be natural were a leading party cadre to lose his election campaign for a People's Council seat or to the National Assembly. This is feedback which will give the party more data to evaluate its cadres. this is also an additional test of great importance.

Our country has been liberated for 12 years now. The composition of the National Assembly must reflect the profound changes made since liberation. As the entire country is concentrating on economic construction, the National Assembly needs deputies knowledgeable in this field, no matter where they received their training. This is because we accept differing viewpoints and perceptions provided that they are all directed at serving the interests of the country and the people. And, it is the practical results that will serve as the most impartial judge.

What concerns us is that the National Assembly must have the ability to affirm its own power. It must do this basically through its own wisdom and its close ties with the voters.

To talk about learning about democracy may sound odd, but it is true that we are at the apprenticeship stage. Many concepts have been charged and not everything new is immediately welcomed. Working at one's own convenience and for form's sake--here I am referring to the National Assembly in particular--will take root and become a habit among a number of people.

Renovation should not be an empty slogan. The Soviet Union is taking great strides and the results are known to all: the economy is fast pulling out of its slump. The people's lives have been drastically improved. Society has been filled with an atmosphere of open-mindedness. The Soviet Union's rivals have become increasingly isolated. The Soviet Union is carrying out Lenin's behest. Soviet society is developing within the socialist orbit. All these

comprise a fact that eloquently testifies to the superiority of socialism once it regains its essential inherent traits.

Vietnam, following the 6th CPV Congress, must study those instructions bequeathed by Uncle Ho as well as those questions concerning the renovation of thinking and the idea of "regarding the people as roots."

The 8th National Assembly will certainly answer and will have to answer the imperative demands for socialist development in Vietnam in accordance with our own plans and in our own special ways.

From now on, "unanimous approval" will not be "automatic." Some things may get unanimous approval while other things may only be passed by a certain number of votes. The point is that "unanimous approval" must exist not only as a stock phrase, but must be achieved by comparing different viewpoints and holding frank discussions. The National Assembly must not only be a forum for deputies to "express their views," but it must be a place where deputies weigh the pros and cons, make calculations and voice their agreement or disagreement.

Past experience is rather abundant. I think that if this experience is scrupulously studied, it will help create a new vitality in the National Assembly--an essential vitality in the move to achieve renovation aimed at accelerating the advance of our fatherland.

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OVERCOME IMMEDIATE DIFFICULTIES AND SUCCESSFULLY CARRY OUT THE ECONOMIC TASKS

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 7-12

[Unattributed article]

[Text] Over the past 5 years, led by the party, our people have attained important achievements in socialist construction.

Since 1981, grain production has achieved important development and industrial production has shown an increase as compared with the previous period. In the country as a whole, many production and business establishments have emerged with fairly good achievements and many districts with good business activities. A number of localities and sectors having dynamic and creative work methods have scored numerous achievements.

However, these achievements and improvements have yet to effect a change in our country's socio-economic situation. Production has shown some increase but a slow increase in view of our existing capabilities and our efforts. Failure to attain certain important norms in the 5-year plan has had an impact on the entire economic and welfare activities of the people. The effectiveness of production and investments is low. Far from being satisfactorily tapped, the country's natural resources have been squandered away. Efforts to minimize major imbalances in the economy are slow and there are some aspects of the economy still considered acute. Efforts to consolidate socialist production relations are slow. Non-socialist socio-economic components have yet to be satisfactorily used and restructured. The life of the people, especially that of workers and civil servants, is still fraught with difficulties.

On the basis of affirming what has been gained while criticizing shortcomings and analyzing the special socio-economic situation of our country at present, the 6th CPV Congress affirmed that the general targets for the remaining years of the first stage consist of stabilizing the socio-economic situation in all aspects, continuing to build those premises needed for stepping up socialist industrialization in the following stage.

In the coming years, we must try at all costs to stabilize the socio-economic situation. This includes stabilizing production, distribution and circulation; stabilizing and improving step-by-step the material and cultural

life of the people; increasing the effectiveness of management; establishing public order and discipline; and achieving social justice. Stabilization does not mean there is no development at all. Instead, in stabilization, there are readjustments and development. There is a dialectical relationship between stabilization and development. Achieve stabilization for development and only through development can we achieve stabilization.

Proceeding from these general targets, we must achieve our specific socio-economic targets at all costs, trying to insure that production guarantees adequate consumption and some reserves, to create a rational economic structure aimed at developing production, building and further perfecting new production relations, to effect a change for the better in the field of social welfare and meeting the country's demands for the strengthening of national defense and security.

All the targets cited above have been concretized in various tasks and norms of the socio-economic plan. Achieving these targets at all costs is considered as a landmark with which to mark the end of the first stage.

While advancing to socialism from a small-scale production system in the current historical conditions of the country, beside the basic advantages, we are faced with no small difficulties. Due to mistakes and shortcomings in the arrangement of the economic structure, in transformation work, and in management, production forces are being held back: one half of the equipment capacity has been left unused; not much land has been put under intensive cultivation; forests, the sea and other natural resources have yet to be exploited satisfactorily; the ample work force and scientific-technological forces have not yet been fully employed; and so forth.

To achieve the socio-economic targets set, it is of primary importance that we renovate economic and social policies and launch a movement among the masses to enthusiastically perform labor and step up production for national construction. Economic policies must be aimed at rapidly and effectively exploiting all the existing and latent potentials of the economy. At present, the renovation of economic policies is an important driving force to accelerate socialist construction. The guiding thought for planning and economic policies is to release the existing production forces, exploit all latent potentials of the country and effectively utilize international assistance in order to vigorously develop the production forces while building and consolidating socialist production relations.

The 6th Party Congress marked an important directional shift in the party's leadership of the economy. This involves a shift in the arrangement of the economic structure and the investment portfolio and the renovation of economic policies and the mechanism of economic management. An important issue at present is to rearrange the production structure and make large-scale readjustments in the investment portfolio and the progress of the economy to suit the orientations and targets of the coming years.

To bail the country's economy out of its imbalanced situation at an early date we must definitely rearrange the national economy in accordance with a rational structure. The various sectors, regions, economic components and

forms of production having different scopes and technical levels must be arranged in a balanced and integrated manner so as to insure favorable economic development. The 6th Party Congress once again affirmed that in the coming years, we must truly regard agriculture as the primary front and strive to accelerate the production of consumer and export goods. Heavy industry must be directed first of all and chiefly at serving agriculture and light industry on appropriate scales and at appropriate technical levels.

Regarding economic construction, the congress stressed the following tasks:

First, formulate and implement the three programs concerning grain and food, consumer goods and export goods.

These three targeted programs are the main content and the core of the 5-year 1986-1990 plan. Only by implementing them will we create the conditions for accelerating industrialization in the next stage. These three programs are dialectically interrelated; and they serve as the basis and precondition for one another to develop the country's economy. They reflect the relationship between agriculture and industry and between the national economy and the world economy, and symbolize our economic structure at present. In reality, they represent the content of socialist industrialization during the initial stage in our country.

Although our party has long confirmed the primary position of agriculture, we have, in reality, not made appropriate investments in agriculture and failed to adopt suitable policies for promoting agricultural development. As an immediate step, it is necessary to develop agriculture along the line of large-scale production so as to rapidly increase the volume and percentage of marketable agricultural products. To truly regard agriculture--including also forestry and fishery--as the primary front means to give priority to meeting its demands for capital investments, energy, supplies and technical labor. Investment in agriculture must be coordinated in all stages, from production to processing, transportation and maintenance. Efforts must be made to broadly apply scientific successes and technological advances, especially biological techniques; introduce new varieties of seed for widespread and stable use; fully and promptly meet the demands for fertilizer and insecticides; invest in draft power, insure sufficient availability of ordinary and improved tools and carry out systematic and selective mechanization.

The guidelines for developing agriculture consist of combining specialization with comprehensive development and balancing crop cultivation with livestock breeding, rice with subsidiary food crops and grain crops with industrial crops. Intensive crop cultivation and multicropping should be considered as the main objectives while enlarging the cultivated area in a steady and effective manner.

Efforts should be made to develop light industry and small industry and handicrafts; meet the demands for consumer goods and for processing agricultural, forestry and marine products; and rapidly increase the volume of goods produced under labor contracts for export and other export goods. In past years, the production of consumer goods has developed but only slowly.

Many types of ordinary goods are still in short supply, and the quality of consumer goods has declined. In light industry production, we must first of all rely on the reorganization of production and intensive and uniform investment to fully use the equipment capacity of the existing establishments, with attention being given to those with good capability and a high processing efficiency. It is also necessary to develop and consolidate state-run economic establishments whose operation influences the process of production and circulation.

Concerning export goods, it is necessary to create a number of key items, the export revenues of which can meet for the most part the demand for imported supplies, machinery, spare parts and essential goods. First of all, we must formulate a long-term plan and a specific program for each period concerning the production of export goods. Appropriate investments must be made to insure the availability of the necessary means of production, with attention given to production centers and key items of goods. Appropriate policies on purchase prices, on the supply of grain and essential consumer goods and so forth should be adopted to encourage the producers. It is necessary to overcome immediately ineffective business practices and fragmented and chaotic procedures for distribution and circulation and to establish order and discipline in the field of foreign trade.

Regarding external economic activities, it is necessary to tighten relations between our country and other countries of the socialist community, first of all the Soviet Union; widen our comprehensive cooperation with the Soviet Union; clearly manifest our country's participation in the international division of labor; and broaden the scope of goods exchange while stepping up the division of labor and cooperation in production. Concerning the two fraternal countries of Laos and Cambodia, we should pay special attention to developing close relations, coordinating with them in formulating programs for cooperation in all fields and advancing toward economic integration based on a common strategy.

We must develop heavy industry and build an infrastructure aimed at achieving economic and national defense targets while preparing conditions for developing the economy in the next stage. Priority should be given to developing the energy industry; and in the raw material and supplies production industry, attention should be focused on mineral ores and other raw materials used in the production of fertilizer and insecticides. Efforts must be made to produce domestically, on an appropriate scale and with suitable techniques, products that are needed for the development of agriculture and light industry. Products that cannot yet be produced domestically or whose output falls short of demand should be imported and paid for with income earned through exports.

Second, build and consolidate socialist production relations and utilize and transform non-socialist economic components.

To vigorously develop production forces, apart from rearranging the production structure, it is necessary to correctly define the structure of economic components.

A special feature of the transitional period in our country is the multi-component economy. It is impossible to draw all private business operators into collectivized economic establishments within a short period of time because many branches and trades, if collectivized, would fail to bring about economic efficiency. Therefore, along with developing the state-run and collectivized economies, we must correctly utilize and transform private economic components. It is necessary to employ diverse economic forms with suitable scales and techniques so as to exploit all the capabilities of the various economic components and integrate them together, with the state-run economy assuming a leading position.

Building new production relations should involve three domains: namely the system of public ownership over production means, the management system and the distribution system, with the system of public ownership of production means being the foundation of the new production relations.

But if the management and distribution systems are inadequate, enterprises can in no way produce good results even if they are state-run enterprises equipped with modern technology.

Facts obtained over the past several decades permit us to state that socialist transformation is a permanent and constant task during the whole period of transition to socialism and that it should be carried out through appropriate forms and steps in accordance with the law governing production relations which requires that these forms and steps must suit the characteristics and the capabilities of production by production forces. In the years to come, it is necessary to consolidate and develop the socialist economy in such a way as to enable the state-run economic sector to truly hold the leading role. As for the small commodity production-based economic sector, the state recognizes the need for its existence during the transitional period and will guide and assist it in production and business. We must motivate individual laborers to join collective economic organizations in accordance with voluntary and mutually beneficial principles. We should not hold any prejudices or discriminate against them when they remain outside collective economic organizations. Family economies must be promoted and developed through the close, mutual-support relations with the state- and collectively-run economic sectors. With regard to the petty bourgeoisie, they are authorized by the state to use their funds and technical and managerial skills to go into production and business in a number of branches and trades. The private capitalist economy must be guided into the socialist orbit under various forms of state-run capitalist economy and at various levels, from low to high, trying to do away with bourgeois trade. Regarding small traders, depending on each branch of goods, we must use various forms to rearrange, transform and employ them as a replacement force for the socialist trade sector and must help those people no longer needed in the circulation of goods shift to production and support services.

Third, renovate the economic management mechanism.

The system of bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies--which is closely linked with an economic thinking that relies on simplistic concepts about socialism and is strongly characterized by subjectivism and idealism--has

restrained production, failed to generate a driving force for development, created economic upheavals and spawned many negative phenomena in society. So far, the old mechanism, basically, has yet to be done away with while the new mechanism has yet to take shape uniformly. Many policies and systems have become obsolete. A number of new regulations on management are still no more than a patchwork as they are unsynchronized and self-contradictory. The state of bureaucratic centralism is still acute while indications of disorganization and indiscipline are prevalent.

Renovating the economic management mechanism must be closely linked with rearranging the economic structure. The new economic mechanism is, in fact, a planning system based on economic accounting and socialist business and on the principles of democratic centralism. The new mechanism advocates using planning as a central key, correctly resolving the relationship between commodities and monetary funds, and combining the use of economic measures--the mainstay--with other administrative educational measures.

In planning production and the circulation of goods, we adopt the integrated system of economic laws which, with the special laws of socialism holding the leading role, should be applied uniformly together with those laws governing the production of goods, the law of value, the law of supply and demand, the laws governing monetary circulation, etc. In the past, we have, in fact, had prejudices against and have not yet truly recognized the objective existence of the law governing the production of goods. It is due to this that we have committed numerous shortcomings. In economic management, we must achieve an harmonious combination between various interests--the interests of the entire society, of the collective and of the individual laborers. All these are a catapult for the development of the national economy.

The division of managerial responsibilities should insure the right to mastery of the three echelons: the right of the central echelon to make decisions in the key domains and on strategic issues, thereby guaranteeing a balanced development of the entire national economy; the right of localities to take the initiative in discharging their socio-economic managerial responsibilities in their areas; and the right of basic economic units to autonomy in production and business. Planning in various sectors must be closely combined with planning in territorial divisions. Along with correctly determining the managerial functions and duties of all echelons and sectors, we must renovate the organizational structure of the managerial apparatus, renovate cadre work and build a contingent of good and capable managers to meet the demand for renovating the managerial mechanism.

Fourth, we must resolve the urgent problems concerning distribution and circulation.

In leading and managing the economy over the past 5 years, we have committed very serious errors in distribution and circulation.

We have committed many shortcomings in resolving the problems of prices, wages and money.

In the coming years, the trade sector must really switch to the socialist business system, rationally organize the circulation of goods, gain control of the sources of goods and improve the quality of its service to achieve mastery in the market. It must promptly expose and severely punish speculators and smugglers.

We should apply a combination of several economic laws in defining pricing policies including the law of value which will have a direct impact on our decisions. Prices must be set on the basis of value and suited to the purchasing power of money, with due account taken of the impact of the law on demand and supply of goods.

We must reduce budget deficits by creating more sources of revenue and increasing income in accordance with the set policies and gradually curb and eventually end the issuance of money to cover budgetary spending. We must strengthen the management of money circulation, attract idle money from among the people and accelerate the turn-around rate of money. By means of numerous measures, the state must guarantee the real wages for cadres, workers and the armed forces. It must formulate and gradually perfect the national financial policy, renovate various financial policies and system, especially the tax policy; uniformly implement the set policies to restore the balance between money and commodities step by step so as to gradually reduce and eventually put an end to inflation, thereby creating conditions for slowing down the tempo of price increases and eventually stabilizing prices.

These are especially important economic problems on which we must concentrate our resources in all fields so as to resolve them by all means. All echelons and sectors must concentrate their efforts on consistently and thoroughly leading and guiding the implementation of the tasks mentioned above. While paying due attention to the current economic tasks, we should not overlook the need to coordinate implementation of the economic tasks with implementation of the social tasks and to insure a harmonious combination of the economic policy and the social policy.

The 6th Party Congress has set important tasks for our people and clearly pointed to the fundamental orientations for taking the country forward in the remaining years of the initial stage. Let our entire party and people stir up a new revolutionary movement, actively overcome the immediate difficulties, resolutely implement the congress resolution well and score new and great successes in building the socialist economy in our economy.

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IMPLEMENTING THE MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY LAW WELL

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 13-15

[Article by Nguyen Thi Dinh]

[Text] The 1959 Marriage and the Family Law has played a major role in helping to abolish the vestiges of the feudal marriage and family system and establishing the socialist marriage and family system while contributing to the liberation of women and the establishment of equality between the sexes within the family and in society.

Since this law was enacted, life in our country has undergone many important changes, changes which demand that the provisions of the law on marital and family relations be made more consistent with life today, be fuller and more specific. To meet these demands, the twelfth session of the 7th National Assembly ratified the new Marriage and the Family Law and the state publicly announced this law on 3 January 1987 in order for it to be implemented by all the people.

The new Marriage and the Family Law incorporates and builds upon the 1959 Marriage and the Family Law with the aims of continuing to build and strengthen the socialist family, maintain and enhance the fine customs and habits of the nation, help to mold the new man and woman and the new, socialist society and struggle against the feudal and bourgeois vestiges and influences in marital and family relations.

The new Marriage and the Family Law is based on the following principles:

- A voluntary and progressive marriage of one wife and one husband in which the wife and husband are equal;
- Protecting the interests of parents and children;
- Protecting mothers and children.

The new Marriage and the Family Law, which consists of 57 articles in 10 chapters, regulates three matters of major importance: marriage; the relations between parents and children; and the guardian system. Compared to the 1959 Marriage and the Family Law, the current law contains the following

new provisions: the obligation of a wife and husband to practice planned parenthood and the obligations and rights of parents and children (Article 2); marriage between citizens of Vietnam overseas (Article 8); marriage between a citizen of Vietnam and a citizen of a foreign country (Article 52); and the right of social organizations to intervene in marital and family relations in necessary cases (Articles 9, 31, 39 and 50).

The provisions of the new law reflect the basic views of our party and state concerning marriage and the family and concerning the molding of the new man and woman and the establishment of the new, socialist way of life in marital and family relations. In view of the fact that our country is encountering many difficulties and complex problems as it makes the transition to socialism and must struggle to resolve contradictions within society, building and strengthening the new marriage and the family system is a matter of very important practical significance. It is one of the solid foundations of the new society and will have a major influence upon social relations and even upon our race in the nation's future. Society is only a good society when families are good. A good society makes families better. The family is where the molding of the new man and woman and the establishment of the new way of life begin. When marriages and families are good, more of the thoughts and feelings in society are wholesome, thus helping to strengthen the unity of the people and build national harmony. The objectives of the new law are to build and strengthen families that are democratic, stable and live in harmony and happiness; cultivate loyalty, love and mutual respect between husband and wife and the desire to care for and help each other make progress; cultivate love and support between parents and children, between grandparents and grandchildren and among the brothers and sisters of the family. In this spirit and in keeping with this objective, the general provisions of the law raises the matters of protecting marriages between citizens of Vietnam of different ethnic groups or religions, between religious and non religious persons and not obstructing legitimate marriages between these citizens. The law also addresses the matters of protecting mothers and children and helping mothers to fulfill their noble function as a mother well, including mothers who are widows. The obligations and rights of husband and wife are clearly defined and reflect equality between men and women. In the socialist family, the husband and wife respect, love and help each other, have the same obligations and rights (with regard to selecting a legitimate occupation, choosing a place to live and using the common property of the family) and discuss, decide and undertake the work of the family and the raising of their children together. The purpose of these provisions is to abolish the feudal customs that give special rights and privileges to the husband.

The law attaches importance to the relationship between parents and children from the standpoint of obligations and rights within the family. Parents have the obligation to love, nurture and teach their children to be productive members of society. They may not discriminate amongst their children and must set good examples for their children in every area of life. Children have equal obligations and rights within the family and also have the obligation to respect, care for and support their parents, to listen to their parents' advice. Children 16 years of age and older who still live with their parents have the obligation of supporting the family and must contribute to the needs of the family if they have their own income. Relations between parents and

children are a matter of very much concern on the part of society because, in many families, children are not fulfilling their obligation to their parents or are not fulfilling this obligation well. Conversely, in more than a few families, parents are not fulfilling their obligations and are even setting bad examples for their children. The law defines procedures for dealing with parents who seriously violate the obligations of a parent toward a child.

The marriage and the family law is closely related to each age group and each stratum of the people. The implementation of the law will make an important contribution in building families of the new culture, building strong cells of Vietnamese society.

The Political Report of the Party Central Committee at the 6th Congress stated: "The family is the cell of society and plays a very important role in building the new system and the new economy and molding the new man and woman. The party, state and mass organizations must adopt guidelines, policies and measures for building families of the new culture and insuring family happiness. They must raise the level of self-consciousness with regard to cultivating the emotional and ethical relations within each family, insure the practice of planned parenthood, insure the raising of obedient children and organize the material and cultural lives of the family."⁽¹⁾ Our work of building socialist society is closely related to each family and must begin with families. Only good families give birth to and raise citizens who are wholesome and productive for society. The stability of the family and the order, discipline and safety of society are only guaranteed when families are happy and warm and everyone in the family is united and loves one another. Practicing equality between wife and husband and defending the rights and properly fulfilling the obligations of parents and children are the practical implementation of social fairness beginning within the family. Having a good family is not only in the interest of each family, but also serves the common interests of society and helps to build a wholesome society.

In the 27 years spent implementing the 1959 Marriage and the Family Law, we made certain advances and several aspects of the law became fine habits among the people, such as the matter of marriage age, a voluntary and progressive marriage of one husband and one wife, equality between husband and wife, protecting the rights of mothers and children... Now, the new Marriage and the Family Law makes it possible to do more to adjust the relationships within the family, the relationship between the family and society and guide each citizen in living and working in accordance with the law, beginning within the family, thereby helping to strongly stimulate the establishment of the socialist marriage and family system.

The drafting of the new Marriage and the Family Law was a collective project in which many cadres and people nationwide participated over a period of 5 years. It entailed many investigations, surveys and seminars, many drafts, contributions of opinions, revisions, amendments and so forth. While drafting the law entailed many painstaking efforts, propagandizing, teaching and agitating among the people so that they gain an understanding of the law and consciously implement it are many times more difficult. Today, there are still more than a few phenomena that violate this law and many persons still do not know this law. Arranged and forced marriages, violations of the

principles of monogamy, the abuse and beating of wives and the cruel treatment of parents by children still occur at one place or another. Deserving of attention is that many of the persons who do these things are cadres, manual workers and civil servants of the state. Although the criminal code provides procedures for prosecuting violations of the Marriage and the Family Law, some administration cadres in positions of responsibility still consider these violations to be private family matters and do not concern themselves with taking action.

Implementing the Marriage and the Family Law entails a long and complex process of struggle to build and defend that which is correct and to criticize and abolish that which is wrong within each family and throughout society. Because the law is new, it is necessary to conduct a widespread propaganda and educational campaign among the people. Party committees and administrations must give their attention to leading, organizing and inspecting propaganda efforts to publicize and implement the law and must deal with violations of the law in a strict but fair manner. The Front, Women's, Youth and Trade Union organizations have the responsibility of educating their members and the various strata of the people in the law and must intervene in marital and family matters in necessary cases. Party members, cadres, manual workers and civil servants must set good examples and take the lead in implementing the Marriage and the Family Law. Only when the various levels, sectors and stratum of the people concern themselves with and actively implement this law, only when they struggle to defend this law can we make this law a highly effective part of life.

FOOTNOTES

1. Political Report of the Party Central Committee at the 6th Congress, TAP CHI CONG SAN, No 1-1987, p 61.

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EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS ON THE ROLE OF THE HUMAN FACTOR IN SOCIALIST
CONSTRUCTION: DISTRIBUTING AND MAKING FULL AND EFFECTIVE USE OF THE COUNTRY'S
SOURCES OF LABOR

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 16-21

[Article by Tran Dinh Hoan]

[Text] Providing everyone with a job, this is the most important and the most difficult task of socialism. The greatest difficulty in providing everyone with a job lies in determining how to develop the "human factor." Under socialism, the concept "human factor" is personified by the free laborer--as the primary production force and as the collective master in productive labor. The activism associated with the human factor is reflected in the ability of every laborer to meet economic targets for himself and contribute to society by being aware, by taking the initiative and being creative. This is the matter that is of greatest interest and attraction to the economic and social sciences today. But to succeed in gaining everyone's participation in labor, we cannot act on the basis of subjective desires, rather, we must base what we do on a deep analysis of domestic socio-economic conditions, the international situation and the characteristics and trends in the development of the international division of labor. In essence, we must assess the situation surrounding the organization and management of labor in past years and, from this analysis, draw lessons and experience and point out the problems that must be solved in the remaining years of the initial stage of the period of transition.

I. The Situation and the Problems Faced

Our country recently experienced 30 years of war. As a result, the economy is still an economy in which small-scale production predominates. The amount of farmland per capita is low compared to world standards and steadily decreasing at a time when the population is already large and rapidly growing. Labor is abundant but labor productivity and national income per capita are among the lowest in the world. The number of persons working in the various sectors of the national economy is low compared to the total work force (80.7 percent). Reserve and unemployed labor still make up a large percentage. The persons working in the various sectors of the national economy also account for more than 30 percent of unused work time. The educational and specialized standards of the laborer have been raised but the distribution and use of

labor are still irrational in many ways. The amount of mechanized equipment and the value of fixed assets per laborer are low. The health of laborers is declining and occupational illnesses are becoming more widespread with each day. The distribution of labor by sector remains at a low level of development: two-thirds of the labor force works in the agricultural, forestry and fishing sectors. In those sectors that have the conditions and the need to use much labor, such as small industry, the handicraft trades, the services and the production of raw materials, building materials and fuels, development is slow, which will have a major effect upon efforts to absorb labor in social production.

Examined by segment of the economy, we see that production activities within the state-operated and cooperative segments are inefficient. The self-employed, private and household segments of the economy have not been organized or managed in a way that develops production and increases the supply of products to society while gradually bringing these segments within the sphere of socialism. Distributing labor by area of the country is a very important task, a strategic task in our country. But, organizing large-scale migrations requires that very many problems concerning land use planning, the structure of investments and so forth be solved.

In the utilization of primary laborers, attention has only been given to the quantity of labor. Not enough attention has been given to making rational use of the laborer. The organizational measures and various policies that have been promulgated with the aim of making good use of special sources of labor, such as technical labor and highly skilled manual labor, female labor, the labor of youths, the labor of war invalids, the handicapped, the retired, the disabled and so forth are simplistic and have, therefore, produced low returns. The number of persons working within the state sector has been growing very rapidly compared to needs. Meanwhile, the volume of products being produced has risen slowly and many enterprises are only utilizing 30 to 40 percent of their machine and equipment capacity due to shortages of energy, fuel, materials and so forth.

In summary, the general aspect most deserving of attention in the distribution and use of sources of labor today is that the structure and quality of these sources are not consistent with the structure of the economy. This inconsistency is partly due to a failure to give attention to the special characteristics of the formation and development of the country's sources of labor when establishing the structure of the economy and the structure of investments. At a time when labor is abundant, many persons are unemployed or do not have sufficient work. We have also concentrated our capital in large projects and not attached importance to building small and medium-scale projects that absorb much labor. On the other hand, this inconsistency is also partly due to the fact that sources of labor have not formed or developed in a way that is rational. For example, we have not properly combined academic education with occupational training (particularly with regard to trades that are consistent with the requirements we face in the initial stage of the period of transition, such as the agricultural trades, forestry, small industry, the handicraft trades, the services and so forth). As a result, the majority of youths who graduate from general middle school is not prepared to go to work.

The realities of socialist construction in the fraternal countries and in our country show that in order to distribute and utilize labor well, it is necessary to satisfactorily resolve the issue of the interests of the laborer. The improvements made to wages in September 1985 were urgently needed to tie all wages to the results of labor. When they first went into effect, the new wages provided enough money to replenish the energies expended in labor and restored uniformity to the wage policy nationwide. However, due to mistakes in the fields of prices, wages and money and the failure to closely tie improvements in these fields to national income, to the supply of goods, particularly the supply of goods controlled by the state, wage and salary scales quickly lost their impact as a result of the very rapid rise in the prices of goods. In December 1986, the real wages of manual workers and civil servants equalled only about 30 percent of what they did in October 1985. At enterprises, real wages (including mid-shift meals and other income items) equalled only about 50 to 60 percent. In a number of southern provinces, due to the payment of subsidies that exceeded the common standard, real wages equalled only 40-50 percent. On the other hand, due to the limited capabilities of the economy compounded by very narrow wage and salary scales, the principle of distribution in accordance with labor has not been fully manifested. Today, due to the rapid drop in real wages and the decline in the quantity and variety of ration goods sold at stable prices, egalitarianism is becoming more evident than ever before. This truly poses a danger within the wage policy: wages are not enough to replenish the energies expended in labor and do not provide the foundation for strengthening the work force, especially the force of specialized and highly skilled workers.

II. The Guidelines and Primary Measures for Improving the Organization and Management of Labor During the Period from 1986 to 1990

The developing countries formulate their socio-economic development strategy on the basis of one of three primary production factors: investment capital, labor and natural resources. In view of the conditions of our country, which is not rich in natural resources and is poor from the standpoint of capital, the only factor on which we can base our socio-economic strategy is labor. Thus, the strategy for human development must become an important part of the entire socio-economic strategy. In view of our country's circumstances, guidelines of a strategic nature for the years ahead are: on the one hand, we must do everything possible to make full use of the valuable sources of capital that lie in our labor and arable land to develop agriculture, the forest industry, fishing, small industry and the handicraft trades and develop the impact made by the different segments of the economy in order to step up production, create new jobs and produce more and more wealth for society. This is the work of the state and all the people and must be expressed in the form of specific targets, policies, norms and measures within the socio-economic development plans of each basic unit, each locality, each sector and the entire country. On the other hand, we must make fundamental changes to the structure of the economy and the structure of investments. Capital must be concentrated on the three programs in grain-food products, consumer goods and export goods. At the same time, we must build a number of industrial sectors to support the development of agriculture, with full importance attached to developing small and medium-scale projects that absorb much labor.

Specific guidelines and measures are:

1. The strategic significance of the population policy in the initial stage lies in making use of every available socio-economic measure, every method of agitation and persuasion...to bring about a rapid decline in the rate of population growth. In the next stage, rational development will insure that we achieve the target of zero population growth by the start of the 21st century and the development of a population structure that is rational from the standpoint of its quality. Between now and 1990, we must endeavor to reduce the rate of population growth to 1.7 percent, with a population of 66 million by 1990 and only one or two children per family. We must closely and constantly guide the population planning campaign, considering it to be one of the important measures in stabilizing and developing the economy. The policies and principles of the state must be well coordinated, unified and designed to achieve practical results.

2. From the perspective of the entire national economy, it is the structure of the economy that defines the structure of the labor force. However, from the perspective of the view that we "move ahead on the basis of our arable land and labor" and in view of the fact that we have surplus labor, the potentials that lie in labor must be taken into consideration when forming the structure of the economy. Therefore, in the initial stage, we must distribute production first on the basis of utilizing social labor and the redistribution of labor must be carried out under the best possible plans, namely, plans that create new jobs. In the initial stage, the guideline with regard to providing jobs is to achieve full employment. In the next stage, the guideline will be to provide jobs that are rational and efficient. In conjunction with the full employment strategy, it is necessary to formulate a raw material strategy. The most efficient investments that can be made in the initial stage are investments in the development of raw materials in order to create new jobs. The state must make investments with the aim of creating new jobs and must, at the same time, adopt policies that tap each source of capital among the people in order to create new jobs for unemployed laborers.

3. Raising social labor productivity is the most important measure in raising national income per capita and the standard of living. The way to raise social labor productivity in our country in the initial stage is to increase the number of persons who have a job while raising national income by increasing the efficiency with which fixed assets are used, economizing on raw materials, fuel, building materials and so forth. Raising social labor productivity demands that we not only make efficient use of living labor, but also make good and economical use of past labor. Raising social labor productivity under the conditions of the low labor productivity in our country requires that we create the conditions for a portion of our country's labor force to achieve the high productivity levels of the world by expanding the various forms of international cooperation in labor in a variety of ways, such as performing work under contract for other countries, allowing foreign countries to invest in our country and sending some of our country's labor to work overseas.

The principal measures that can be taken to expand the division of labor by sector are: opening local sectors and trades in order to absorb the majority

of the labor not being fully utilized and new labor while vigorously redistributing labor to localities in which the potentials lying in arable land are still large but which lack labor with the aims of developing agriculture, forestry and fishing and also strongly developing small industry, the handicraft trades and the services in the cities and the countryside while encouraging the development of the household economy. Within agriculture, more labor must be given jobs in intensive cultivation and multicropping, in expanding the amount of area under cultivation and in developing livestock production and the trades within cooperatives and within the scope of the district. In particular, investments must be made in expanding the intensive cultivation of annual and perennial industrial crops (rubber, coffee, tea, t'ung trees, peanuts, beans, vegetables, fruit, pharmaceutical crops and so forth).

It is also necessary to expand the redistribution of labor by segment of the economy in the direction of increasing the investment of labor in the state-operated and collective sectors in a stable manner that yields practical socio-economic returns. When taking this approach, it is necessary to avoid doing things in a simple, "form for form's sake" manner in the hope of quickly abolishing the private segments of the economy, which would lead to curbing and eliminating the private segments of the economy too early and the impetuous establishment of state-operated basic production units at a time when the state lacks capital and lacks experience in organizing and managing labor and managing production.

In the work of redistributing population, it is necessary to implement the guidelines "the state and the people working together" and "the central level and the locality working together" in order to tap each potential and reduce the difficulties being experienced by the state in view of its limited sources of capital. We must seek to acquire sources of capital through joint ventures with foreign countries in the cultivation of rubber, coffee and so forth. Migration models must be developed that take the form of general business federations that do business in a specific strategic crop or species of livestock and encompass the various forms of the state-operated, collective, self-employed and household segments of the economy.

4. To redistribute and make full and efficient use of labor, we must continue to conduct research for the purpose of improving the wage and salary policy and the income of the worker. As the Political Report at the 6th Congress of the Party stated: "The correct implementation of the principle of distribution in accordance with labor demands that we fundamentally revise the wage policy along lines which insure that the energies expended in labor are replenished, egalitarianism is eliminated...." The complexity of this problem demands that we take two types of measures, urgent measures and basic, long-range measures. Due to the continuing difficulties with essential grain and food products, the state must guarantee the sale to manual workers, civil servants and the armed forces of the six rationed consumer goods. Different approaches must be taken to solve the problem of wages and income in the production sector and the administrative sector. In the production sector, this problem must be solved on the basis of improving the organization of production and labor, economizing on supplies, raw materials, fuel and so forth. A mechanism must be put in place through which these savings can be

translated into increased income for the laborer. At the same time, it is necessary to study and establish a mechanism in the payment of wages to laborers that is dynamic within the context of rapidly rising prices. This approach will not result in an increase in nominal wages across the board and will thus avoid the need to make a very large payment all at once, which leads to a continued rapid rise in prices. Thus, it is of basic importance that the solution to the wage and income problem be based on the development of production. The state must control the supply of goods, particularly the supply of grain, food products and other essential goods, and establish an appropriate mode of selling products, one which insures that wage earners are able to buy necessary goods. On the basis of developing production and increasing the sources of revenue for the state, wages must gradually be raised within the administrative sector. On the other hand, under this 5-year plan, we must continue to study ways to improve and refine the new wage policy. The new wage policy must insure that the energies expended in labor are replenished, make further inroads against egalitarianism, provide incentive for technically skilled labor and highly skilled manual laborers, attract labor to sectors and trades that are encountering many difficulties, to strenuous and hazardous occupations, to remote places... That is, this policy must insure the correct and effective implementation of the principles of distribution in accordance with labor. Within the collective sector (agriculture, small industry, the handicraft trades...), state policies (primarily a reasonable policy on two-way economic contracts) are needed to create the conditions for collective organizations to establish a correct wage and income distribution system, provide incentive for labor and strongly stimulate production. The state should adopt a policy that correctly regulates the income of the various strata of the population and the income of laborers, one which upholds the basic principles that the income of each person must come mainly from the results of production and work and that persons who earn income by means other than legitimate labor must be prosecuted in accordance with the laws of the state.

The 6th Congress of the Party was a fine success. It reflected new growth by the party in the direction of adopting new thinking, particularly economic thinking. Of special importance is the fact that this congress of our party set social policy guidelines and tasks aimed at developing the role of the human factor and making serving man the highest objective of each activity. These correct views and guidelines will surely create large forces for socialist construction in the years ahead.

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THOUGHTS ON TAKING A NEW APPROACH TO IDEOLOGICAL WORK, LITERATURE, ART AND EDUCATION

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 21-25

[Article by Professor Nguyen Van Hanh]

[Text] Anxious to rebuild our war ravaged country and with our perception of materialism at times being crude, we have sometimes placed sole emphasis upon economic issues and viewed the economy as separate and distinct from society, maintaining that once we have the economy on its feet, we will have everything. Now, it can be confirmed that one of the underlying causes of our long difficult situation, of the slow and unstable development of the economy has been our failure to appropriately concern ourselves with social issues that became exceedingly complex under the impact of the war and the partitioning of our country for many years and our failure to give full attention to the human factor in production.

We have talked at great length about developing production and it has been our desire to quickly make the transition from military victory to economic victory, our reasoning being that a nation which won victory over the U.S. imperialists would be skilled in economic work. However, we failed to see the full price we had to pay for that victory and did not realize that, following a war such as the one from which we recently emerged, the people had to be strengthened, had to be further prepared spiritually and materially in order to have the strength needed to embark on a totally new and no less arduous and difficult front. And, if the laborer lives in extreme privation, if the laborer is not content, not hopeful, production cannot be carried out well. During the early days of the revolution and under the circumstances of war, due to unforeseen requirements and immediate needs in ideological work, we attached importance to cultivating, through propaganda and education, the spirit of sacrificing personal interests for the interests of the collective, sacrificing the present for the future, and stressed the need to concern ourselves with the prosperity of the country while giving little thought to the legitimate interests and essential needs of every laborer in everyday life. These temporary, one-sided and non-dialectical measures must be promptly corrected in the years ahead.

Appropriately satisfying the rising material and spiritual needs of man, of the laboring people, is a demand of the fundamental economic law of socialism,

is both the goal of and the moving force behind the socialist revolution. Man makes revolution in order to liberate society, liberate labor, liberate himself, in order to be able to live a life of freedom, comfort and happiness. Man can, for the sake of ideals, for the sake of the victory of the revolution, endure hardships and make sacrifices. But enduring hardships and making sacrifices are not the goal of the revolution. But the need to endure hardships and make sacrifices must be based on principles and cannot be indefinite. How the spiritual and the material combine and support each other, to what extent and under which circumstances the masses will endure hardships and make sacrifices, these are things that leaders must know. To have the strength to live, to make revolution, particularly under normal circumstances, the laborer must be cared for in a way that is reasonable and concrete, must have his legitimate needs satisfied and must be able to see principles being applied, see prospects and results in each job he performs.

The needs of man are both material and spiritual. Therefore, in caring for man, we must give attention to both the spiritual and the material. Neither can be given light attention. However, social by nature and unique from the standpoint of his consciousness and self-awareness, the spiritual and ideological needs of man are very large. The extraordinary strength that sets man apart is the strength of his thinking, his spirit. The more highly man is educated, the higher his cultural standards and revolutionary awareness rise, the more his ideological and spiritual needs grow. Therefore, in the cause of revolution, ideological work plays an exceedingly important role in encouraging and inspiring man and tapping his strength, to a high degree, in labor and combat.

There was a time when we overemphasized the impact of ideological work, maintaining that ideological work could resolve all problems. More recently, our tendency has been to place sole emphasis upon economic measures and material interests. Neither of these approaches is correct. Clearly, correct economic measures and legitimate material interests exert a positive impact upon thinking. However, ideological work has its own strength and is indispensable. The persons who perform ideological work are well aware of this. The problem is how to perform ideological work correctly and effectively.

Performing good ideological work requires more than knowledge of the policies and tasks concerning which information must be imparted. It also requires knowledge of the persons toward whom this work is directed and knowledge of circumstances. Ideological measures differ from administrative and economic measures in that they are not the same for everyone, are not compulsory in nature, rather, they are specific and designed to tap the consciousness and voluntary spirit of the person for whom this work is performed. Ideological work which is abstract, compulsory and pragmatic produces little by way of results and is sometimes even useless and counter-productive. The ultimate value of ideological work must be measured in terms of changes in perception and results from the actions of the masses, not in terms of the motives, intentions or actions of the cadres who perform ideological work.

The purpose of ideological work is to make an impact upon the thinking and feelings of man. Therefore, it is necessary to know the thoughts, aspirations

and standards of the persons toward whom this work is directed. Only in this way can we have the basis needed to help alleviate their concerns and doubts, help them to accept the new, accept that which is right, to agree with, support and act in accordance with the new and that which is right.

Since the victory over the U.S. imperialists in 1975, countless changes have occurred in the thinking and attitudes of the masses and many things have arisen that must be given thought and re-evaluated in the face of the new situation and tasks and on the basis of a constant flow of new information containing more than a few contradictions. The people have been liberated, have become the masters of an independent and completely reunified country and feel deep pride in their party and fatherland. At the same time, they have many new hopes and demands. However, our ideological work has not changed accordingly. Generally speaking, it remains locked in the old approach with its old concepts concerning the persons toward whom this work is directed and old methods which lean heavily toward conveying information and providing instructions in the way found in textbooks and formulas.

There are some persons engaged in ideological work who themselves do not believe or deeply understand what they are saying, who view the persons toward whom this work is directed as inferior and obstinate persons whose minds must be opened and whose confidence must be strengthened. In such cases, how can there be empathy and mutual trust between the propagandist and the person toward whom propaganda is directed? How can ideological work be convincing and produce results?

Our people, particularly youths and intellectuals, have matured to the point where they do not place unconditional faith in policies. There must be a basis for this faith. Power must be justified by means of actions and practical results. Through the educational efforts of the party and since the victory in 1975, the people have acquired a clearer concept of honor, democracy, the individual, the law and social justice. They do not tolerate paternalism, authoritarianism or special rights and privileges. They want to know and participate in every affair of the country. They need to know the truth, the truth about successes as well as failures. They must be considered as persons who are involved, as persons who have a responsibility and authority in formulating policies and in successfully implementing these policies. To reflect true trust in and respect for the people, to give the people a clear understanding of the truth and make it possible for them to participate to the full extent of their responsibility and authority in every affair of the country, ideological work must be change and improved in terms of its themes and forms, in terms of organization and management, of personnel and means.

While attaching importance to the human factor, we cannot give light attention to one special field of ideological work, the field of literature and art, a field which has a far reaching and lasting impact upon the soul, feelings and character of man, upon the spiritual life of society. Through their very profound and unique themes and forms, literature and art reflect the spiritual face, the goodness and the conscience of each nation in the most natural, faithful and vivid way. By reflecting normal, everyday happenings and more than a few unexpected and personal situations, literature and art help man to

rise above pragmatism, selfishness and the commonplace, not by being didactic and authoritarian, but by experimenting, suggesting and advising. In the ups and downs of life, in times of joy as well as sorrow and after wrestling with the difficulties and dilemmas of life, everyone wants to see himself in these examples in order to learn more about himself, ponder recent experiences, hear the private conversations and thoughts of others and acquire greater love, confidence and experience in order to continue on in this vast life filled with trials and tribulations with renewed spiritual energy. Herein lies the attraction of and the need for literature and art.

Major achievements in literature and art depend upon many years of preparation from the standpoint of the nation's history in this field and upon the magnitude of talents, which emerge rather unexpectedly. However, when the spiritual life of society and the creative atmosphere are favorable and management and guidance are correct, works of value are easier to complete and the creative process takes fewer detours and suffers fewer regrettable setbacks.

Literature and art are a very complex and delicate field but little has been done to research this field in a systematic and truly scientific manner. We have not invested much effort or intellect in this research and our grasp of the laws that apply is very limited. But in no field is it easier to be subjective. The creative process is part understanding and discovery. But is also part inspiration and "instinct." The artist is the engineer of the soul but he is also a "talented person." To distinguish between right and wrong, between truth and falsehood, between talent, fidelity and skill and manifestations of a lack of talent and opportunism in literature and art, we must conduct thorough studies, with attention to many different relationships, must clearly understand the nature and functions of literature and art, the special characteristics of the talent and creative labor of the artist, the needs and tastes of the public, etc. In practice, praise and criticism of a work, the evaluation of a work are, more often than not, made in a very simplistic and hasty manner through comparisons to general requirements of life, of a number of categories or concepts... This is not to mention that we sometimes are undecided, go around in circles and evaluate, praise or criticize works on the basis of customary standards and methods without comparing the artist to anyone else, without lifting our heads and looking around, as a result of which it is easy to be subjective and not see the essence of the situation surrounding our work.

Producing works that are truly of greater value requires that our efforts and spirit be more intense, that we possess deeper knowledge and insight, most importantly that we be pure and trust one another, the artist as well as those who work in the fields of theory and criticism and those who guide literature and art, that we dare to squarely face the truth and widely and frankly exchange experiences about everything in the interest of our common work. Art is unique and never duplicated. It is constant inquiry and creativity. Trials, problems and mistakes are very difficult to avoid. Therefore, what is needed very much here is an open and sincere atmosphere of comradeship. We must be strict but loving, must encourage talent and respect the truth. The new approach should begin with this, with liberating the thinking of the persons who work in the field of literature and art so that everyone is

allowed to think and work to the fullest extent possible and possesses the confidence and courage needed to denounce sinister powers and every cruel and ugly attitude and act, to praise the beauty and wonder of life, of honest and creative labor for the sake of the happiness of the people, social progress and love and respect for one's fellow man.

When attaching importance to the human factor, it is even more necessary to give attention to performing good educational work. Education is the training of man, is the preparation of the work force, of the corps of workers and intellectuals, of the activists needed for each field in the life of the country. Education is the foundation of the strategy for human development. it is closely related not only to culture, but also to the economy, national defense, science-technology and every other aspect of the country's life. There are grounds for stating that to know the future of a nation, all one has to do is look at how this nation is educating its people today.

We have made made efforts in the field of education. However, from the perspective of quality and efficiency, a thorough analysis of the situation shows that there are still many shortcomings in this work, many aspects of this work that do not comply with laws.

Education is generally viewed as purely a welfare item that can be provided to whatever extent we wish. Compared to many countries in the surrounding region, investments in education in our country are very low. The plan for the development of education has yet to become a part of the overall development plan of the central state and the localities. A matter as large and complex as education and which is related to the destiny of our country is a vital interest of the young, is a source of joy and concern on the part of each person and each family. However, education has never been widely and deeply discussed among the people. It is very necessary for there to be sessions of Party Central Committee plenums, of the National Assembly that are devoted solely to education. There are still many matters that have not been codified. A mechanism has not been put in place which clearly defines responsibilities and authority and the forms of coordination among the sectors, levels, basic production units, agencies and mass organizations in supporting education.

Educational methods still lack flexibility and are not compatible with the different characteristics, requirements and capabilities of areas and localities. Excessive and sweeping state subsidies have caused more than a few difficulties from the perspective of the state budget and educational work itself, a field of activity in which strict regulations and order apply. At present, however, many educational activities are being conducted in any manner that suits convenience and are not being inspected, thus creating problems for the people.

Due to the separation between studies and examinations, between training and how persons are utilized and among the different fields and levels of study, the quality and efficiency of education are, generally speaking, low and the imbalance in the development of education is quite severe.

In the years ahead, research must be conducted to shed light on the matters of major importance in our country's education strategy. We must do a better job of tying education to the socio-economic goals of the country and the locality; quickly convert the general school into a school that teaches basic knowledge and general technical skills and provides occupational counseling and trade training; and chart a course and adopt methods that are dynamic and creative in order to improve the quality and efficiency of education and develop education in a manner consistent with the requirements and capabilities of the economy and the revolution in our country in the new stage. To do these things well, attention must be given to building the corps of teachers and education management cadres and practical measures must be taken to elevate the position of teachers in society, improve their material and spiritual lives and strengthen the material-technical bases of the education sector, especially of key schools and basic units, with importance attached to making improvements in the two fields that have the farthest reaching impact upon our efforts to adopt a new approach to our work, namely, the fields of scientific research and management.

In ideological work, literary and art activities and educational work as well as all our revolutionary work today, we must adopt a new approach in terms of our thinking, style of work, organization and cadres in order to keep pace with the development of the new situation and tasks.

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CSO: 4210/8

THE NEW WRITER AND ARTIST AND THE FUNCTION OF MOLDING THE NEW MAN

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 25-29

[Article by Ha Xuan Truong]

[Text] In the initial stage of the period of transition to socialism, reunified Vietnam faces entirely new and complex problems. To correctly understand these pressing problems, each member of society must adopt a new approach, adopt new thinking, new methods and a new style of work.

Molding generations of new persons who possess the capabilities and spirit needed to undertake the task of building the new society is the foremost task of literature and art today. Clearly, to fulfill this noble function, the artist himself must perceive things in a new way, must adopt new thinking and new methods of expression. At present, each question raised for examination and every way to perform a job demands a correct explanation of social realities, which are changing, are fraught with contradictions and must be examined against the background of the sharp class struggle taking place in the world. Large projects which employ progressive management methods and apply new scientific-technical advances continue to spring up beside the disorganized, non-mechanized, backward and stagnant ways of working of the outmoded system of bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies. Examples of bravery in combat at border positions and models of dedicated labor at worksites, at enterprises and in fields are in need of being praised. At the same time, negative phenomena, degeneration and deviation among some cadres and some of the people must be courageously brought to light and strongly criticized. Sharp contradictions demand explanations by literature and art, explanations based on the stand of struggling for the victory of socialism. Mistakes in the economy are not the responsibility of literature and art but making us aware of these mistakes is part of the responsibility of the writer and artist. Making us aware through images, through life, this is the work of literature and art. Now, more than ever before, the writer and artist must cultivate the revolutionary world view, possess broad knowledge, most importantly knowledge of the economy and society and take a firm stand. Only in this way is it possible to reflect life and man today honestly and deeply. The Political Report of the Central Committee of the CPV at the 6th National Congress of Delegates highly evaluated the role of literature and art in molding the new, socialist man. At the same time, it set a high requirement of writers and artists: "No ideological form can take the place of literature

and art in cultivating wholesome sentiments and making a profound impact upon man from the standpoint of adopting a new way of thinking, a new way of life...the party requires that writers and artists constantly cultivate the sense of responsibility of the citizen, of the soldier and fulfill their noble duty: creating spiritual values that invigorate the soul and feelings, molding the character and skills of generations of citizens and establishing an ethical environment in society."(1)

In the war time literature and art of past years, it became a rather well established way of thinking to attach foremost importance to models of the complete man, to characters who were not tormented by complex inner struggle. Little attention was given to personal feelings. Rather, emphasis was placed on ideal characters and we focused on the beautiful traits of man in the life or death struggle against the enemy aggressors. This was proper under war time circumstances, when we faced stern and unforeseen challenges, when the entire nation had to become heroes, when the question we faced was the survival of the country. These images are still needed today and will also be needed in the future. But, the artistic needs of society today are different than they were then and are very diverse. The appreciation of art by the public takes many different directions. Their cultural standards and perception are different. Another difference that affects the public on a daily basis and by many different avenues is the impact of the world upon them. There are two parties to literature and art: the author, who puts his thinking into the work, and readers, who perceive and draw from the work things they need in their lives. There is a growing trend among the public today to be independent on the basis of their own personal understandings of what the writer puts into the work. Therefore, it has become a matter of survival to art that the writer and artist adopt new thinking. This adoption of new thinking must be expressed in the contents of their works, in the methods employed in their works and in the style of their works. In actuality, the party character and the popular nature of literature and art demand this adoption of new thinking. Socialist realism in art is fully capable of meeting this demand and accepting the new: it is the first method to help the writer and artist discover the new, to recognize the new as it is developing.

During the past several years, literature and art have focused attention on the process of the formation of the character of man in the struggle to transform others and transform oneself, on the complex changes and contradictions occurring within each person and in social relations. These works also reveal the private thoughts and concerns of the writer and artist. However, their authors, although they recognize certain problems, do not yet have the ability to deeply analyze these problems and make positive suggestions. The problems are larger than the author. In other words, the author has not yet brought himself to the level of the problem faced. This is the reason behind the simplistic and superficial approach seen in these works. The problem does not emerge from the work and come alive. Recently, large numbers of the public have been drawn to certain works because they see in them things that coincide with their thoughts and concerns. But when the work does not give everyone increased energy, when it does not provoke new thoughts about life, it is quickly forgotten. In particular, when resolutions and policies of the party are clearly realistic, when they reflect the spirit of

change, works of a political nature that do not go beyond illustration (even if their literary or artistic approach is interesting) will disappear from the scene because they do not possess the inherent power of true art.

In the appreciation of art today, characters, regardless of whether they are stereotypes or still in the process of developing, regardless of whether they are negative or positive, usually cannot be imposed upon the public. Frequently, the public is discussing these characters outside works. This is something new, something worthy of attention in literary and art criticism and in guiding readers and viewers. But one thing is clear, today's public is assuming its role as master. As a result, the responsibility of the new writer and artist does not stop at faithfully reflecting what he perceives or at the desire to present again lessons that have already been learned. Rather, his responsibility is higher: he must be ahead of the public and anticipate what they will want. To the artist and writer, it is not enough, however, to simply be responsible. He must also possess knowledge and sensitivity--a virtue that can only be achieved when one has extensive life experience. The artist must engage in a direct dialogue and exchange of confidences with his public, must stimulate and provoke them into thinking and acting, into contributing to the process of understanding and improving society as well as themselves. As Aragon said: "The truth has its own class face, reality is not the objective but a tool in bringing about revolutionary changes in reality itself." No one but the artist creates the power that literature and art have to transform things. This power lies in the work and in the perception of the public. To create this power, the artist must first possess the ability to grasp the revolutionary changes occurring in the reality of life for himself and for his public. Therefore, the fighting strength and responsibility of the socialist writer in the face of the task of actively molding the new man cannot stop at the issues of good-evil, beautiful-ugly and positive-negative, but must go beyond these ordinary things by means of new thinking, of a new way of thinking based on the spirit and essence of Marxist thinking: criticism and revolution.

To socialist literature and art, modern, or more broadly stated, the spirit of our times, do not lie only in adopting new subjects, a new style, new language and new forms. Modern lies primarily in bringing a new quality to one's works, in bringing to light from the confusion of everyday life things which society does not see, things about which society has not thought, raising questions, joining the public in finding answers to these questions and inspiring them to think and act to improve themselves and help to transform and improve life.

To produce works that are modern in this sense, our new writers and artists must begin with the concrete, but not dwell on trivialities or the commonplace, and proceed to a high level of abstraction without being metaphysical. They must make forecasts of major importance without creating illusions. And, all this must be done for socialism, for the socialist man and woman with a clear understanding of oneself and the goal to be achieved. This is the very difficult path of the socialist artist. To be a socialist writer or artist in the new stage of Vietnam's revolution, one must always go beyond his limits, which includes going beyond one's limits in the face of difficulties in one's material life. Going beyond one's limits is the theme

and the requirement in our adoption of new thinking in art. But when talking about the adoption of new thinking, we cannot fail to mention democracy and the freedom of thinking, this spirit that emanates from the Political Report of the 5th Party Central Committee adopted at the 6th Congress. This is the greatest desire of the people, particularly creative intellectuals. Going beyond one's limits entails struggling with ourselves, with others, struggling against the old and moving ahead to embrace the new. Therefore, democracy in debate and the spirit of freedom in creativity must be considered as important as air is to our earth. Because, without this air, the writer and artist will suffocate, will be unable to reveal himself and openly test himself in the struggle in society in order to know himself, to forge and improve himself. Here, the concept "literature and art are learning about oneself" loses meaning. It is not compatible with the character of socialism. Rather, the writer and artist must be the one who takes the lead in speaking openly in a conscious and deliberate fashion, must be the "spokesman of the age." Consequently, the real writer or artist must, besides talent, possess as his foremost virtue the virtue of being true, true to himself in every way. Literature and art are to dishonesty what water is to fire. And, the writer and artist must live by the ethical standards by which society requires everyone else to live. Literature and art are difficult crafts. Socialist literature and art are even more difficult. But difficult does not mean mystical. We should not mysticize our work and none of us is permitted to live outside the normal life of society. Here, a conceited or unrestrained way of life is to be avoided. Such ways of life are not innate "personal" or "character" traits of the writer and artist.

Twenty-four years ago, at the 3rd National Congress of Writers and Artists, Truong Chinh reminded us: "The words of President Ho that 'to build socialism, we must first of all have socialists' also mean that to build socialist literature and art, we must have socialist writers and artists." (2) This thinking is as "new" today as it was then.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Political Report of the Party Central Committee at the 6th Congress, TAP CHI CONG SAN, No 1-1987.
2. Truong Chinh: "Ve van hoa va nghe thuat," [Culture and Art], Van Hoc Publishing House, Hanoi, 1986, Volume 2, p 120.

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FOCUSING EFFORTS ON STABILIZING THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE ETHNIC MINORITIES IN HIGHLAND AREAS

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 29-32

[Article by Hoang Truong Minh]

[Text] "To build socialism, we must first of all have socialists."⁽¹⁾ This teaching of President Ho points out the importance of the human factor in socialism. When discussing the human factor that is the men and women of Vietnam in the cause of building socialism and defending the fatherland, we cannot fail to give thought to developing the role and building upon the fine tradition of the ethnic minorities of our country, who make up an important segment of the Vietnamese national community and have a very proud history of participating in building and defending the country.

The ethnic minorities of our country, although they only account for 11 percent of the country's population, live in regions that are of important strategic significance from the standpoint of both the economy and national defense. In our long history, the ethnic minorities have arisen along with the rest of the country to fight foreign domination and have recorded brilliant feats of arms that have helped to defeat powerful aggressor armies of the Chinese feudal dynasties and maintain the nation's independence. Since the birth of the party and organized, educated and led by the party, they have greatly enhanced their traditions of solidarity and struggle. There has probably not been one resounding feat of arms, not one victory of historic significance in the revolution or the wars of resistance fought in our country during the past four decades that was not prepared for or did not begin in the mountainous forests, with the ethnic minorities serving as a solid base of support and making very positive contributions. Today, along the northern border, ethnic compatriots face forces of the enemy day and night and are fighting tenaciously alongside the people's armed forces while developing production and defending the frontier of the fatherland.

As soon as it was born, our party, clearly aware of the revolutionary role and capabilities of the ethnic minorities in our country, adopted a correct nationalities policy, considering "correctly resolving the nationalities question to be one of the strategic tasks of Vietnam's revolution."⁽²⁾ The basic features of this policy are: unity among ethnic groups with the aim of toppling the rule of the imperialists and feudalists and advancing to the

cause of building socialism and defending the fatherland; establishing equality among ethnic groups in the eyes of the law and eventually achieving full equality among ethnic groups in practical terms; the ethnic groups assisting one another and being the masters of the country together; and gradually eliminating the differences in economic and cultural development among ethnic groups. Thus, from the standpoint of cultivating and developing the human factor in the cause of revolution, the nationalities policy of the party is truly a policy that respects and supports the segment of the Vietnamese community that has long been considered backward by tapping the enormous potentials among these persons and directing their development toward the goals of the revolution, by making every effort to develop and enhance the spiritual and material capabilities of these persons and create the conditions for them to move ahead along with the other ethnic groups to build and defend their beloved fatherland.

Through this policy of the party, we united the ethnic groups--the ethnic majority and the ethnic minorities--in a solid bloc and mobilized each force of all ethnic groups to win victory over each cruel and cunning enemy, advance the revolution to victory, advance the wars of resistance to victory, win back and staunchly defend our national independence and reunify the fatherland. Since the liberation of the South and the reunification of the country, our party and state have organized and led the people of the ethnic minorities and our fellow countrymen nationwide in a strong assault on poverty and backwardness through extensive efforts to achieve economic and cultural development and build socialism while defending the fatherland.

Many important changes of revolutionary significance have brought new things to the ethnic minorities in many areas and localities. Socialism is becoming part of their life, from their production relations and economic development to science, technology and the transformation and development of their spiritual life. The corps of ethnic minority cadres, persons who symbolize progressive forces, symbolize the desire and ability of these ethnic groups to make progress, has developed quite strongly.

However, a look at the actual state of living conditions and the development of the ethnic minorities over the past 10 years show that there is still much stagnation. Due to objective difficulties and subjective shortcomings in leadership and guidance, the economic potentials and strengths of mountain areas have not, generally speaking, been developed. Marked progress has not been made toward the goal of "taking one step in reducing the differences in the level of economic and cultural development among the ethnic groups." (3) The lives of the ethnic minorities are still very hard.

It is even more necessary that we give special attention to the living conditions of the ethnic minorities in the highland and border areas, at remote places in the wilderness and in the former base areas of the revolution and wars of resistance. Among the ethnic minorities, these are the persons who bear the most severe consequences of slow development. They face towering difficulties in many areas of their lives due to natural and social conditions. From the standpoint of "taking one step in the direction of reducing the differences in the level of economic and cultural development among the ethnic groups," these are the persons who must be given attention

first and for whom the greatest concern must be shown. From the standpoint of the position occupied by the areas in which these persons live, these are also places for which full concern must be shown due to their importance politically and in terms of national defense.

In the spirit of respecting the truth, squarely facing the truth and speaking the truth, it must be acknowledged that although we have concerned ourselves with meeting some needs of the ethnic minorities in the highland and border areas, the circumstances and living conditions of the ethnic minorities in these areas, particularly those at remote places in the wilderness and in the former base areas, have not, generally speaking, changed to any significant degree. There are even places at which they have been forced to return to the way they lived before the success of the August Revolution. In some respects, the gap between the ethnic minorities in these areas and those living in other areas is growing wider and larger, not narrower. Hunger and shortages of clothing have not been completely alleviated. Some places still lack potable water! There are still nearly 1.3 million nomads who practice slash and burn cultivation and live unstable lives. Spontaneous migration--thousands of persons leaving the harsh conditions of their birthplace each year in search of a place where conditions are better to earn a living--is a growing trend. The number of illiterates and persons who have slipped back into illiteracy among the ethnic minorities is quite high (Hmong: 88 percent; Dao: 75 percent Bahnar: 72 percent; Koho: 67 percent...) and steadily rising. Very few children of school age attend school (among the Hmong, only 5.6 percent; Dao: 6.5 percent, Mnong: 10.5 percent; Khomu: 4.8 percent...). Superstitious beliefs and practices and opium addiction are re-emerging and spreading. Social diseases, such as malaria, dysentery, goiter and so forth, have not been brought under control.

We can have no peace of mind as long as the situation described above persists. The ethnic minorities in highland and border areas, at remote places in the wilderness and in former base areas must not be allowed to endure these towering difficulties indefinitely. Although our country is experiencing very many socio-economic difficulties and the enemy continues to encircle, intimidate and sabotage us, the problem of the living conditions of the ethnic minorities in highland areas demands an urgent solution. And, if the general goal of the socio-economic tasks of our party and people in the remaining years of the initial stage of the period of transition is mainly to stabilize the economy and living conditions, these persons are among those who are very deserving of attention and priority.

To begin with, inspections should be conducted, the best would be inspections by the state, in order to correctly and directly assess the socio-economic situation and the implementation of the positions and policies of the party and state concerning these areas, determine realistic capabilities and adopt correct, practical and effective guidelines and measures for markedly improving the production and living conditions of the ethnic minorities in these areas. Then, well coordinated programs and plans must be adopted which clearly define the responsibilities and task of each level and sector and the implementation of which is under centralized guidance from the central to the local level with the aim of tapping the combined strength of all levels and sectors, of the armed forces and the local people in order to achieve specific

norms within a given amount of time, norms that produce marked results within each area.

We maintain that the guideline "the state and the people working together, the central level and the locality working together" are correct, including in highland areas. However, it must be realized that highland areas are encountering many difficulties and their standard of living is low. Therefore, appropriate, well coordinated (money, materials, technology and so forth) and effective investments must be made by the state (the central and local levels) combined with mobilizing the labor of the local people and support by fellow countrymen in other areas. Otherwise, the highland ethnic minorities will find it difficult to make progress.

In the economic development plans and policies for highland areas, we must take more than profit and loss, more than economic interests into consideration. We must, instead, combine the economy with politics, the economy with national defense and make political interests, make building stronger unity, achieving equality among the ethnic groups and firmly defending the border of the fatherland our highest objectives. When working to closely combine the economy with society, very much importance must be attached to social matters. We cannot consider investments in the development of education, culture and public health in highland areas as not worthy of being given priority. Nor should we think that these investments should only account for a small percentage of the total investment made. Rather, large investments must be made in social development in highland areas, even if it means that a little less will be invested in a number of other areas, so that we meet the needs to rapidly raise the cultural, educational and health standards and improve the way of life of these minorities, thus reducing the extent to which they are backward compared to the other areas. Especially deserving of attention here is the need for the party and state to adopt concrete and sound plans and not hesitate to spend the money and go to the effort needed to train a local force of cadres of the highland ethnic minorities. Anyone who has travelled to highland areas knows how valuable these cadres are.

The settlement of nomads is a campaign of profound revolutionary significance among the ethnic minorities in the highland areas, is a major program being carried out by the party and state, by all sectors and levels, with the aims of stabilizing the economy and the living conditions of our fellow countrymen in these areas. During the past 17 years, we have settled some 950,000 persons (of the 2.2 million persons who need to be settled). However, progress is still slow and returns are still low. In the months ahead, we must make extensive efforts to accelerate, improve and perform this work better. The settlement of nomads must be closely tied to organizing production, organizing labor, building the structure of the economy and redistributing the population within the district. On the basis of the master plan and the socio-economic plan of the district, we must formulate and implement a settlement of nomads plan aimed at stabilizing production, developing the economic and labor potentials and strengths of highland areas and establishing close ties between highland areas and other areas. The

settlement of nomads must be carried out by the party organization and administration on the district level under the direct guidance of the provincial level and with inspections by the central level.

In the development of education in highland areas, we must attach very much importance to quality and not simply place emphasis upon quantity. We must give attention to efficiency and not place form over substance or seek to achieve development in breadth. The key is to train and build a large corps of local educators who are members of the highland ethnic minorities themselves, are zealous and fully capable of imparting knowledge to the children of their ethnic group. The boarding general schools run by the state for children of the highland ethnic minorities have been proven to be a suitable form of education that creates a pool of good, effective cadres. These schools must be maintained, strengthened and strongly developed.

Stabilizing and improving the living conditions of the ethnic minorities in highland and border areas, at remote places in the wilderness and in the former base areas of the revolution and wars of resistance are a very large undertaking. There is nothing simple or easy about this work. It demands that we be highly determined, that we persevere and constantly implement policies, forms and measures that are appropriate to these areas. Well coordinated efforts in many fields by the various sectors, levels and forces, especially the concern of and appropriate investments by the state, are of foremost importance.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ho Chi Minh: "Tuyen tap,"[Selected Works], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1980, Volume II, p 209.
2. Political Report of the Party Central Committee at the 4th Congress, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1977, p 164.
3. Proceedings of the 5th Congress, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1982, Volume I, p 133.

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SOME THOUGHTS ON VIETNAMESE MAN IN THE ADVANCE FROM SMALL-SCALE PRODUCTION TO SOCIALISM

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 33-37

[Article by Professor Ngo Thanh Duong]

[Text] Marxism-Leninism holds that man is both the product of nature and conducts activities aimed at transforming the natural world. The masses are the persons who make history. It is they who create material and spiritual wealth for society. They are the force behind the revolution, the force stimulating the advance by society from one system to a higher system. "...The strength of a country, of the revolution lies in the people. To truly uphold the right of collective ownership of the laboring people, we must have confidence in the people. Each position and policy must have the people as its base. Our ancient ancestors also thought and acted this way. In our times, from the period preceding the general uprising to the August Revolution and the wars of resistance against France, the United States and the Beijing expansionists, our party has done the same. Today, as we advance to socialism, it is even more necessary that this be done."(1)

The exchange of opinions on "the human factor in the cause of socialist construction" organized by TAP CHI CONG SAN is of important practical significance. I would like to address one aspect of this issue and express some initial thoughts concerning "Vietnamese man in the advance from small-scale production to socialism."

President Ho said:

"To build socialism, we must first of all have socialists."

However, the new, socialist man cannot be molded overnight. This requires a long process of education in which we gradually advance to an increasingly high level.

In the nation's long history, Vietnamese man has recorded glorious achievements. We often define the fine traditions of Vietnamese man as being very diligent and hard working, being patient in the struggle against nature,

possessing the spirit of patriotism, being unyielding in the fight against foreign aggression, uniting with one another, loving and assisting one another, etc.

In the process of leading the revolution and in the wars of resistance against France, the United States and the expansionists and hegemonists, our party has developed upon these strengths of Vietnamese man. As a result, it has led the revolution forward, from one victory to another.

Today, in the process of advancing the entire country to socialism, we still must rely upon the strengths of Vietnamese man. However, it is also necessary to build these strengths so that they are suited to the new conditions of the revolution.

On the other hand, we must also be fully aware of the weaknesses of Vietnamese man, weaknesses which are inherent in a people that lived for thousands of years under feudal domination and hundreds of years under the domination of colonialism, both old-style and new, particularly a people who have lived with small-scale production for many years, lived in a country whose economy is poor and backward.

These social circumstances made a deep imprint upon the consciousness of Vietnamese man and created the psychological traits, thinking and ways of earning a living that are unique to Vietnamese man.

Here, it is not our intention to study the influence of feudalism, of colonialism, both old-style and new, upon Vietnamese man, but only to discuss the influence of small-scale production.

Concerning small-scale production, K. Marx compared a country of small farmers to a sack of potatoes. When the potatoes sprout, each runner goes off in a different direction. The meaning of this image is that small-scale producers have no ties to one another. They work by themselves. They know only what they are doing and their localities know only what the persons within the locality are doing. They are isolated producers separated from one another and hardly ever do anything more than what they need to do to subsist. They are not concerned with developing a commodity economy. The small-scale producer spends his life around his house, in his village and locality. Therefore, his mindset is largely one of self-interest and localism. This is the first distinguishing characteristic of the small-scale producer.

The objective of the small-scale producer is mainly to subsist. In his production, he uses hand tools and experience passed down by his ancestors. Consequently, his productivity is very low. This is production on a small-scale but the small-scale producer is readily satisfied with the results he achieves. He does not dare to exert himself in order to produce more. He has no contact with modern industry and knows nothing of modern science and technology. Therefore, the mentality of the small-scale producer is heavily characterized by conservatism and stagnation. He keeps repeating the same old experiences and does not dare to improve or change the way he earns a living. This is the second distinguishing characteristic of the small-scale producer.

Because his cultural standards are low and he lacks knowledge of science and technology, the small-scale producer is more emotion than reason. Each day, he lives and works with his family, visits with neighbors and earns his living in a fashion that suits his convenience. He works only if he wants to work. If not, he rests. He is not like a factory worker, who must comply with production regulations and is highly disciplined. Therefore, the small-scale producer is subjective, liberal and haphazard and readily harbors illusions. This is the third distinguishing characteristic of the small-scale producer.

The characteristics of the psychology, the thinking and the way of earning a living of the small-scale producer described above are clearly the antithesis of what large-scale production requires. To build socialism in our country, we must advance to large-scale socialist production. This is a long, arduous and very complex process. We cannot achieve large-scale production with small-scale producers. Here, the ideological struggle and the struggle over how one earns a living between small-scale production and large-scale production are very hard and bitter struggles. They are also a very important part of the struggle between socialism and capitalism within our country during the period of transition. The line on the socialist revolution correctly adopted by our party is that we must simultaneously carry out the three revolutions: the production relations revolution, the scientific-technological revolution and the ideological and cultural revolution. Through these three revolutions, we must transform the small-scale producer, gradually bring him into collective production, raise his cultural and scientific-technical standards, struggle against localism, departmentalism, the guild mentality, liberalism and the habit of doing whatever suits convenience and teaching him the new labor discipline.

Shortcomings and weaknesses that impede the advance of the revolution are also evident among our cadres.

The 5th Congress of the Party pointed out the shortcomings and mistakes of our cadres as being subjective and impetuous but also very conservative and stagnant in economic management and social management.

Being conservative and stagnant and being subjective and impetuous are inherent maladies of the small-scale producer. Our cadres come from the backgrounds of small-scale producers. As a result of living for many years within small-scale production, they bear the deep imprint of small-scale producers. In addition to the two characteristic maladies mentioned above, we cannot give light attention to localism, liberalism and the habit of doing as one sees fit in economic management and the management of society. These maladies are also causing serious harm and disorder within our country's economy today.

Since joining the revolution and through the education provided by the party, our cadres and party members have learned some of the theory of Marxism-Leninism, forged the thinking and style of the proletariat and cultivated a scientific world view and methodology. But these things are not enough. The world is rapidly changing. Many of the concepts we hold as part of our understanding of socialism are backward and mistaken. The vestiges and influences of various kinds of non-proletarian thinking and styles still weigh

heavily upon us. This is the most important cause of the serious mistakes that have been made in economic management, which have impeded the advance of the revolution. Adopting a new approach, most importantly adopting new economic thinking, has become the pressing demand of our country's revolution.

The urgent need today is for our cadres in all sectors and on all levels to combat the malady of subjectivism, respect objective laws in their leadership work and apply them in practice. To advance to socialism in a backward country in which small-scale production predominates, we cannot be impetuous.

V.I. Lenin once said:

"The more backward a country is when it must--due to the vagaries of history--begin the socialist revolution, the more difficulties this country will encounter in making the transition from the old, capitalist relations and socialist revolution."(2) And, Lenin criticized subjectivism and the malady of harboring illusions as follows: "A communist who harbors the illusion that the economic base and economic origins of the small farmer can be transformed in the space of 3 years is, of course, a utopian. And among us--there's no reason to hide it--are more than a few such utopians. But this is not something bad. How can such a country begin the socialist revolution without utopians?"(3)

We have made the very same mistake criticized by Lenin, namely harboring illusions, which we have done to a rather serious degree! In fact, in the initial stage of the period of transition in a backward country, in the advance from small-scale production to socialism, we have been subjective and impetuous because we have harbored the illusion that we could build socialism easily and quickly. Moreover, our concept of socialism has been simplistic. Our understanding of socialist production relations has, for the most part, not gone beyond the form that these relations assume. We have only attached importance to collectivizing the means of production, not to labor management and product distribution. We have viewed socialism as meaning only the abolition of exploitation and have not given attention to the efficiency of production, to labor productivity. The mechanism characterized by bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies has not been dismantled. We still lack knowledge and have little experience in economic management.

Here, having raised the question of the role of "Vietnamese man in the advance from small-scale production to socialism," let us try to gain an understanding of the laws governing the advance from small-scale production to large-scale, socialist production. Some persons subscribe to the view that there are no laws governing development from small-scale production to large-scale, socialist production. My view is that there are such laws. Learning these laws requires detailed study by many persons. However, in my view, the following several characteristic features can be pointed out:

In the past, it took the bourgeoisie a long period of time, as long as 300 years (from the 15th to the 18th century) to advance the small-scale production of feudalism to large-scale, capitalist production. Today, we, too, must apply the objective laws of this development. Of course, in a world in which large-scale, capitalist production already exists and with the

assistance of the fraternal socialist countries in which large-scale, socialist production has been achieved, we can greatly reduce the amount of time required.

The advance from small-scale to large-scale production (be it capitalist or socialist) must be made through intermediary, transitional economic forms. In the period of transition to socialism in our country, we must develop and apply intermediary, transitional economic forms to gradually upgrade small-scale production to large-scale, socialist production. Our party is correctly applying forms such as product contracts with groups of laborers and individual laborers in agriculture and economic ties and joint businesses within industry and the handicraft trades. It is even utilizing the private, capitalist segment of the economy to some extent. We must apply the spirit of the new economic policy in the Soviet Union introduced by Lenin in the 1920's. With the dictatorship of the proletariat having been established and strengthened, we need not fear the development of capitalism, rather, we must know how to use it, how to direct its development toward state capitalism.

Lenin asserted that when there are millions of small-scale producers, the development of capitalism, of capitalist relations is unavoidable and that these relations are still advantageous and necessary. Therefore, the only sensible policy is not to look for ways to impede or stop this development, but to guide it along the path of state capitalism. He wrote: "At a time when we are living in great misery as a result of our utter lack of products, our abject poverty, it would truly be absurd for us to fear the threat posed by capitalism developing on the basis of a small-scale, commodity producing agriculture."(4)

The above words of Lenin hold very much meaning for us today in light of the realities of our country's revolution in the initial stage of the period of transition. As we study the characteristics of Vietnamese man in the advance from small-scale production to socialism, we must recognize the capitalist spontaneity of small-scale production but must firmly maintain the dictatorship of the proletariat and lead small-scale production down the path of state capitalism. We must know how to develop upon the strengths while overcoming the weaknesses of the small-scale producer of Vietnam. Of importance is the need to concern ourselves with their interests while intensifying our educational efforts in order to lead them to socialism.

FOOTNOTES

1. Speech by Truong Chinh at the Cadre Conference to study the draft of the Political Report to be presented at the 6th National Congress of the Party, TAP CHI CONG SAN, No 8-1986.
2. V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works," Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1978, Volume 36, p 6.
3. V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works," Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1978, Volume 43, p 71.

4. V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works," Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1978,
Volume 43, p 376.

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SOME ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS ON THE PROBLEMS OF MAN IN THE ADVANCE FROM SMALL-SCALE PRODUCTION DIRECTLY TO SOCIALISM

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 37-40

[Article by Professor Tuong Lai]

[Text] As has been pointed out by our party, advancing from small-scale production directly to socialism without experiencing the stage of capitalist development is "a process of comprehensive, continuous, profound and thorough revolutionary change."(1)

In the final analysis, the achievements that we have recorded as well as our shortcomings, weaknesses and temporary setbacks in the various socio-economic fields in recent years are due to man. With each day that passes we gain a clearer understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of Vietnamese man in the face of the challenges of socialist construction in the economic, cultural and social fields. Avoiding the truth or being pessimistic and wavering in the face of the confusion and disorder in the economy and society are not the attitude of the communist. In each and every field of life, things must be examined from the perspective of their origin. Thus, "the origin of man is man himself."(2)

In my remarks about man, while I will discuss his ethical qualities, I would like mainly to discuss his practical skills. Marx called production forces the result of the practical skills of man and also pointed out that these skills are determined by living conditions, by the level of development of production forces that has been achieved and by pre-existing social forms. These skills are not created by production forces but handed down by the preceding generation.

In the advance from small-scale production directly to socialism, that is, from a traditional society to the high form of modern socialism, traditional Vietnamese man faces truly stern challenges. Traditional society has equipped man with very little and inadequately prepared him for modern society. Of course, socialism must never sever tradition. Rather, it must carry on, must refine and enhance the essence of tradition and raise tradition to a new and higher level.

Tradition is not the natural sediment of the river of history. Rather, history is always a chain of temporary stages in endless development on an increasingly high level. As things that are handed down from one generation to the next, traditional values are selected, carried on and developed upon by the persons of each age. That is, traditional values are only adopted as values when the social conditions of the new stage of history fully support the existence of these values, when these values continue to meet the needs of the movement and development of the new stage. When extolling the fine attributes of traditional Vietnamese man and seeing the strengths that must be tapped and built upon with a view toward meeting the demands of the new stage of the revolution, we cannot fail to see the weaknesses and limitations of traditional man. Because, the material-social constants that created these fine traditional values were also the origin of the weaknesses and deficiencies of man, the maker and the product of history.

In the advance from a society of small-scale production to a society of large-scale production, large-scale socialist production at that, Vietnamese man of the period of transition is terribly torn between the ways of traditional society and the strong attraction of modern society. If tradition is the affirmation of that which already exists in practical as well as psychological terms, then tradition has an innate familiarity and power because of its stability. Therefore, that which already exists easily creates in man a state of balance, at least in the psychological sense. This is a formidable and strong force that pulls at man and prevents him from forward progress, from moving forward to the new. In particular, over thousands of years of history, that which existed in traditional society with its small-scale, backward production became a mode of production characteristics of the East. In those thousands of years, scientific and technical changes in production were rare. The plow of the Ly period is still widely used in the fields of the Red River and Ma River Deltas in the mid-20th century. Prior to the August Revolution in 1945, Vietnamese society had not experienced any social revolution in the true sense of the word nor had it experienced a true ideological revolution in order to adopt new thinking, adopt a new way of life.

Having not experienced capitalist development, Vietnamese society has not seen the emergence of a bourgeoisie, which, to exist, must constantly revolutionize production tools, that is, revolutionize the whole of social relations. For the same reason, traditional Vietnamese society never witnessed the constant upheaval in production or the continuous convulsions that characterized the bourgeois age. The agricultural economy of the small, self-contained and subsistent village, which was incapable of bringing about the transition to commodity production, created a self-contained system that is resistant to penetration by the new factors. As a result, the conservatism and stagnation in social production with its associated inertia and stagnation in many fields of social activity have persisted right into the middle of this century.

Especially deserving of attention is that small-scale production society is fertile ground for Confucianist thinking, the vestiges of which in the spiritual life of society are serious and harmful. In all fairness, this philosophy has not been clearly or definitely established as one that must be resolutely criticized and eradicated in the ideological and cultural revolution. It is a philosophy which advocates a return to the past. Under

it, all economic, political and social rule and standard and controlled by the household and the model is the family, but extended in scope. Here, ethics are of foremost importance while ability and intellect are viewed as unimportant, and these ethics are nothing more than behavioral ethics aimed at maintaining proper relations, at upholding the principles upon which society is organized--love, modesty and always being on the best of terms with others.

In the comfort of his "village with its own customs and way of life," where "plowing and planting are the life of the farmer," the attitude of "liking agriculture, disdaining trade" still predominates. The small-scale producer detests "living a life of travelling from one place to the next with no permanent home," even when there is a need for trade and commerce, a need to "live near a market first, near a river second." The attitude "everybody stays in his own backyard" prevents the small-scale producer from changing and reaching out to places far away and stifles desires for the personal liberation needed to engage oneself in new activities, to stimulate and develop creative abilities. He is easily satisfied with that which already exists and eager to compromise. He is reluctant to "stir things up" and is afraid that, if he does, "one thing will lead to another." He consoles himself with the thinking that he is not a person who "looks for trouble" and advocates a policy of "some things are better left unsaid." This way of earning a living and these kinds of behavior easily create in the small-scale producer the thinking "what doesn't get done today, gets done tomorrow," encourages the attitude that "only those gifted from birth succeed" and extols the philosophy "experience is the best teacher," which is alien to the bold adoption of things that are new. This way of thinking can only lead to empiricism, not to theory and laws. Once experience is extolled, "the 70 year old must ask the 71 year old" and it is only natural to "enjoy the privileges of old age." The "hierarchy of age" is the product of backward agricultural standards. The knowledge passed on to enrich subsequent generations is nothing more than the sum total of the experiences gained over time. There are never any sudden changes or leaps forward in this knowledge. It can be said that our "conservatism and stagnation," our "backwardness in learning theory and applying laws..."(3) in the recent past have been the product of small-scale, feudal, backward production.

Taking a harsh look at the man of small-scale production society and the pervasive influence of Confucianist thinking reflects a truly practical attitude and a sense of responsibility in the face of the urgent need to change our perception and adopt new thinking, most importantly economic thinking. Of course, we are talking here about a single person, not about man, in general, and are examining this particular person from the economic and social perspectives. However, we must recognize one fact, namely, that under certain conditions, economic factors apparently do not play the role as the main catalyst of social change. Rather, non-economic factors play an important role in the development of society. At these times, the role of the human factor is even more pronounced and becomes the number one force behind economic and social change. However, man is not detached from the conditions under which he lives. He always has been and always will be a product of circumstances. Therefore, man--the master of the process of society's advance from small-scale production directly to socialism without experiencing the stage of capitalist development--inevitably bears the deep imprint of the

unique development of Vietnam's history. The development of socio-economic forms is a natural process. We cannot skip or use decrees to cancel these natural stages of development. Rather, we can only shorten these stages. We can only bypass the spontaneity in the process of creating large-scale production, spontaneity engendered by capitalism in order to create the material backbone of large-scale production, but we do need this material backbone. The age in which we live has laid the groundwork for us to bypass the spontaneity for which the price paid was meandering stages of development that lasted for hundreds of years, years filled with bloodshed and tears of the laboring masses, and consciously create this material backbone by means of socialist industrialization. This also means that we can never and must not skip the stage of development from small-scale production to large-scale production. We can only shorten and "alleviate the birth pains" of history by bypassing the crimes of capitalism and following a straight path, one that complies with the natural logic of the process of development of socio-economic forms by means of consciously creating large-scale, socialist production.

Consciously means that as a result of knowing the laws of natural development of history, man can chart his course in a manner consistent with these laws and take the initiative in stimulating the development of laws. Therefore, it is even more necessary for us to seriously and alertly examine the price that must be paid for shortening the course of history, necessary to avoid subjective, impetuous thinking and the desire to skip necessary stages and disregard for objective laws. As the subject of a stage of history filled with the changes that accompany a fundamental turning point, it is even more necessary that the Vietnamese man of today courageously take a look at his weaknesses in order to rid himself of the old, move ahead to the new and catch up to the common tide of our times.

The new man who is forming in the process of the natural development of history must consciously make himself new with each day that passes in his practical activities.

FOOTNOTES

1. The resolution of the 4th Congress, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1977, p 18.
2. Marx-Engels: "Selected Works," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1981, Volume I, p 25.
3. The Political Report of the Party Central Committee at the 6th Congress, TAP CHI CONG SAN, No 1-1987.

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THE NEEDS AND ACTIVISM OF MAN

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 40-44

[Article by Khong Doan Hoi]

[Text] To successfully meet our overall target in the remaining years of the initial stage, the resolution of the 6th Congress stressed the need to "formulate and organize the implementation of social policies in a practical and effective way." This is a new aspect of the economic thinking that is the antithesis of the simplistic economic thinking of past years because "giving light attention to social policy is giving light attention to the human factor in the cause of building socialism and defending the fatherland (resolution of the 6th Party Plenum).

Never before has the issue of the human factor been raised in such a serious or urgent manner as it is being raised at this time, a time when a process of adopting a new approach in every field, a process of reform has begun, the essence of which--as described by M.S. Gorbachev--is to create the conditions for everyone to feel that he is the master of the country (see NHAN DAN Newspaper, 27 October 1986). In other words, it is the process of developing each potential of man.

Gradually defining the role of the human factor in the cause of revolution in our country today, especially in economic construction, is a matter of major importance. Of even more pressing importance in view of the many difficulties posed by the socio-economic situation is that if we do not activate the human factor, we cannot move our country's economy beyond the enormous, prolonged difficulties being faced today. Because, according to Marx, the development of the production of each individual is the true wealth of each society and history is nothing more than the activities conducted by man in pursuit of his objectives. In the final analysis, the activities of man, his dynamism, skills and work habits, his attitude toward technology, materials and equipment and his relations with his colleagues and superiors are the factors that determine the success or failure of work, be the job large or small.

To activate the human factor, we must give consideration to the laws, trends and contradictions that exist in developing and tapping the social activism of man and combine this with the entire mechanism that exists for increasing the socio-political activism of the citizen. The activation of the human factor

is the result of the combination of economic, political, social and other measures.

In economic management, activating the human factor means making an impact upon the laborer and developing the economic activism of the laborer so that he can achieve the economic targets that have been established on the basis of his consciousness, initiative and creativity in social labor and achieve higher efficiency in his work.

The economic activism of the laborer is expressed not in words, but in deeds, in practical actions. However, to reach activism in production, business and support work, man must go through a process that begins with recognizing social and natural circumstances and extends to material and cultural needs, needs recognized in the forms of interest, goals, aspirations, desires...and to the development of a motive, before deciding to act. Action is the realization of objectives, the satisfaction of needs. The main factor of behavior is needs.

Consequently, an optimum economic management mechanism is one that makes a strong impact upon the laborer so that his attitude and actions are consistent with the demands of society, the collective.

Marxism-Leninism considers the needs of man to be the central, primary factor that combines within each person objective decisions and subjective decisions. Conscious needs lead to the establishment of conscious goals that directly guide the actions of man. While we cannot give light attention to the important role of the influence of ideology upon the behavior of man, the broad masses are only won over by theories that reflect the needs of the masses. A need is the combination of the subjective and objective, of leading and being led, of managing and being managed. The existence of needs gives man the positive attitude of searching for ways to satisfy these needs.

Therefore, motivating man and activating the human factor are no different than giving attention to the interests and needs of man and searching for ways to satisfy these needs. However, we cannot give light attention to or fail to combine this effort with non-material incentives.

In recent years, has there been something new in our approach to the laborer, in society's attitude toward the position and importance of the laborer in society and social development, toward the achievements of the laborer in life and toward the requirements and needs of the laborer? The approach itself is not new. What is new is that it has taken many years, many successes and failures, even crises, for us to recognize the very simply truth that if the needs of man are not the reason why he engages in production, what other reason is there? How can the human factor be activated if life is becoming more difficult with each passing day and real wages are steadily declining?

This being our approach, the questions that arise are why has our management mechanism failed to vigorously develop the human factor and what can be done to activate this factor?

In general, we know what the answers to these questions are. However, it is necessary to conduct a more detailed analysis to find ways to solve problems within and outside the economic management mechanism (defined here in the narrow sense).

As regards internal factors, the resolution of the 8th Plenum of the 5th Party Central Committee clearly pointed out the obstacles we face. Here, I would only like to address two problems. First, the revamping of the management apparatus for the purpose of implementing the new management mechanism must be carried out quickly, the quicker the better. However, our implementation of specific measures to overcome the obstacles being faced cannot be impetuous or hasty. The recent solutions applied to the problems of prices, wages and money was one such experience. Secondly, the revamping of the management apparatus together with economic measures, policies and so forth must thoroughly reflect the spirit of encouraging the expansion and development of production and trade.

External factors are first and primarily the system of strategic economic decisions, which consists of strategic economic targets and measures in the nature of a stage.

In its most general form, the main economic need is expressed as the needs of society and the satisfaction of material needs in each specific stage of history.

If satisfying the needs of society is our goal, the development of production is only a means for achieving this goal. We should not consider satisfying needs as part of the consumption category and then consider developing production to be our first target.

Needs will not have the effect of vigorously activating the human factor if these needs are not quantified. The purpose of production, of developing production is not to meet needs that are abstract or utopian. When needs are not concretized in numbers, the structure of the economy is disrupted, efforts to activate the human factor lack direction and focus and, in the end, needs cannot be satisfied, targets cannot be met.

The experience of the fraternal countries is worth examining.

The German Socialist Unity Party has reached the conclusion that raising the standard of living by only 3 percent would have virtually no effect by way of raising social labor productivity. This also means that this increase would not have a strong impact upon the economic activism of the laborer.

The experience of other countries also shows that not every increase in the satisfaction of needs further activates the human factor. Because, it is first necessary to determine whether the need in question is rational. On the other hand, it is also necessary to determine whether or not satisfying this need will exceed the capabilities of the country's economy and whether or not this need will continue to grow. If the standard of living is raised to a high level but then stops rising (not to mention if it declines), serious consequences will result. Therefore, the policy arrived at by the German

Socialist Unity Party is that this problem must be solved in such a way that the laborer feels that his life is being steadily improved.

Although these experiences might differ, they do share one similarity: the quantification of essential needs.

We do not have yet have a system that quantifies targets in a way that is scientifically based, is based on the economy. Admittedly, developing such a system is a difficult task, exceedingly difficult for us because we do not have a full grasp of our potentials. However, this is a task that cannot be avoided. Moreover, it is a task that must be performed first, is the passport to each economic activity. It is also where one begins when meeting a list of demands. We cannot keep living with the thinking that we can "design a building as it is being constructed." With this thinking, how can anything be constructed efficiently?

The specificity of targets must be closely tied to these targets being realistic and representing a stage.

For targets to be realistic, they must be consistent with requirements and capabilities under each specific set of historical conditions. This is the historical-specific character of targets, of the satisfaction of needs. Economic targets cannot be based on subjective aspirations. We are in the initial stage of the period of transition. These targets can only be to stabilize every aspect of the socio-economic situation and begin to carry out the formation of capital from within the national economy to the degree necessary to expand industrialization.

Estimates of how much time will be needed to conclude a stage should not take the place of the norms that must be exceeded. Carrying out the formation of capital from within the national economy is the target that must be met in order to shift to the next stage. Stabilizing the situation and balancing production and consumption are the norms that must be exceeded.

Thus, in our opinion, the economic target that must be met in the initial stage is to achieve the formation of capital from within the national economy. That is, a certain percentage of national income must be surplus product, or, necessary work time on a society-wide basis must decrease for a number of years first.

The state of our economy is one of serious imbalance between revenues and expenditures, between production and consumption. Although the standard of living of our country's laboring people is still low, we must realize that we are consuming far in excess of what we produce, that is, we still have not completely solved the problem of producing the necessary product on a society-wide scale. Solving this problem requires time and demands that we divide the initial stage into smaller stages, namely, the 5-year plans and, corresponding to these plans, the periods in between congresses. Each congress must, in a specific order of priority, set the task of meeting one portion of the target. At present, the most important objective is to stabilize the socio-economic situation. The economy can only "take off" after it has achieved "balance."

Economic targets are the determining factor in activating the human factor. However, without appropriate economic measures, the role of targets, regardless of how specific or realistic they might be, is nothing more than a potential role.

In view of the above mentioned economic targets of the initial stage, the production sector that must be given priority today and for the foreseeable future, is agriculture, not heavy industry, regardless of how reasonable this might seem. Not giving priority to the development of heavy industry does not mean not building heavy industrial enterprises. Building heavy industry must first and primarily be considered an element of the structure of agricultural production, which is the front of foremost importance and the prerequisite to continuity in development. We should not think that because we have sources of external aid we can develop heavy industry independent of domestic economic capabilities. Under certain economic conditions, building heavy industry in this way absorbs a rather large amount of materials, labor and money that should be used in a more practical way. Building many enterprises does not reduce the difficulties of the economy in every situation.

When agriculture is considered the front of foremost importance, there is no reason for farmers (especially those in areas that produce grain and agricultural products for exportation), handicraftsmen and the laborers within small industry, who are the persons who have the most direct ties to agricultural production, not to be considered the first persons whose activism must be tapped by every possible method. That is, priority must be given to creating the conditions for these laborers to strongly develop production and produce many products and goods. Priority must be given to satisfying their needs. Otherwise, it will not be possible to improve the standard of living of the other segments of the population, including the working class. The standard of living of cadres, manual workers, civil servants and the armed forces today is the mirror image of the needs that can be met of farmers and the policies adopted to satisfy their needs. Grain and food products come from agriculture.

In summary, needs are the basic factor stimulating the economic activism of the laborer. Giving attention to satisfying the needs of the laborer is the measure of fundamental importance in activating the human factor. Needs are always specific and practical. Therefore, targets must also always be specific and practical and must be met in a specific order of priority. Only in this way can the human factor be vigorously tapped.

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VIETNAMESE MAN AND THE DISCIPLINE OF MANAGING ECONOMY AND SOCIETY IN ACCORDANCE WITH LAWS

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 44-48

[Article by Phan Hien]

[Text] The Vietnamese possess fine traditions. Through the process of glorious revolution, they have forged dependable skills and sterling qualities. They are ardently patriotic. They detest oppression and exploitation. They are brave and tenacious and have fought with determination to win victory over each enemy aggressor. They are ready to sacrifice everything for independence and freedom. They unite with, assist and care for one another, particularly in times of difficulties, in times of natural disasters and enemy attacks. They are diligent workers who love socialism and possess the noble international spirit. They respect that which is right and love justice and social fairness. All these ethical values and fine national traditions of the Vietnamese are being carried on by our generation today and strengthened for future generations.

However, the Vietnamese, as a result of being under the influence of small-scale production for many generations, also exhibit many weaknesses from the standpoint of their consciousness, psychology, style, habits, ways of earning a living and lifestyle. These weaknesses, coupled with the influences of other kinds of non-proletarian thinking, have created enormous inertia and resistance to change in the process of transforming and abolishing the old and building the new of socialism, particularly in this initial stage, when the economy still consists of many different segments and complex changes are occurring in the socio-economic situation. Among the working class, among farmers, socialist intellectuals and the armed forces are many persons who are struggling to build upon their fine qualities and improve themselves in many fields so that they can contribute more to society and become the masters of the country. However, during the past several years, some working people, due to their lack of political, ideological and ethical conviction, have become degenerate and deviant and taken a negative path into speculation, black marketing, embezzlement... Ethical values cultivated through painstaking effort are eroding. Because we have been lax with regard to socialist transformation and the management of the economy for some time now, the number of private merchants has risen sharply and their unorganized activities have had an adverse effect upon the market and prices. Criminals and other

violators of the law have intensified their activities and taken for themselves a considerable portion of the property of the state and people, thus causing major harm to production, the standard of living and the right of collective ownership of the laboring people. They unlawfully receive a significant percentage of national income and have contempt for state law and social justice. Generally speaking, changes have occurred in the mood of society that are not good and this mood is easily affected in a negative way by economic difficulties and the enemy's wide-ranging sabotage.

In such a complex economic and social situation, deeply and thoroughly researching and analyzing the human factor in Vietnam on the basis of science and practice truly is not a simply task. Carefully analyzing the human factor from the perspective of many fields of science, of many sectors of state management is of important theoretical and practical significance in charting our course, setting targets and adopting measures for tapping the human factor in the current stage of the revolution.

Here, allow me to focus on two questions: why has the human factor not been appropriately tapped in the management of the economy and society by laws? And, what measures must be taken to mold new men and women who live a disciplined life and work for socialism in our country?

I. Some Reasons Why Our Efforts To Tap the Human Factor in Managing the Economy and Society by Laws Have Been Thwarted

Man cannot live apart from society, cannot exist outside social relations. As Marx said: "In the social production of their life, human beings enter into certain, necessary relations that are not dependent upon their desires--production relations. These relations are consistent with the level of development of material production forces. All these production relations combine to form the economic structure of society, that is, the real base upon which a legal and political superstructure is built and corresponding to this real base are certain definite forms of social consciousness."⁽¹⁾ Man is the embodiment of social relations. The essence of man is revealed in these social relations. It is only through his behavior and actions within these objective social relations that the essence of man can be correctly evaluated and the human factor is clearly seen in each relation. Analysis can show in which social relations and when the farmer is both a genuine laborer and a small merchant in the true sense of the word or to some lesser extent. Farmers engage in speculation and small-scale trade not only because of economic reasons, but also because of their psychology, political perceptions and thinking and their level of knowledge of culture and the law and partly because the current regulatory mechanism of the law is not rational. For example, when they receive convertible goods from the state by lawful means and these goods are not truly needed, farmers are compelled to sell them on the free market. Or, when they do not receive materials and fertilizer for production on time, farmers are compelled to buy these items on the free market at prices that are constantly changing. Thus, in addition to other causes, there are legal causes. These are due to the fact that the regulatory mechanism and the implementation of the law are not closely coordinated and cause the motives, consciousness and psychology of the small merchant to develop among farmers.

Clearly, whether consciously or unconsciously, human beings must participate in certain social relations, the framework, scope, extent, directions and requirements of the behavior required within which are regulated and stipulated by the law. Under socialism, there are no social relations that are not closely tied to upholding and respecting the authority and interests of others. The framework of socialist relations is the sum total of the political, economic, social, ideological, ethical, legal and other principles and rules which guarantee that everyone works in accordance with his ability and is remunerated in accordance with the labor performed, which closely link authority and interests to obligations and responsibility to society and the collective, which combine, in a way that is well balanced, the interests of society and the interests of the collective with the interests of the individual laborer and which implement the principles "one for all, all for one" and everything by and for the people.

When fulfilling his social role, when exercising his authority and fulfilling his obligations in social relations, man, in general, and each person, in particular, is better able to transform himself, forge the consciousness of being his own master and managing his own affairs, stimulate the socialization of the individual and tap the potential positive factors within himself. On the other hand, socialist relations, which include legal relations that are constantly being improved, play an increasingly positive role in molding and developing the character of the new, socialist man and woman. To mold the new man and woman who possess discipline and live the new way of life, it is essential that the law be constantly improved.

From the recent realities of the management of the economy and society by laws, we can see several major factors that have been and are continuing to thwart our efforts to tap the human factor.

1. Our widespread small-scale production with its decentralized and fragmented way of working and its laborers with their deeply entrenched, small-scale, private ownership mentality together with the acute shortages and imbalances on the economic front are one factor.

2. The slowness with which we have adopted new political thinking, new economic thinking and new legal thinking consistent with the new situation and circumstances among managers and the persons being managed is another factor. For example, because the political thinking of more than a few economic management cadres is incorrect, it has given rise to a lax attitude in socialist transformation, the thinking of business for business sake and the pursuit of profit, the separation of economic issues from social issues and emphasis on the interests of production while giving light attention to the interests of the laborer, which have led to a relaxation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and our efforts to carry out socialist transformation.

The economic thinking associated with the bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies style of management and with the "formula" approach has also led to the thinking of relying upon the upper level, of waiting for a subsidy, to conservative, stagnant thinking and to the practice of operating at any cost without needing to calculate economic efficiency or give attention to human and social issues in economic management and the management of production and

business. The slowness with which we have adopted new legal thinking has also been a significant impediment to our efforts to develop the human factor. There is still the widely held view that the law has nothing to do with politics, the economy and social issues. There are still many persons who do not see the need for laws in managing the economy and society, do not see the role and practical impact of the law in stabilizing, restoring wholesomeness to and stimulating the development of the economy and society and in protecting the economic gains that have been made. Laws and regulations are still being drafted without knowing how they will be implemented, without taking economic, social and legal consequences into consideration and without conducting investigations or reviewing practice. Also deserving of mention is the fact that our current legal thinking is marked by a lack of strategic, coordinated and systematic views and methods and by a lack of a scientific and practical approach, which has led to confusion and problems in formulating a strategy for building and developing the system of law.

3. The management mechanism based on bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies and the lax discipline and enforcement of state law in many areas and many fields have also impeded our efforts to develop the role of the human factor. The law, particularly economic law, has not been changed to keep pace with the new situation, has not developed in a well coordinated manner, not developed into a system in order to promptly adjust social relations and bring everyone within the necessary scope of law and order. On the other hand, we also lack the dynamic and effective apparatus needed to insure strict enforcement of the law. Crime, corruption and other violations of the law are not being brought to light, investigated, prosecuted and properly punished. The strict but fair nature of the socialist system of law, social justice and social fairness are not plainly evident.

4. We have not made coordinated use of political, economic, administrative, organizational, legal and ideological educational measures in molding the new, socialist man and woman. Effective steps have not been taken to overcome, in a determined and continuous manner, the vestiges of small-scale production and the enormous power of the habits of small-scale production, of the conservatism, stagnation and lack of focus within each type person. Light attention is still being given to teaching ethics, discipline and a wholesome way of life.

Only by correcting the causes mentioned above can we develop the human factor and meet the demands of the new situation and tasks.

II. Measures that Must Be Taken To Mold the New Man and Woman Who Live a Disciplined Life and Work for Socialism

1. Beginning immediately, and for the next several years, we must revamp the management mechanism; build a force of production and business management cadres who are dynamic and disciplined and who work for socialism; and successfully eradicate corruption, speculation and black marketing. These are urgent steps that must be taken in order to gradually stabilize the socio-economic situation. Cadres who unlawfully use property of the state and society to serve their personal interests, cadres who are deviant, degenerate and immoral and cadres who steal, take bribes, conspire with others or use

their position to extort the state and the people must be caught and appropriately punished by the responsible agencies.

The discipline of state management, social justice and social fairness are demanding and will continue to demand that state agencies take determined, consistent and effective actions to insure that socialist law is strictly enforced and is clearly seen as a real force in life. This is a very important prerequisite to tapping the human factor in the present situation.

2. Steadfast and continuous efforts must be made to adopt new thinking, which includes political thinking, economic thinking and legal thinking. Here, in addition to the efforts made in many different areas by each person to achieve a higher cultural standard, achieve a higher level of knowledge and improve their practical work skills, the state, the collective, everyone must assist and encourage these efforts. On the basis of adopting new political, economic and legal thinking, we must improve the subject matter and methods employed in the training of cadres of all types and improve education in order to mold new persons who possess broad knowledge and practical skills.

3. We must accelerate the establishment of the new economic management mechanism and constantly concern ourselves with improving this mechanism. This mechanism must apply the objective economic and social laws of socialism in a manner consistent with the special characteristics of each stage in the period of transition in our country and also appropriately apply the laws of state development and our legal codes in the new situation to insure that economic policy is properly coordinated with social policy and that importance is attached to the human factor in each practical activity of the state and society.

4. We must research and put into place a mechanism that coordinates economic, technical, organizational, legal and ideological factors in the education of the new man and woman and establish a wholesome way of life marked by the rule of socialist law and order. Importance must be attached to widely propagandizing and teaching the law among cadres and the people, especially state management and economic management cadres. At the same time, attention must be given to developing the role of the mass organizations and worker collectives in educating the new man and woman.

By adopting many well coordinated and positive measures and implementing these measures in a planned and goal-oriented manner, we will surely be able to gradually mold the new man and woman who are disciplined and work for the victory of socialism in our country.

FOOTNOTES

1. Marx-Engels: "Selected Works," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1981, Volume II, p 637.

7809

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LET US GIVE ATTENTION TO THE HUMAN FACTOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOUNTAIN REGION

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 49-53

[Article by Professor Dang Nghiem Van]

[Text] In the different socio-political systems, the ruling class always has an interest in the development of a model of the person who is compatible with the system.

In contrast to the exploiting systems, the socialist system is truly interested in man. It gives man the proper position in society and develops the role of the human factor in society. The Political Report of the Central Committee at the 6th Party Congress confirmed this, particularly the section of the report dealing with social policy. However, molding socialists and developing the human factor in socialism are difficult and complex tasks that take many years to perform. These tasks are many times more difficult in our country, which is in the initial stage of the period of transition to socialism, which is bypassing the stage of capitalist development and where the level of development of material-technical bases is still low and the standard of living is still unstable at many places. This demands that each of us make enormous sacrifices and large efforts. We must sacrifice our flesh and blood in fighting the enemies of the people and the nation. In particular, we must work in a selfless, creative and intelligent way to abolish poverty and backwardness, quickly bring ourselves abreast of the times and advance our country to prosperity and power within a society in which there is no exploitation of man by man, in which everyone lives on the basis of his or her own labor and has a worthy position and role. "To build socialism, it is first of all necessary to have socialists."⁽¹⁾ In the initial stage of the period of transition to socialism, socialist man must be a person who is aware of the interests of the class and the nation; who follows in the path of preceding generations; who is willing to make sacrifices and work in a selfless manner with his mind and his hands to gradually move the country, which has suffered the serious consequences of several decades of war and in which the sound of gunfire continues to be heard, into a position of stability; and who dare to go to places where difficulties are being encountered and undertake brand new tasks filled with hardships and complex problems.

The mountain region is where the challenges to today's generation are to be found. Occupying a strategic position that is very important economically, politically and from the standpoint of national defense, the mountain region promises a bright future for those who develop it, for the country. Millions of persons are currently working there at worksites, state farms and forestry sites, in mines, schools and rural areas of the mountains and at remote places where material and cultural necessities are still lacking. Millions of other persons will follow them and make the mountains their new home. But, despite numerous efforts, the party and state have not been able to provide these persons in the vanguard with all the conditions they need and must continue to demand of these persons, these beloved sons and daughters of the fatherland, a high spirit of sacrifice, sterling socialist qualities and the devotion to work for their ideals.

The party, the state and all the people must encourage and support these persons to the maximum degree possible and give them every possible priority. To accomplish this, we must first know who these persons are, know the difficulties they face and know what they need by way of material, cultural and emotional support in order to complete the task assigned them by the fatherland.

Today, when we talk about the persons living in the mountains, we are talking about two different populations: 1) the local population, which consists mainly of the ethnic minorities, the vast majority of whom reside in rural areas and whose social circumstances, although on different rungs in the ladder of history, are clearly at a lower level of development than in the lowlands (all along the Truong Son Mountain Range and in the Central Highlands, there are even vestiges of primitive society); 2) the new persons who have come to the mountains to start new lives, the majority of whom are ethnic Vietnamese from throughout the lowland provinces, to whom the mountains are still very new and unfamiliar and who have experienced many changes in their natural and social surroundings and are compelled to earn their lives in trades not found where they formerly lived.

The population in the mountains today is split into two areas marked by significant differences. From a purely economic perspective, investments have been concentrated in those areas that can be easily developed: lowlying areas along main roads, areas near cities and towns and areas bordering the lowlands and midlands. However, from a social standpoint, the party and state must direct attention to highland areas, remote areas and areas where the population suffers many disadvantages and the economic, social and cultural standards of living lag rather far behind the standards in the lowland areas of the mountains, particularly in the delta regions. It must also be mentioned that these mountain areas were formerly revolutionary base areas and resistance war base areas and now occupy an important position in the defense of our nation.

The responsibility we face with regard to molding the new socialist man and woman in the mountains is truly a heavy responsibility. To begin with, it is necessary to give them the scientific-technical capability required to develop their rich and diverse natural potentials: the forests, industrial crops, minerals, energy and so forth. This development demands a certain level of

education and proficiency in trades that are new and different. Of no less importance is the need to make them aware of the necessity for developing the mountains and cultivate among them a way of life compatible with these new trades, a life lived in cooperation among the fraternal ethnic groups, between the ethnic Vietnamese and the ethnic minorities.

The realities of the past 10 years have proven that true attention must be given to the human factor because this is the factor determining success in the development of the mountains. Otherwise, as has been the case at more than a few places, economic achievements will be limited and the environment will be destroyed. Many complex social questions have arisen and many negative phenomena have occurred that have had a considerable effect upon confidence in the success of socialist construction, upon the qualities and ethics of man, upon the unity between the two different population groups. Clearly, in the recent past, ideological preparations have not been sufficient and light attention has been given to the social factor, to the human factor in plans for development of the mountains.

As regards local citizens, that is, the ethnic minorities, we failed to prepare them, in terms of their thinking, for the shift from war time to peace time. When mobilized to fight to liberate the country, to fight oppression and exploitation, the ethnic minorities readily responded, even though they had to make many sacrifices and endure many hardships, because, by doing so, they were carrying on their forefathers' tradition of defending their villages and struggling against national and class enemies. Therefore, the ethnic minorities placed absolute confidence in the party, in Uncle Ho and made enormous contributions that will be remembered for generations to come. However, now that we have embarked on socialist construction and in the face of the towering difficulties of the initial years, in the face of the compelling need to change everything from the way we earn a living to the way we think, the ethnic minorities are not prepared. They are perplexed by things they cannot explain and passively console themselves with the thinking "let us place confidence in the party and government." But no one has answered their many questions: why is this land, this village the property of all the people; why are the people its masters? Why are the party and state sending persons up from the lowlands to set up state farms, forestry sites and so forth? Why are we not allowed to participate (there is currently a policy on bringing local citizens into state-operated units)? Why are the precious resources of the mountains, its minerals and forest products, being sent to the lowlands? Why is it that state projects built with contributions of our own manpower and money (taxes) do not serve us? Why are our villages still bleak and unlighted even though they now stand beside enterprises, forestry sites and state farms with impressive buildings, electric lighting, etc? With the forests being cut and destroyed, what are citizens who live off the forests supposed to do? Why? Why? These questions keep arising. The answers being given are either not specific or are simple and childish. Therefore, these citizens, generally speaking, have no idea of what socialism is. They do not realize that changing the way they earn their living, the way they live will require that they overcome many difficulties and wage a bitter struggle in order to succeed, just as hardships and sacrifices must be endured to win victory over the enemy.

In the final analysis, the requirement faced in the ideological work directed toward these persons today is how to show them the need to change the way they have been living, the way they have been thinking since ancient times, that is, to make the transition from a life of hardship lived in isolation within individual villages and among one's own ethnic group to a broader way of life lived as part of a society that is nationwide in scope with cooperation among all fraternal ethnic groups in each region of the country. This also entails showing them that productive labor does not only have the purpose of serving the narrow interests of their family or village, but also the purpose of supporting the socio-economic development of the entire country in accordance with a common plan with zoning by territory and sector and that this development also serves the interests of their family and ethnic group. The ethnic minorities must also come to the understanding that they must gradually abandon their small-scale, subsistent production and make the transition to large-scale, socialist production on a nationwide scale.

As regards those citizens who have only recently arrived in the mountains, particularly those who have arrived since 1975, it is necessary to thoroughly resolve their initial difficulties and avoid such simplistic economic thinking as "give them a hoe and send them to a new land area, they'll have a better life and get rich" or "let's redistribute the population and labor to alleviate the overcrowding in the lowlands..." During the past 10 years, many places from which citizens have been leaving to build new economic zones have prepared them poorly, both materially and spiritually. In particular, the cultural and social needs of these persons have not been met. They do not know what they will be doing, do not know who their neighbors will be and do not know who should be going. The places welcoming these persons think that it is sufficient to find them a piece of land on which to live and carry out production. There is still irresponsibility at both ends, at the places sending persons to new economic zones and the places receiving them.

The persons new to the mountains must understand that their responsibility is not only to themselves, but also to the country, that they must join with the fraternal ethnic minorities in working to make the mountains increasingly prosperous and strong while insuring unity among ethnic groups. They are carrying on the tradition of their forefathers, who went into the forests, built bases and endured hardships to resist the French and the Americans. Now, it is they who are going to places where the difficulties and hardships are no less, bringing the light of the party, of science and technology to an unfamiliar, poor and backward region of the fatherland. They must be persons who know how to make concessions and who cooperate with the fraternal ethnic minorities, not persons who take more for themselves, who take the advantages for themselves. They must be persons who are needed in the mountains, needed by the ethnic minorities, just as their forefathers were accepted by our fellow countrymen in the mountains as trail blazers and guides, as indispensable forces in the liberation of the mountains, of the fatherland. They must be persons who are conscious of guiding the ethnic minorities in how to earn their living and live in the socialist way so that the ethnic minorities gradually leave their poverty and ignorance behind and find their way to civilization.

Thus, the new persons going to the mountains must be selected from among the outstanding persons of the localities sending citizens to this region. They must be party cadres, education, public health and cultural cadres, scientific-technical cadres and skilled manual workers. They are also persons who will be working in new land areas in sectors and trades that are still unfamiliar to the ethnic minorities, persons who will be clearing difficult, remote areas. These persons must be given full attention and the responsibility assigned to them must be more fully and clearly defined. They are the vanguard militants of the party going to open land and bring prosperity to the fatherland, bring light to areas of the fatherland that are still backward.

These persons must be given material and non-material incentives and encouragement. They must be equipped with the necessary knowledge, not only knowledge of science and technology, but also knowledge of the geography and the people at the places to which they are going. Su That Publishing House's plan to publish books of general information to assist those persons going to the six northern border provinces or to the Truong Son Mountain Range and the Central Highlands to fight, work and produce is an encouraging step.

It is necessary to teach these persons the proletarian international spirit, ardent patriotism and a high sense of responsibility.

As regards the two different populations--local citizens and the new persons arriving in the mountains--it is necessary to cultivate among them feeling for one another as the citizens of the same country, as members of the party in power. They must be good neighbors, must join together and make every effort to abolish poverty and backwardness and make the place where they live more prosperous and beautiful with each day that passes. In the face of the tasks of building socialism and the towering difficulties of this initial stage, it is necessary to cultivate among them a spirit of close unity, one at least as close as the spirit displayed by those persons of past years who shared the same trench in the fights against France and the United States. This spirit must be based on everyone consciously exercising ownership, assisting and respecting one another and being determined to make the life of the new persons arriving in the mountains as well as the life of local citizens more prosperous and beautiful. Only in this way can the two different populations trust each other; dare to overcome each obstacle posed by their different languages, customs, habits and ways of life; not be deceived by class enemies; and not give up in the face of initial problems or difficulties posed by their work, their lack of experience or sabotage by the enemy.

Nationwide socialist construction in the initial stage demands generations of persons who are prepared to make sacrifices. Socialist construction in the mountains demands generations of persons who are prepared to make even greater sacrifices. Practical steps must be taken to assist and encourage the vanguard militants of the nation who go to develop the mountains, this region of many potentials but also many hardships and difficulties, in order to bring prosperity to the fatherland. The fatherland demands that socio-economic management cadres devise appropriate policies and measures designed to quickly and steadily bring the mountains to the level of development of the lowlands. Scientific and technical cadres must research ways to introduce scientific and

technical advances in the mountains. Educators must quickly raise academic standards and consider investments in education to be the same as investments in the economy, to be of equal value as investments in the economy, in order to train the intellectuals needed to build the mountain region. Cadres who perform ideological and cultural work--whom I should think have the heaviest responsibility of all--must formulate a strategy for transforming persons aimed at molding socialist men and women of the mountains who possess the virtues and abilities needed to undertake the large tasks assigned to them by the party in the initial stage of the period of transition to socialism. While performing tasks in the mountains, we should give attention to the words of advice spoken by Truong Chinh in a speech in Dac Lac in 1983: "The ideological and cultural revolution among the ethnic minorities has a very strong reciprocal impact upon the production relations revolution and the scientific-technological revolution."(2)

FOOTNOTES

1. Ho Chi Minh: "Tuyen tap," [Selected Works], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1980, Volume II, p 209.
2. Truong Chinh: "Dua nhan dan cac dan toc o Dak-lak tien thang len chu nghia xa hoi," [Directly Advancing the People of the Ethnic Groups in Dac Lac to Socialism], TAP CHI CONG SAN, No 8-1983, p 14.

7809

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THE FAMILY AND THE BUILDING OF A PERSON'S CHARACTER

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 53-56

[Article by Professor Dang Thanh Le]

[Text] The feelings of kinship within the family unit provide a splendid initial base from which a person can enter the broad life of society with its collective feelings, national sentiments, patriotism and proletarian internationalism.

The family unit is a person's first "collective." When born, the infant meets the first person who will care for and nurture him. Then, he meets his father and brothers and sisters. It is within this first unit that a person learns the relationship between the individual and the community. Feudal consciousness and bourgeois consciousness only cultivate concern for oneself, one on the basis of family interests and the other on the basis of the interests associated with individualism. However, in ancient times, there emerged among the laboring people genuine feelings for other persons, feelings reflecting beautiful humanist ethical values, feelings between wife and husband, between parents and children, among brothers and sisters and among the other members of the family.

Socialist society has inherited these traditional feelings and developed them into socialist concern for the welfare of others. Within the family, the deep and affectionate love of the mother, the wise and quite love of the father and the affection, part kinship, part friendship, of brothers and sisters for one another make a person feel that he is living in an atmosphere of beautiful love, teach a person concern for others, to share joys and sorrows, happiness and adversity with others. These feelings mark a beautiful beginning and lead to the emergence and development of feelings for one's comrades, for one's collective, for all mankind. Feelings are an indispensable factor in the spiritual life of a person, including when this person enters the life of society, enters a relationship with a large collective.

Feelings are also a spiritual force of enormous value, one that has long been verified by psychologists, are an inspirational force, an instructional force. Genuine feelings lead to desires for happiness and to a beautiful view of those who one loves. There have been cases in which deep love for their parents has caused children to follow the course taken by their parents and,

subsequently, through increased awareness and heightened perception, continue to perfect their character from the standpoint of ambitions and ideals.

Thus, the feelings of kinship within the family are one of the spiritual values capable of helping to mold the character of the new socialist man and woman (from the perspective of cultivating revolutionary sentiments).

In the course of the struggle to combat the paternalism of the feudal system and the individualism of bourgeois consciousness and mold the sentiments of a socialist community, there was a time when we gave light attention to the educational impact of feelings within the family upon the character of the new, socialist man and woman. Neither school curricula nor the plans of the mass organizations for educational work among the young generation as well as their parents have sufficiently addressed this matter and, as a result, not many scientific research projects concerning this subject have been conducted.

One's emotional life, one's personal life are a dynamic and complex reality. The bases of the new, socialist economy in our country have yet to be fully developed. The concepts and ethical values associated with the "microcosm" of the new society also have not been completely "defined." On the other hand, bourgeois individualism and the oppressive, narrowminded and stern mentality of paternalism have left their imprint upon customs, habits and the way persons think, even upon their emotions, thus causing family feelings within our socialist country today to display certain abnormalities which we must study and with which we must deal.

1. The absence of love in some families today: it is a very large misfortune for a child to live in a family atmosphere in which the love associated with kinship is lacking, in which the father is cruel and brutal, the mother is cold and selfish, another child is insolent and wicked... It is within such a small collective that a person learns the "truth": "People cannot be friends." Because, the only things felt in such families are the whip of the father, the cursing of the mother and jealousy among brothers and sisters.

The causes of this non-proletarian behavior are very complex. Sometimes, for one reason or another, the father or mother takes to drinking or gambling or has an extra-marital affair. Or, due to selfishness on the part of the father (or mother), the parent is only concerned with his life, to the point of "putting himself first." There are also times when it is due to a misunderstanding of educational methods, to views such as "spare the rod and spoil the child" held by an arbitrary and paternalistic father... But it is clear that the beating of children, frequently very brutally to the point of disabling the child, and cursing at children, sometimes to the point of humiliating them--are facts in some families. And, displaying the same attitude that it does toward other negative phenomena, the collective often times does not intervene, either because it is not interested or feels that it is powerless to act.

The law now prohibits the humiliation of persons, particularly teenagers and children. The beating of children must be stopped, must be dealt with in a harsh manner. The administration plays a role here, but should not the mass organizations adopt strict regulations and inspect their implementation by

means of ideological activities, rewards and penalties and disciplinary action as they do regarding the population issue?

2. "Sentimentalism" is the complete opposite of the above. It is widespread. Here, the child is loved and pampered by his parents. They "hold his hand" each step of the way, which includes worrying about the child when he is a college student, worrying about a subject he does not pass, or buying him an expensive set of clothing or piece of jewelry he wants.

We reject the relations of the feudal family which are devoid of genuine, natural love. However, at a time when socialist life liberates man and brings to man happiness within genuine feelings of kinship, it is easy for us to arrive at sentimentalism, which is not guided by clear reasoning. This tendency can lead to the following harmful consequences:

--Most importantly, the child becomes a person who relies upon others, who lacks the quality of being a master and lacks the dynamism of a socialist. Today, in many cadre families, the parents try to create a life that allows all their children to enjoy everything that is available. These small citizens feel that providing them with their material needs, such as food, clothing, a bicycle, paper and pens, notebooks and so forth, is the duty of their parents and society. They even think that their education, their success...are supposed to be a smooth path prepared by someone else.

--From early in his childhood, the child perceives himself as the "center of the universe." It is here that selfishness is born. Everyone else is "secondary" compared to him. Outside the family, everyone is a stranger. The love of parents is frequently even more foreign to persons whose souls are filled with this kind of selfishness.

A person who is selfish, a person who relies upon others often lacks the spirit and the ability to be the master of his fate. This is the kind of non-socialist citizen of the future whom we will train if we do not quickly recognize this problem. Our present shortcomings could lead to a model person who combines the reactionary and negative character of the selfish and cruel bourgeois model of man with the "mandarin's son, mandarin's daughter" model of the feudal aristocracy, to a person who lives on the labor of others.

This sentimentalism will pose a major obstacle within the family when a situation requiring ideological struggle is faced and this "indulgence of rightism" in family life has led to many serious tragedies, such as the erosion of the good qualities of a husband or wife, the corruption of a child...

From within the everyday life of the family, a life in which the members of the family have very close and diverse relations with one another, such as organizing everyday life and helping one another organize the social life of each person--the life and fate relationships--arises the sense of obligation of each member toward the family and toward the other members of the family.

The proletarian view demands a sense of obligation on the part of family members toward one another, a sense of obligation based on socialist ideals (struggling for the life and happiness of all society, which includes the happiness of each person).

Each person participates in the common life of the family to the extent possible in view of his or her age and abilities. It is from this that the relationship among family members in terms of their obligations toward one another arises. It is this relationship that becomes the basic spiritual foundation of family life. This relationship is truly a microcosm of the socialist concern for the welfare of others.

From the above, we see that genuine, beautiful feelings lead to a sense of responsibility to contribute to building and developing the spiritual as well as the material life of the family. This sense of responsibility toward the life and the development of the happiness of the family will enable the family to retain its position as the first school molding a person's character. This is also a prerequisite to molding, cultivating and developing the concept of serving society, from childhood into one's mature years.

The socialist family has the ability to contribute to cultivating in persons a noble *raison d'être* and the spirit of creativity in labor. The person of a wholesome age is a person whose desire is to affirm who he is to society. A youth who is about to enter life has an even greater desire to affirm to society his talent and ability to contribute. Genuine pride in one's ability (one's usefulness to society) will help a person strengthen and develop his socialist ideals. This is also a direction to be taken in the work of cultivating the qualities of the new socialist man and woman.

Some other shortcomings and mistakes that must be rectified include the irresponsible attitude of parents toward the education of their children. Our powerlessness in the face of this problem of parents, which is due to many complex reasons, is a serious issue. However, in the final analysis, this problem is the responsibility of parents. Some cadres, because they are too busy with their work, leave this matter up to the school and the mass organizations. Sometimes, this problem is explained away by adopting the views "we do what we can to help" or "everything in its own time." Actually, this does not display a sense of democracy, but a lack of responsibility toward society, toward one's children and even toward one's own happiness and life.

The failure of parents to set examples from the standpoint of their *raison d'être*, ideals and socialist consciousness is a serious problem. At present, the struggle between the two paths is a bitter struggle, and when this struggle emerges in family life, it assumes even more diverse and unexpected forms.

The ideals of socialist life are being attacked by the kinds of thinking associated with individualism in the attitude of adults toward their work and even in the attitude of the young generation toward their studies. This is not a simply social phenomenon that can be easily analyzed and rectified. Nevertheless, we must be determined to rectify it, the sooner the better, if

we want to form within the family the beautiful rudiments of the socialist character.

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ADOPTING NEW THINKING: THE METHODOLOGICAL ASPECT

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 57-62, 68

[Article by Thai Ninh]

[Text] In our country today, adopting new thinking is a pressing demand of life. Although this is a matter of pressing importance, we cannot be impetuous. Rather, the adoption of new thinking will require a long process of struggle in every field. The purpose of adopting new thinking is not just to rectify mistakes nor is it only a demand of leadership levels. Rather, it is an objective requirement of life, of the process of scientific perception.

The reflection of the objective world in the mind of man is not as automatic as the reflection of something in a mirror but occurs through a person's thought process. This is the process of translating objective reality into subjective images within a person's mind. This process of reflection is the process of keeping pace with objective reality, the process of revising one's thinking in order to raise one's perception of objective things from one level to another and on toward infinity. This process is also the process of supplementing one's perception with new aspects and new features of the objective world. Moreover, life does not stand still. The objective world is not static. It is always moving and developing. This movement and development usually occur more rapidly than they are perceived. In other words, a person's perception usually lags behind, usually does not keep pace with this movement and development. Therefore, one requirement tantamount to a principle is the need to revise one's thinking so that one's perception steadily increases and is compatible with the movement and development of objective reality. The difficulty we face in adopting new thinking is where to begin. How should we revise our thinking?

1. To adopt new thinking, it is first of all necessary to conduct a full-scale review and compare old perceptions to new perceptions from the standpoint of each specific argument, view and concept in order to adopt a clear-cut attitude concerning what must be negated and what must be affirmed. This review and comparison must take two directions:

First, we must compare theory and perception in order to bring to light mistakes in old concepts as well as discover the new, which many persons do not yet recognize. The purpose of discovering the new is to make our

perception of the truth deeper and more comprehensive. These new things need not be new discoveries in the field of theory, but need only to bring our thinking closer to the truth. Because, perceiving the truth, according to Lenin, is a process. Due to faulty perception, because of perception of the truth has been incomplete or simplistic, we have failed to achieve the desired results in many areas of practical activity. For example, because we have not fully realized the complex and long nature of the period of transition, particularly the initial stage of this period, and because we have subscribed to simplistic, rigid concepts of industrialization, socialist transformation, the existence of the different segments of the economy and the principle of distribution in accordance with labor, we have made mistakes in mapping out strategy in recent years, such as being impetuous and subjective and practicing voluntarism. The observations of a highly scientific nature and profound practical significance concerning this matter that were made in the Political Report of the Party Central Committee at the 6th Congress provide the basis for revising our thinking in order to acquire new perceptions previously lacking in many persons.

Secondly, comparisons must be made to practical activities, to the requirements of the revolution, in order to evaluate the qualities and ethics of cadres and party members and expose the serious harm caused by conservatism and stagnation, by the mindset of localism, by the habit of doing things in a disorganized and disorderly way, by the decline in the will to fight and degeneration and deviancy among some cadres and party members. Mistakes related to qualities and ethics have "undermined" scientific concepts, distorted information and caused black and white, right and wrong to be confused at one place or another. At some times and places, value standards have been turned upside-down. Flatterers and opportunists are respected. Loyal persons are the targets of many unjust accusations or are "avoided like the plague." Mistakes and shortcomings are concealed. Achievements are exaggerated. Falsified reports have become commonplace. Therefore, the adoption of new thinking in the field of ethics and qualities must be closely tied to organizational and cadre work, to efforts to educate and forge the new man. In this field, there are many concepts that must be revised, particularly concepts that deal with values. Many outmoded and backward feudal and bourgeois concepts have crept into these value standards. Is the character Doan Xoa (in the play "Summer at Sea") a typical reflection of the value standards of cadres and party members in the current stage of the revolution? Does this character's concept of the good need to be changed? This kind of good is clearly not compatible with the new stage of the revolution. As a result, it is essential that the value standards of the cadre be changed. The good is a concept of an historical and class nature. In the adoption of new thinking, we must also adopt a new concept of "good." We must make comparisons and determine which factors of the "good" are no longer suitable and need to be abolished and which factors are still suitable but need to be augmented so that value standards are consistent with the requirements of the revolution, with the views of the working class.

Labor is glorious. In practice, however, some persons' concept of labor has not changed and is still old in some respects. This is evident in their disdain for manual labor, their attitude that working for a cooperative is not as important as working for a state enterprise, their disdain for private

labor... These concepts lead to aberrant values. Some cadres do not want their child to marry the child of an artisan or the child of a member of a handicraft cooperative.

Production forces, as everyone knows, are the factor determining the development of production. However, among production forces, many persons only give their attention to means of production, to saving raw materials and building materials. They give little attention to the laborer. The slogan "love your vehicle as you do your own child, value gasoline as though it were your own blood" is a correct slogan but not one enterprise has adopted a slogan to teach and encourage everyone to care for the worker, even though the party has adopted the general slogan: "Everything for the happiness of the people." Tens of thousands of dollars can be spent on machinery and equipment but no one dares spend a little money to provide for the regular transportation of workers to mines or to buy equipment to improve working conditions. When fuel is in short supply, every possible step is taken to obtain enough. But when workers are experiencing many difficulties in their everyday lives, appropriate and constant concern is not shown for them.

In the field of inter-personal relations, a proper form of behavior and attitude are very important. However, more important, more decisive is that the values of charity and concern for others pervade all contacts with others, all behavior. In recent years, little attention has been given to these values. Teaching children good manners, such as being polite and saying hello, is necessary. But many persons give little attention to teaching their children about conscience, responsibility, love, charity and concern for others in their relations with others. As a result, situations have occurred in which persons have ignored victims of accidents, have not been the least bit moved by heart-rending scenes, etc. The values of charity and concern for others must be expressed not only in sentiments, in ethics, but also in actions based on ethics, in the activities of the new man in each field of social life. At many places, some elements are abusing their position or authority or assuming unto themselves the right to do things that are illegal and cruel. These persons are seriously eroding both traditional and new ethical values. Many methods and measures must be employed to rid ourselves of these parasites, to block the hands of these saboteurs of values. Lenin demanded that "such persons be harshly punished."⁽¹⁾

Thus, the adoption of new thinking demands that we augment our perception of the essence of things with new realizations and raise this perception to a higher level on the basis of reviewing practical activities, on the basis of the new achievements of science. We must correct and adjust our thinking to be consistent with scientific concepts and the laws that reflect objective reality.

2. To adopt new thinking, it is important that the direction of thinking be correctly set and that scientific methods of thinking be applied.

Setting the direction of thinking is an essential requirement in the activity that is thinking and is also the first step in the thought process. Generalizing the directions taken in thinking in the history of man's development, we see that every age or major period in history has been marked,

in terms of thinking, by one dominant direction. The results of the thought process have depended, to a large extent, upon these directions. Thinking that takes the correct direction is a force that stimulates the development of society's spiritual culture. Conversely, thinking that takes the wrong direction impedes and retards the development of society. In ancient times, the thinking of mankind was directed toward nature. As a result of this correct direction, this age was able to draw a general picture of nature. In the Middle Ages, the thinking of mankind was directed by the ruling feudal class toward gods and saints, towards life in heaven. Mankind thus fell into the long medieval night and the development of man's intellect was impeded in many fields for nearly a millennium. During the Renaissance, the direction of thinking was restored to the correct path of ancient times. In this period, thinking was directed toward life in this world, toward the real life of man with its genuine values. This correct direction brought about a very important turning point in the history of man's thinking. Many progressive humanist theorists were born during this period. As a result of this direction, this period produced "giants," produced persons of great genius, such as Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci and others. However, in the preceding ages, the direction of thinking was set in a spontaneous manner in response to the demands of the class struggle within a society of antagonistic classes. In today's age, an age in which the scientific-technological revolution in the world is developing rapidly and strongly like a growing typhoon, an age in which socialism and communism have been and are becoming the conscience and intellect of the times, this direction must be set in a highly conscious and scientific manner. The more correct and scientific the direction of thinking is, the greater is its power to assemble scientific research forces and the better are the conditions that exist for tapping the intelligence of the masses. Clearly recognizing the important role of setting this direction, our party, at its 6th Congress, appealed to the entire party and all the people to adopt new thinking, most importantly, economic thinking.

This correct direction of thinking will be a strong force stimulating the development of the creativity of all levels and sectors as well as cadres, party members and the masses in the implementation of the resolution of the 6th Party Congress.

Setting the correct direction of thinking is necessary and very important. This, however, is not enough. To insure that thinking is oriented in the chosen direction, it is also necessary to employ a scientific method of thinking. Frequently, thinking does not produce results only because the method of thinking employed was not scientific.

The only correct method of thinking, the most scientific method of thinking is the material dialectic. To employ this method, thinking must be objective in terms of how things are perceived, must respect objective reality, that is, respect reality independent of the will and subjective desires of a person, a group of persons or a large collective. Scientific leadership demands that objective reality be respected when examining and evaluating the situation, when deciding economic and social policies and measures.

Respecting objective reality means defining things as they exist. A thing is what it is, not something else. This demands that we build socialism on the

ground that is the realities of our country. The living soul of Marxism is examining each specific situation in detail. Therefore, we must take the dialectical view when setting the line on socialist construction. This was Engels requirement of scientific socialism. Engels criticized the austere and regimented socialism of Specter (which banned all forms of enjoyment) and criticized the thinking that socialism is a manifestation of absolute truth, of perfect reason and that it is only necessary for man to discover socialism in order to conquer the world through its strength. Engels demanded that Marxists not make socialism eclectic. Eclectic socialism is a mixture of all sorts of exceedingly diverse philosophies. Engels considered this eclectic socialism to be "like a stone eroded by the water of a stream."(2)

There was a time when we tried to make the realities of Vietnam fit the ideal model of socialism instead of adapting socialism to the realities of Vietnam, the most important of which are small-scale production and the serious consequences of the war, in order to plan suitable steps to take down the path of socialist construction.

The law of socialist industrialization is the law that pervades the entire period of transition. However, applying this law requires that strict conditions be met in terms of material and technical bases and entails a long process. The process of capitalist industrialization occurred in three stages (simple cooperation, the manual labor worksite and large-scale mechanization) and took several hundred years. Although many favorable conditions exist in our country for the more rapid development of socialist industrialization, it cannot be carried out in the space of a few 5-year plans. Rather, we must plan on it taking many decades to complete. We must map out logical stages of development and set targets that are realistic, not illusory. Depending upon the stage, a different priority must be given to the development of heavy industry. Socialist industrialization characterized by voluntarism and disregard for laws, by being impetuous and skipping stages leads to failure, to losses. It retards the movement of laws and, as a result, impedes the development of the economy and society.

There are many reasons for the shortcomings mentioned above. Some relate to our level of knowledge, some to objective conditions and circumstances and some to the level of development of our thinking. From a philosophical standpoint, one of the causes of the above shortcomings has to do with the method of thinking employed. In the words of Engels this cause "being mired" in metaphysical thinking.(3) In the face of this situation, Engels stated that it is necessary, more necessary than ever before, to return to the material dialectic and place socialism upon a piece of ground that is real in order to examine relationships and "reciprocal effects in which not one thing is not moving and changing, in which everything is moving and evolving, is appearing and disappearing."(4)

The adoption of new thinking in this field demands that we adhere to the dialectic, that we grasp the living soul of Marxism and make our concepts of socialism more scientific, more specific and more practical in the process of applying these concepts to the realities of Vietnam's revolution in each of its stages. The adoption of new thinking demands that we "soften" our concepts regarding socialism and not turn them into rigid, dry dogma. The

adoption of new thinking also demands that there be dialectical consistency between that which we negate and that which we affirm. The negation of the old must be a dialectical negation. It must enable us to incorporate positive factors that are necessary for development while affirming the new, the developing, affirming those things that will have vitality in the future. To us today, the adoption of new thinking demands, from the methodological standpoint, that we negate thinking which is metaphysical, mechanical, dogmatic and always the same. And, we must affirm dialectical thinking, thinking that complies with the laws of socialism. From the perspective of ideological viewpoints, we must overcome petty bourgeois thinking in practical activities that is both "leftist" and rightist.

3. Adopting new thinking is difficult. It requires that the following prerequisites be met:

First, we must comply with the laws of thinking. Therefore, it is necessary to know what thinking is, to adhere to the laws of thinking in the fields of psychology, logic (formal logic and dialectical logic), linguistics and cybernetics. Perception is not introjection of the kind associated with A-ve-na-ri-uyt [Vietnamese phonetics]. Nor is it the concept of the absolute associated with Hegel. It is even further from the of the immortal soul associated with Pla-tong [Vietnamese phonetics]. Thinking is the highest form of reflection. It is reflection on a high level of abstraction and generalization, reflection that is highly indirect. It is spiritual production. It is an activity capable of producing forecasts. Therefore, when talking about adopting new thinking, we are talking about changing our thinking to be consistent with things as they are in order to correctly reflect objective reality and correctly forecast the direction its development will take. Secondly, we must possess a certain amount of knowledge of the natural as well as the social sciences. That is, only when a person's thinking has reached a certain level of abstraction is it possible for him to adopt new thinking and to think about the need to adopt the new. Without meeting this prerequisite, it is impossible to adopt new thinking. Lenin said: "The largest and worst mistake a Marxist can make is to think that the millions of persons who make up the masses...can only escape this darkness via the path of pure Marxist education."(5)

Thirdly, we must grasp the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, particularly the fundamentals of the dialectic. "Certain punishment awaits those who reject the dialectic."(6)

Fourthly, we must possess the revolutionary-offensive spirit and fight conservatism and stagnation. We must have practical experience and know the experience of history. These kinds of experience are also the basis of theoretical thinking. Engels pointed out: "The theoretical thinking of every age, including the theoretical thinking of our age, is a product of history...and this is something of important significance, even in the application of thinking in the field of experience."(7) Without the necessary practical experience, it is difficult to have the conditions needed to adopt new thinking. In our country in recent years, new thinking has sprung from many sources. One important source has been the creative experience gained by the laboring people in their practical activities.

These prerequisites augment and have a reciprocal impact upon one another. They create the capability for adopting new thinking and turning the potentials of thinking into the development of theory. The purpose of developing theory is to adopt new thinking. The purpose of adopting new thinking is to develop theory, to perfect our methods of thinking and acting so that persons are wiser, are more intelligent, more dynamic and more creative in their practical activities. Engels stressed: "A nation which seeks to stand at the pinnacle of science must engage in theoretical thinking."(8) Conversely, if a nation is ignorant, it cannot adopt new thinking and might, as Marx pointed out, also cause many tragedies."(9)

The problem of adopting new thinking cannot be solved through revolutionary zeal nor can it be resolved by "bravely charging forward" as we do in combat or by means of military measures, such as launching a "campaign" or "breaching the line."

The adoption of new thinking is a process of developing the power of thinking. The intelligence, dynamism, creativity and sensitivity of thinking must be manifested in the process of adopting new thinking. This is a scientific problem. It must, therefore, be solved by means of science, by means of combined, well coordinated measures aimed at continuously raising the standard of thinking and improving the ability to thinking of each person, most importantly the key cadres of the various levels and sectors.

The adoption of new thinking must be the combined result of objective conditions and subjective factors, of revolutionary reasoning and revolutionary spirit. Lenin pointed out: "Marxism differs from all other socialist theories in that it skillfully combines complete scientific clearheadedness in the analysis of the objective situation and objective evolution with very clear recognition of the impact of the revolutionary energy, revolutionary creativity and revolutionary initiative of the masses."(10)

FOOTNOTES

1. V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works," Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, Volume 38, p 125.
2. F. Engels: "Anti-Duhring," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1971, p 31.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p 32.
5. V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works," Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1978, Volume 45, p 31.
6. F. Engels: "The Dialectic of Nature," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1983, p 101.
7. Ibid., p 75.

8. Ibid., p 72.

9. K. Marx: "Collected Works," Russian version, Volume I, p 112.

10. V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works," Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979,
Volume 16, p 29.

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NEW REQUIREMENTS IN THE MOBILIZATION OF WORKERS

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 63-68

[Article by Dan Tam]

[Text] Mobilizing workers is always a strategic task of the party. Today, the working class of our country has the weighty and glorious responsibility of taking the lead in successfully performing our two strategic tasks: building socialism and defending the socialist fatherland. These are the central political tasks of the working class and also the primary goals in the party's mobilization of workers.

In recent years, because industrial production has been weak and failed to meet the pressing needs of the country, because many newly constructed industrial units have failed to make an impact, because many negative phenomena have emerged within the ranks of workers and so forth, there has been a less than full understanding within the party and society of the role of the working class and the mobilization of workers. The methods employed in the mobilization of workers have not been improved. The mobilization of workers has not met the demands of revolutionary tasks. Many problems directly related to the role of the working class and the worker movement have not been solved.

For example, in the reorganization and restructuring of the industrial sectors, we have not done a good job of implementing the policy on strengthening the dominant role played by the state-operated economy, which is the base determining the leadership role of the working class on the economic front. In building the structure of the economy, we have not clearly defined the role that industry plays within the different types of industrial-agricultural structures on a nationwide scale or on the municipal level and in the agro-industrial structure within the district.

In the improvement of economic management, determined steps have not been taken to implement the production and business independence of basic economic units. Importance has not been attached to the human factor in productive labor. We have not relied upon the working class nor mobilized workers to participate in revamping the economic management mechanism. Management agencies and cadres still think that this is the work of "managers," is a matter of broadening the authority of the director. They do not realize the

important significance of increasing the authority of the collectives of laborers at basic units.

In the distribution of the social product, the working class has not been considered "the foremost production force of society"(Lenin). As a result, we have not adopted effective measures designed to insure an appropriate income for manual workers and civil servants.(+)

The working class is the base and foundation of the dictatorship of the proletariat. However, party organizations and state agencies have not been fulfilling their responsibilities in building the ranks of the working class. Our country's working class, besides its revolutionary character, which is basic, is still weak in many respects, weak in terms of its size and structure as well as its quality. Importance has not been attached to training and developing the corps of workers and technical cadres in many sectors and localities. At present, more than 50 percent of the workers in our country have not received training at trade training schools or classes. Meanwhile, more than a few workers who have completed their training do not have a job or have been given jobs in sectors and trades for which they were not trained. There is still a shortage of technical workers and leading workers. The health of many workers has declined.

As for workers, they do not have a deep appreciation of their historic role and mission and have yet to fully manifest their vanguard role. There are even some misconceptions and negative phenomena among workers that are not consistent with the revolutionary character of the working class.

The 6th National Congress of our party set the guidelines, tasks, and goals of our country's revolution during the remaining years of the initial stage of the period of transition. The congress also established the guidelines, requirements and themes concerning the mobilization of the masses in the new stage, stressing the need to adopt new themes and methods in the mobilization of the masses, including the mobilization of workers.

The main goals in the mobilization of workers in the current stage are to successfully implement economic and social development plans, raise the standard of living of workers and build a working class that is solid and strong to insure that it is fully capable of undertaking the large and glorious tasks of the socialist revolution.

In the years ahead, the guidelines and themes concerning the mobilization of workers are to uphold the right of collective ownership of the working class by every means possible and to organize and encourage manual workers and civil servants to take the lead in the effort to implement the resolution of the 6th Party Congress. Specifically, we must meet the socio-economic targets and the targets of the three major programs (grain-food products, consumer goods and export goods) that were set by the 6th Party Congress. In particular, we must launch spirited revolutionary movements of the working class on the economic front with the aims of producing many more products for society; truly putting into practice the right of the working class to be the masters in dismantling the management mechanism based on bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies and establishing and implementing the socialist business mechanism; and making

economic plans and the economic management mechanism consistent with economic laws, management principles and the will, aspirations and interests of the working class.

To achieve these goals and implement the guidelines and themes described above, the following measures must be taken:

1. Intensifying Efforts To Teach and Cultivate the Stand and Views of the Working Class among Cadres and Party Members

This is a basic as well as urgent measure aimed at bringing about strong changes in the mobilization of workers and making a direct impact upon the activities of party and state agencies and social organizations.

All cadres and party members must be given a correct understanding of the revolutionary character, the historic mission and the decisive role of the working class in socialist construction and socialist industrialization. At the same time, the various strata of the people, including the working class, must also be educated in these matters.

This is a very difficult and long job, one which requires patience and constant effort and the adoption of many effective measures. Because, the majority of our country's cadres and party members do not come from a worker background. In addition, they have been working for many years under the management mechanism based on bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies. Therefore, they do not have a full appreciation of the stand of the working class or the party's viewpoint concerning the masses. The ethical qualities of more than a few cadres and party members have deteriorated. More than a few cadres and party members have violated the party's code of discipline and the laws of the state. As a result, the prestige of the party has declined and this has seriously harmed the relations between the party and the masses. Many party members, particularly party members in the countryside, do not understand that they must be members of the working class, that they must, moreover, be the most progressive elements of the working class.

Therefore, together with teaching Marxist-Leninist theory and the lines and policies of the party, it is necessary to give party members a better understanding of the views and stand of the working class and wage a relentless struggle against thoughts and actions that are contrary to the working class stand and views of the party. At the same time, a greater effort must be made to bring outstanding workers into the party in order to increase the size of the worker component of the party. We must be determined to expel from the party members who have degenerated or become corrupt in order to quickly improve the quality of the corps of party members.

2. Organizing and Encouraging Manual Workers and Civil Servants To Successfully Perform Socio-Economic Tasks

In the current stage, the main theme of the emulation movement of the working class is to achieve specific targets on productivity, quality and efficiency in production and business on the basis of displaying initiative, making technological improvements, applying technological advances and rationalizing

production. We must stop the practice of issuing empty appeals for emulation that lack specific targets, norms and themes and eliminate the formal, bureaucratic and administrative approach to emulation of the kind seen when upper level cadres assign "emulation" pledges to the masses instead of allowing them to discuss and make their own pledges. To accomplish this, we must hold good worker-civil servant conferences, adopt good collective contracts and organize good emulation registration drives so that these forms of activity truly reflect the will, the revolutionary enthusiasm and the vital interests of the manual workers and laborers at each basic unit and put into practice their rights concerning democratic activities and emulation movements at basic units.

Through emulation movements, we must teach and heighten the sense of collectivism, the new attitude toward work and labor discipline, must cultivate and raise the occupational standards of the worker and laborer. We must implement the principle of distribution in accordance with labor well, appropriately remunerate those persons who make contributions and record achievements and combine the three interests in a way that is well balanced in order for emulation movements to be well established and develop. Emulation is a conscious action of the masses, "is the communist method employed to build socialism, build communism"(Lenin). Therefore, emulation must be organized and encouraged by the trade union under the leadership of the party and the conditions and prerequisites needed for emulation (plans, supplies, raw materials and so forth) must be created by state agencies in order for results to be achieved.

3. Giving Attention To Building the Ranks of the Working Class So That They Are Solid and Strong and Equal to the Historic Tasks of the Working Class

The Political Report of the Party Central Committee at our party's 6th Congress pointed out: "The party and state must adopt policies designed to build the ranks of the working class... The party must adopt specific measures aimed at raising the socialist awareness and the overall knowledge of the working class so that it is worthy of its position as the class in the vanguard of the revolution. At the same time, the party must concern itself with the material and cultural life of the working class and create the conditions needed for it to complete its historic mission."(1) The building of the working class encompasses very many fields:

Politically, it is necessary to heighten the class awareness of workers and make them conscious of the historic responsibility of their class toward society and the country and conscious of the need to struggle to achieve the ideals of their class, namely, successfully building socialism and fulfilling their international obligation. On the basis of class consciousness, workers will take the lead in successfully implementing economic development plans and gradually bring the economy from small-scale production to large-scale, socialist production, which is the basic and decisive prerequisite to abolishing poverty and backwardness and building a life of comfort and happiness for the people, who include the working class.

Cultivating the new attitude toward work--the socialist attitude--and building stronger labor discipline among workers are a very important and pressing

requirement. Because, at present, there are misconceptions and incorrect attitudes among workers concerning labor, such as disdaining productive labor, avoiding strenuous labor when selecting a sector or trade, being too lazy to work, arriving at work late and leaving early, stealing public property, doing sloppy, careless work, disregarding the law... This situation has caused not only economic losses, but also the erosion of the sense of organization and discipline, which is a fundamental characteristic of the working class. In conjunction with intensifying educational efforts, economic measures must be taken to stop the moral decay taking place among some manual workers and civil servants.

Positive measures must be employed--holding classes and providing on-the-job training at the side of veteran workers--to quickly improve the worker's command of theory and manual skills in order to insure that the worker's grade corresponds to the demands of his work and create the conditions for our workers to be ready to rapidly acclimate themselves to and become the masters of the modern, advanced technical sectors that are and will be emerging in our country.

Specific plans and measures must be formulated for establishing a rational structure among the workers of the different sectors and trades and between workers and technical cadres. The vigorous development of the scientific-technological revolution in the world is demanding that we view the working class in a new way and attach the proper importance to its corps of intellectuals. The times are bringing mental labor and manual labor close together as a result of the universal reality of workers becoming intellectuals and intellectuals becoming workers. Therefore, it would be a mistake for the building of the working class not to encompass the building of the corps of intellectuals. Conversely, the building of the corps of intellectuals cannot be separated from building the working class.

Giving attention to the standard of living of the worker, of the laborer, is the most important factor in insuring the reproduction of labor, in guaranteeing, from the standpoint of material needs and physical fitness, that the laborer fulfills his labor obligation.

The requirements faced concerning the standard of living of the laborer are very diverse. The standard of living of society is dependent upon the country's level of economic development and is related to certain socio-historic factors. Our country recently emerged from a long and bitter war. The needs of the worker and laborer are very pressing in every area of life. Most pressing, however, is the need for the party and state to take effective measures to provide full employment and insure that the laborer works with high productivity and efficiency and earns a high income for himself and his family. At the same time, the management of prices and the market must be improved and essential consumer goods must be made available in order to maintain the real wages of workers and laborers.

The realities of recent years have shown that establishing the public ownership of the means of production is the most important prerequisite to restoring to the laborer the interests that are his. However, in order for these interests to be guaranteed in practical terms, distribution policies

that are fair and rational must be adopted. We must be determined to put a stop to violations of the interests of the laborer caused by the bureaucracy of state agencies or by the degeneration, deviation, self-interest and so forth of corrupt cadres and state personnel.

4. Giving the Organizations Within the Proletarian Dictatorship System a New Perception of the Mobilization of Workers and Heightening Their Responsibility in This Work

The leadership role of the working class and its role as the main force in the revolution can only be developed when the mobilization of workers is carried out successfully. It is only on this basis that the leadership role of the party and the management effectiveness of the state can be increased.

As the political representative of the working class, the party considers the mobilization of workers to be a matter of vital importance in the cause of revolution and in building and strengthening the party. The working class can only be strong when it possesses communist awareness. The party can only fulfill its leadership role when it establishes and maintains close ties to the working class. President Ho said: "Without being led by the party, the class cannot make revolution. Without the support of the working class, the party can do nothing." (2)

Under the guidelines set by the 6th Party Congress, party committees must periodically adopt specific policies concerning the mobilization of workers, adopt resolutions on the mobilization of workers and lead and coordinate the activities of the administration and trade unions in the mobilization of workers. Through party activities and the worker movement, party committees must intensify their effort to teach and cultivate the stands and views of the working class among cadres and party members, do more to develop the party among workers and train cadres who come from the background of a worker. These are very important factors in heightening the class nature of the party.

As the representative of the power of the working class, the state has the responsibility of codifying and putting into the form of plans the positions and policies of the state concerning the mobilization of workers. In the immediate future, plans must be adopted for training, building and developing the ranks of the working class, plans that go hand in hand with socio-economic development strategy and plans. We must supplement and promptly promulgate new regulations concerning the rights of workers and trade unions in the adoption of a new economic management mechanism. We must fully and promptly implement labor, wage, bonus and collective welfare policies and principles. More must be done to teach to state cadres the concept of serving the class and serving the people. Persons who violate the political democratic rights and the interests of the laborer must be harshly punished. One matter of very important significance is the need to quickly increase the number of cadres who come from the background of a worker at the agencies of power as well as the executive agencies of the different sectors and levels. And, work regulations must be adopted to insure that these cadres truly fulfill the role and make the impact they are supposed to make.

The trade union is the staff officer of the party, is the closest partner of the state in implementing the line on the mobilization of workers. The trade union must adopt a new way of thinking and a new approach to its work. It must take the stand of the working class, truly live among the masses and represent the thinking, aspirations and legitimate interests of the laborer to the party and state. It must rid itself of passive thinking, wage a determined struggle against violations of the interests of the state and laborer and truly be the school forging the working class, the school of management of the working class.

The cause and the future of the working class are also the cause and the future of the young generation and women. Moreover, the ideals of the working class--communist ideals--will be achieved by the young forces of our country, beginning with this generation. The liberation of women is a cause that is linked to the cause of the working class. Therefore, the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union and the Women's Union as well as the other social organizations have the responsibility of doing more to teach the views and ideals of the working class to their members. They also must work closely with the trade union to successfully implement the position of the party concerning the mobilization of workers so that the strength of the unity of the working class is increased and this class is worthy of being the class in the vanguard of the revolution in the new period.

FOOTNOTES

- + In 1985, the relationship among the different strata of the people in out country in terms of real wages was as follows: workers: 1, farmers: 1.5, and private merchants: 10-15.
- 1. The Political Report of the Party Central Committee at the 6th Congress, TAP CHI CONG SAN, No 1-1987, p 69.
- 2. Ho Chi Minh: "Giai cap cong nhan Viet nam va cong doan," [Vietnam's Working Class and the Trade Union], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1985, p 11.

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THE OVERSEAS, EXPORT-IMPORT ECONOMY IN THE INITIAL STAGE OF THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION TO SOCIALISM

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 69-74

[Article by Luu Van Dat]

[Text] In the present age, the overseas economy is very important to every country and plays a major role in the development of the country regardless of how high the country's levels of economic and scientific-technological development are, regardless of how rich it is in natural resources and regardless of how large its domestic market is. As an objective necessity arising from the differences among countries in terms of natural conditions, especially geography, and in terms of their levels of economic and scientific-technological development, the overseas economy has become an indispensable factor in the process of social reproduction and is, to varying degrees depending upon the characteristics and conditions of each country, a factor of decisive significance in the rate of economic construction and development. Therefore, developing foreign trade and expanding overseas economic relations are truly objective demands of our times.

Our party has confirmed the special importance of overseas economic work on many different occasions.

The Political Report of the Party Central Committee at the 6th Congress stated: "The task of stabilizing and developing the economy in the initial stage as well as whether our country's scientific-technological development and socialist industrialization are carried out rapidly or slowly depend, to an important degree, upon expanding and increasing the returns from the overseas economy."

Our country has embarked on the period of socialist construction at a low level of economic development. Our agriculture is backward and our industry is underdeveloped. Small-scale production and manual labor are still widespread. Labor productivity is low and national income is small. Meanwhile, the population is growing and developing at a rapid rate. Production is not meeting consumer demands at the necessary level and the formation of capital is not being carried out from within the economy.

The line on socialist construction and our pressing socio-economic tasks demand that our country carry out socialist industrialization, that it advance directly from small-scale production to large-scale, socialist production within a specific period of history and that we import a large quantity of equipment, machinery, materials and essential goods.

Under these conditions, it is impossible to rely solely upon domestic factors. Rather, overseas economic relations must be used to build and develop the economy, carry out the scientific-technological revolution, correct the imbalances of the economy and stabilize and improve the standard of living.

This is totally consistent with the arguments of Marxism-Leninism concerning the ability of backward countries to advance directly to socialism without experiencing the stage of capitalist development and consistent with the laws of economic construction and development in those socialist countries in which the level of economic development is still low. V.I. Lenin asserted: "With the help of the proletariat in the advanced countries, backward countries can advance to the soviet system and, through certain stages of development, to communism without experiencing the stage of capitalist development." (1)

Clearly, it is only through the overseas economy, through export-import activities that our country can acquire the assistance of the advanced socialist countries and carry out the formation of initial capital for socialism.

On the other hand, it is only through the overseas economy, through export-import activities that our country can combine the strength of the nation with the strength of our times on the basis of the international division of labor and socialist economic ties and on the basis of combining industry with agriculture, combining industry, agriculture and export-import activities within a single structure with a view toward effectively developing the country's potentials and making the best possible use of the benefits to be derived from the international division of labor and socialist economic ties.

Part II

Expanding and increasing the returns from the overseas economy are one of the five major policies and measures set forth by the 6th Congress.

As the totality of overseas economic and scientific-technical relations, the overseas economy encompasses all economic and scientific-technical relations with foreign countries and international organizations. These economic and scientific-technical relations are, generally speaking, manifested and materialized in the exportation and importation of goods (tangible) and services (invisible).

In overseas economic relations, both at present and over the long-range, foreign trade, or the exchange of goods and services among countries through commerce, which includes exports and imports, is of foremost importance to our country as well as every other country. K. Marx pointed out that foreign trade was one of the factors stimulating the collapse of the feudal mode of production, the formation of capitalism, the development of commodity

production and the worldwide advance from small-scale to large-scale commodity production.

The resolution of the Political Bureau of the 5th Party Central Committee dated 17 July 1984 stated: "The purpose of exports is to import other goods, the purposes of imports are to develop the economy, carry out socialist industrialization and, at the same time, directly expand our exports."

Examined from the perspective of the relationship between exports and imports and the relationship between exports-imports and the socialist economy, imports are the objective of foreign trade activities and exports are the means by which foreign trade is developed. Thus, imports are a very important factor in guaranteeing the completion of the state plan. Exports are a factor of decisive significance in increasing the sources of foreign currency with which to pay for necessary imports and expand trade with foreign countries.

Under these conditions, exports are truly of strategic significance in economic construction and development, are the prerequisite to socialist industrialization and are the leading edge of the economy today.

The Political Report of the Party Central Committee at the 6th Congress stated: "The most important aspect of all overseas economic work is to accelerate our exports in order to meet import needs." Therefore, the exports program was considered by the 6th Congress to be one of the three major economic programs in the current stage, a program which our entire party and all our people must focus their efforts on and successfully carry out. Only by completing the exports program can we insure the success of the grain-food products program and the consumer goods program. The results of these two programs depend, to a very important degree, upon the results of the exports program.

Under the conditions of an undeveloped commodity economy in which the scale of exports is still small and the sources of export goods are small and decentralized, the key issue of decisive significance in completing the exports program is to create a new export capability, create increasingly large sources of exports and a stable market on the basis of a structure of exports that meets the requirements of the overseas markets and is, at the same time, consistent with the conditions of our country's economy--an optimum and highly efficient structure.

Export goods are marketed on overseas markets. The structure of export goods depends not only upon domestic production capabilities, but mainly upon the demands of overseas markets, on the tastes of our customers. We can only sell that which other persons need to buy, not just what we have to sell.

This requires that we select appropriate goods to export and that we study and make forecasts concerning international markets. In the years ahead, because the structure of the economy is in the process of being adjusted and will not undergo fundamental changes, our main exports will continue to be agricultural products, forest products, handicraft art products and industrial consumer goods.

With the prices of basic products and agricultural products on world markets declining or standing still and the gap between the prices of basic products and agricultural products and the prices of finished industrial goods widening, to increase the returns from and the interest in our export goods, it is essential that we improve the structure of exports in the direction of increasing the exportation of processed goods and reducing the percentage of exports that are crude and raw products while increasing the percentage made up by finished industrial goods, including high technology products (machinery, electronics, chemicals and so forth). In conjunction with improving the structure of exports, it is also necessary to improve the quality of exports to insure that our country's goods can compete on international markets and to increase our foreign currency revenues.

The improvement of the structure of exports demands that we restructure the economy, shifting from a subsistent economy to a commodity economy and closely tying agricultural and industrial production to the world markets. This also demands that we adjust the structure of investments along lines that increase the investments in exports and mobilize domestic and foreign capital in an appropriate manner commensurate with the requirements of the exports program.

The creation of new export capacity will require rather large capital investments, a considerable amount of time and the thorough utilization of existing export capacity.

To increase the sources of export goods, it is necessary, in addition to the state-operated segment of the economy, to organize and utilize the collective, household and private segments of the economy and gain their active participation in the production and development of exports so that we can meet the requirements of markets.

To mobilize these segments of the economy (including idle capital) to contribute to the development of exports, it is necessary to generate true interest in the production of export goods on the part of producers and basic production units by satisfactorily guaranteeing the interests of producers, closely tying the interests related to production to the interests related to exports and maintaining balance among the interests of the state, the basic production unit and the producer.

In conjunction with increasing the volume and value of export goods, it is necessary to strengthen the infrastructure supporting export activities (warehouses, storage yards, piers, domestic and overseas means of transportation...) in a manner commensurate with the volume of goods being exported.

In the present stage, the conditions do not exist for rapidly increasing our exports. Exports are only providing for 40 percent of our import needs. To quickly increase our foreign currency revenues, we must strongly develop the various forms of intangible exports and services that generate foreign currency revenues (tourism, ship repair, aviation services, maritime services, the exportation of labor, overseas Vietnamese services, etc.).

When organized well, intangible exports can become a significant and increasingly important source of foreign currency revenues.

The 6th Congress of the Party decided: "We must do a good job of organizing the sending of labor and specialists overseas to work under contracts of many different kinds. Attention must be given to using general contractors on construction projects and in the various services. We must quickly take advantage of the conditions that the country has in its favor for opening tourism by means of domestic capital and through cooperation with foreign countries. We must develop international transportation and ship and aircraft supply services." In the initial stage, regardless of how great an effort we make to develop internal factors, to develop internal potentials, exports cannot meet the large need for the imports needed to support economic construction and development. Consequently, a trade deficit is unavoidable. Therefore, in conjunction with increasing our exports so that we can carry out socialist construction at a time when capital is not being formed from within the economy, we must seek international assistance from every available source and by every available means, primarily the assistance of the fraternal socialist countries within the framework of the world socialist economic system.

The assistance provided by the fraternal socialist countries, especially the Soviet Union and the other countries within CEMA, must be aimed at bringing about a change of very important significance within our country's production. This assistance must be provided first in the construction and expansion of projects that are of foremost importance to the economy, especially projects within agriculture, the food industry, light industry, the mining industry, engineering, the metals industry, communications-transportation and the production sectors that meet the requirements of the countries within CEMA. This assistance is of special importance and will create the conditions needed to develop our export potentials. This is the prerequisite to carrying out the formation of capital from within the economy, carrying out socialist industrialization and effectively participating in the international division of labor and socialist economic ties.

Therefore, we must make the most effective use possible of the assistance provided by the fraternal socialist countries.

As a developing socialist country, in addition to seeking the assistance of the socialist countries, we can and must seek the assistance of countries outside the socialist system and the assistance of international organizations. The various forms of aid (economic aid, technical aid, non-repayable aid, humanitarian aid, credit and so forth) must be studied and effectively used to meet the needs involved in building and developing the economy and stabilizing and improving the standard of living. Together with developing foreign trade, seeking international aid of every form and expanding our economic cooperation and scientific-technical cooperation are of foremost importance to our country's economy and of foremost importance in implementing the three major economic programs. This is the trend of our times and is a logical step to take to overcome our weaknesses, namely, our lack of capital and technology and our limited organizational and management experience, and to develop the potentials that lie in our arable land and

labor and develop the other resources of the country in a highly efficient manner.

The 6th Party Congress stressed the need to expand our cooperation and diversify the overseas economy, the need to broaden our mutually beneficial, bilateral cooperation with foreign countries. The Political Report of the Party Central Committee at the 6th Congress stated: "Together with expanding our exports and imports and seeking capital in the form of aid and long-term loans, many diverse approaches must be taken to develop our overseas economic relations."

Concerning the various forms of cooperation, the congress asserted: "We must further expand our cooperation in every field with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, from contract production and joint businesses with our friends to direct investments, and must strengthen the cooperation and direct ties in the fields of production and science between economic and scientific-technical organizations of our country and the corresponding organizations of the fraternal countries." These are new and very important policies. They are consistent with the new ties among the CEMA member countries and create many advantages for production enterprises from the standpoint of the overseas economy. Among the various forms mentioned above, joint businesses with foreign countries and direct ties between economic and scientific-technical organizations of our country and the corresponding organizations of the fraternal countries are very important but have yet to be widely applied. Therefore, we must gain experience as we go about this work with a view toward gradually perfecting the new forms of cooperation in a manner consistent with the conditions and level of economic development of the country and each economic sector. Importance must be attached to cooperation in the form of contract production and repayable aid (the foreign country supplying equipment and materials and we making repayment with the products produced).

Through the various forms of cooperation described above, we can import equipment, machinery, supplies and raw materials needed to meet production requirements and acquire stable markets for the products produced.

With a view toward expanding our international cooperation, our party encourages investments in the form of the transfer of technology by foreign countries. At the same time, it maintains that overseas Vietnamese have a role and responsibility in building and developing the country. The Political Report of the Central Committee at the 6th Congress stated: "We must promulgate a policy encouraging foreign countries to invest in our country in many different ways, particularly in those sectors and basic units that require high technology and produce exports. In conjunction with the promulgation of investment laws, policies and measures must be adopted which make it possible for foreigners and overseas Vietnamese to come to our country to start cooperative business ventures.

Importance must be attached to organizing and encouraging overseas Vietnamese to build the country in a variety of ways, which include investments of technology and capital. Importance must also be attached to making use of the ability of overseas Vietnamese to assist us in expanding our cooperative

relations with foreign countries, with corporations and economic organizations overseas."

Part III

The 5th Congress of our party defined the strategic principles and main guidelines in overseas economic work as expanding and strengthening our cooperation in every field with the Soviet Union, developing our cooperation with the other member countries of CEMA within the scope of socialist economic ties and expanding our cooperation in every field and our mutual assistance with Laos and Cambodia while appropriately expanding our economic relations with countries outside the socialist system.

The above guidelines were further concretized at our party's 6th Congress. The Political Report stated: "Our country must participate in the international division of labor, most importantly and primarily by expanding the division of labor and our cooperation in every field with the Soviet Union, Laos and Cambodia, with the other countries in the socialist community. At the same time, we must try to expand our economic and scientific-technical relations with the Third World countries, the developed industrial countries, international organizations and private foreign parties on the basis of the principles of equality and mutual benefit."

In socialist construction, our country has a basic advantage in its favor, namely, the cooperation and assistance of the Soviet Union and the countries of the socialist community, because, the Soviet Union and the fraternal socialist countries have been providing us with heartfelt assistance on an increasingly large scale.

Maintaining close ties with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries is the foundation of our party's overseas economic policy and is a matter tantamount to a law in socialist construction in our country. These close ties to the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries give us a large, dependable and stable market on which we can market the majority of our export goods and from which we can receive the majority of the equipment, materials and essential goods we need. The general program of CEMA to assist and cooperate with Vietnam until the year 2000, the terms of which are preferential, is a major advantage for us in developing overseas economic relations, carrying out industrialization and building a rational economic structure.

While strongly developing our economic relations with the Soviet Union and the other countries of the socialist community, we must make every effort to strengthen our cooperation in every field with Laos and Cambodia by means of practical and effective measures, through mutually beneficial programs consistent with the conditions of each country and on the basis of the principles of strengthening and developing the special relations among the three countries of Indochina and helping one another to build our countries, defend our fatherlands and advance to socialism together.

On the basis of maintaining close ties and cooperating in every field with the Soviet Union and the other countries of the socialist community, with Laos and

Cambodia, we can expand and develop our trade relations, economic cooperation and scientific-technical cooperation with countries outside the socialist system, with international organizations and private foreign parties. In this spirit, it is necessary to promote South-South cooperation and regional cooperation with the countries of Asia-Pacific on the basis of equality, respect for each other's independence and sovereignty and mutual benefit. We also need to strengthen our cooperative relations with the industrial countries on the basis of the policy set forth at the 6th Congress and the regulations on investments and the transfer of technology promulgated by the state.

These are positions that are consistent with the trend of our times.

FOOTNOTES

1. V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1969, Volume 31, p 295.

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UNDERSTANDING THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF THE NEW DIRECTION OF THINKING CHARTED IN
POLITICAL BUREAU RESOLUTION 306 (DRAFT)

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 75-78

[Article by Nguyen Binh]

[Text] The Political Report of the Party Central Committee at the 6th Congress stressed: "We must adopt a new approach in many fields: adopt new thinking, most importantly economic thinking, revamp our organization, revamp the corps of cadres and adopt a new style of leadership and work." This is also the experience that has been gained by our party in guiding the revolution in the recent stages of our history. Only by correctly understanding the law that we must keep abreast of the realities of the revolution and fully comprehending the lines and policies of the party can we successfully implement the resolutions of the party. In this spirit, allow me to express some thoughts concerning a number of the important matters addressed in Resolution 306 (draft) and the position of a management cadre working at a basic unit.

1. Developing the role of the human factor, of the masses in revamping the management mechanism, in general, and in putting into practice the business independence of the basic unit is a fundamental and modern view in socio-economic management. Thoroughly understanding and properly implementing this view in production and business operations will unleash a force that will truly contribute in a very effective way to solving the problems and overcoming the difficulties posed by our country's current socio-economic situation. This thinking pervades many resolutions and documents of our party. Uncle Ho also repeated the well known folk saying:

"Without the people's support, no job, regardless of how easy it might be, can be completed. With the people's support, every job, no matter how difficult it might be, can be completed."

Developing the role of the human factor in production is a modern view in economic management. It was the issue of foremost importance at the party congresses recently held in many fraternal countries. Not only the socialist countries, but the capitalist countries as well have been taking a wide variety of measures to tap the creativity and initiative of man in order to raise labor productivity and increase the output and quality of products. Our

country has an abundance of labor. We, too, must make full use of this advantage and consider it to truly be a strength, a potential. In keeping with the view that we make the people the base, we must place confidence in the locality, in the basic unit. At these places, the laboring masses, the working class are not only the persons who best understand the existing potentials of their unit or locality. They also have all the talent and intelligence needed to develop these potentials. And, it is they who most directly manage and most closely supervise the operations of the enterprise. In his work "On the Grain Tax," Lenin demanded that every effort be made to cultivate and tap the initiative and creativity of the locality and basic unit. He criticized the practices of sitting around and "debating terminology," being concerned only about general matters and drafting useless official documents and directives. Lenin encouraged pilot projects in order to gain experience. His view of what constitutes effective, model activities was: doing something of national significance is more important than holding a position on the central level. In the Political Report presented at the 27th Congress of the CPSU, M.S. Gorbachev stressed: "Very important is the need to stop the meddling and intervention by agencies on the upper level in the lawful affairs of worker collectives and create the conditions for these collectives to develop, on their own, the best ways to implement plans."

Having been maintained for far too long in our country, the mechanism based on bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies has created in the directors and chiefs on the various levels the habit of only issuing orders and not being willing or rarely liking to listen to the opinions of subordinates, particularly contrary opinions. This is the underlying cause of being remote from the masses, of stagnation, of thwarting and sometimes destroying the spirit of initiative of the laboring masses. Determined efforts must be made to eradicate this cause.

2. The matters addressed in this resolution (draft) are broad, pressing and have an impact upon the infrastructure of the country. They are important elements in revamping the economic management mechanism.

As many documents of our party have pointed out: the objectives of each production and business activity are productivity, quality and efficiency. This is also a line of thinking, a principle that must be thoroughly understood. These objectives are also very correct from the standpoint of theory. The goal in revamping the economic management mechanism is none other than guaranteeing socio-economic returns from productive labor. In the final analysis, this is the surplus product, is what Engels said has been and always will be the base of all social, political and mental progress. To insure productivity, quality and efficiency is to comply with the fundamental economic law of socialism, the law that controls each law within the economy of the socialist countries, in general, and our country, in particular. This is also the process of applying, in a skillful and intelligent way, the relationship between centralism and democracy and the relationship between the plan and the market. From the legal standpoint, regulations must be designed to accelerate production and achieve high socio-economic returns. Therefore, they must be applied on a pilot project basis on the basic level. Regulations that are not appropriate or which impede and retard production must be quickly brought to light so that timely steps can be taken to revise them.

Continuing to balance the plan by drawing upon many different sources and capabilities is, as pointed out in the resolution of the party, entirely correct. Viewed in the light of the many serious imbalances that exist today, the purpose of reducing the scope of the central plan is also to insure that the plan can be implemented for primary products--those products that form the backbone of the national economy. The purposes of assigning basic economic units the responsibility of formulating their plan through contracts (including contracts with supply agencies) are to give them the right to make the first decision concerning the make-up of their product line and give them the ability to take the initiative in production in order to accelerate production, create a new balance between supply and demand in society and, in this way, gradually raise the level of planning of the national economy.

The current method of planning does not meet these requirements and does not set clear targets for each product sector. It lacks centralism. As an example, let us examine Hanoi Agricultural Machine Works Number 1. Its task is to manufacture parts and restore old parts for engines and implements used in agriculture. The percentage of agricultural machines as well as the machines within many other sectors of the national economy currently in use in production is low. Many machines are broken. One of the important causes of this situation is the lack of spare parts. Approximately 1,200 tons of parts are needed each year to keep 20,000 tractors in operation in agriculture. However, because it lacks the raw materials and supplies needed to operate at full capacity, the machine works must let out the production of spare parts to other enterprises at the unit price of a material supply unit. There have even been cases in which it has had to contract with the local supply unit to have it return supplies to the central supply unit... This is the result of the recent approach to planning. Viewed from the perspective of all production and supply enterprises nationwide, the waste caused by this disorganization is surely not small. The major portion of the problems, waste and negative phenomena in supply operations in the recent past has been the result of formulating plans in a decentralized fashion that is not based on production, that does not begin with the needs of production. The excess inventories and backlog of many types of spare parts and machines that occurred in many previous years were also the result of a bureaucratic approach to planning divorced from reality.

3. The law of value is the law of commodity production. Dividing the market into different segments of the economy and restricting the circulation of goods are manifestations of a very mechanical way of thinking, manifestations of a lack of understanding of the current state of the economy and the lack of a correct understanding of the law of value. According to Marx, a commodity has value and use value. That is, it embodies a certain quantity of labor and meets a particular need of man. When needs change, the usefulness of these commodities, which is reflected in the relationship between these commodities and the needs of man, also changes. Thus, to realize the value of a commodity, it is not only necessary to keep production costs at a reasonable level, but also necessary to take the needs of society into consideration. Otherwise, it will be difficult or impossible to market the commodity once it has been produced. Consequently, creating the conditions for the director, for enterprises to research the needs of society, of the consumer and select an appropriate product line is a very important factor in achieving higher

efficiency in the production and business of the enterprise. This is the way to raise the business standards of basic units, produce an increasingly rich variety of products for society and quickly solve the country's imbalance between money and goods. The concept "prices acceptable to the customer," which is being used at many basic units and in numerous localities, is confirmed in the resolution (draft) as a concept that is well based. Recognizing and making use of the impact of the law of value under the production conditions that exist in our country today means recognizing the facts mentioned above. The enterprise director must have the authority to do what is necessary to apply this law. After obtaining the materials needed for the production of primary products under the legally binding norms assigned to him by the state, the director must know how and have the authority to select the product line that is most consistent with the needs of society on the basis of his ability and the ability of his enterprise to obtain and process information. Only in this way is it possible to truly discontinue the "supply-delivery" approach that became an integral part of subsidized production and abandon the long-standing practice of imposing norms from above so that producers and basic units become more dynamic. Once delivery obligations have been fulfilled, all revenues from the business operations of the enterprise must remain at the enterprise for it to use in building its capital. Nor should limits be placed on the extent to which these funds can be augmented. This is a new direction, one which will create the conditions for the enterprise to develop. The concept "price differential" in production must soon be clearly defined. The practice of calculating profits on the basis of ceilings must be limited in scope. The enterprise must have financial autonomy based on a positive financial balance to insure that it steadily develops and expands. Taxes, capital and the requirements regarding the turnover rate of capital must be studied at an early date. Enterprises that do not operate efficiently must be disbanded...

4. Final product contracts for worker collectives is a policy that can very clearly define the relationship between the responsibilities and interests of the producer while closely tying production to consumption, that is, the producer to society. This is a modern approach in economic management. We must quickly put this form of contract into use. When the situation surrounding prices, wages and money is complex (and the real wage is very low), piecework contracts do not guarantee the laborer that he will be able to replenish the energies expended in production. This is also the main cause of stagnation in production and rising production costs. Thus, contract wages based on piecework quotas now provide virtually no incentive. An example of this can be found at Hanoi Agricultural Machine Works Number 1. In 1984, it mainly paid piecework contract wages. The average wage for the entire year was more than 500 dong. When the books were balanced at the end of the year, it was found that wage costs (which included only the wages paid in cash, not the products supplied) accounted for 24.8 percent of production costs. When the shift was made to the new policy on prices, wages and money, although this policy was only in effect during the final 3 months of the year, wage costs as a percentage of total costs changed and became quite reasonable: 15.6 percent of total costs, or an average of more than 800 dong (old money) during the first 9 months of the year and 700 dong (new money) during the final 3 months of the year. Thus, during the final 3 months of the year, the wages paid were rather high compared to the average work grade wage. In 1985, production

increased by 12.9 percent over 1984. Thus, the problem is not placing limits upon wage rates, but setting wage rates at levels which insure that the energy expended in labor is replenished and, on this basis, raising the level of production. What we need are socio-economic returns from production, not wage regulations or limits on the amount of income that can be earned. The affirmation of this by Resolution 306 (draft) is entirely consistent with the actual production situation at basic economic units. Allowing the enterprise to balance its wage fund on the basis of what its financial situation permits is also a measure that closely ties interests to responsibilities. The enterprise is thus responsible to itself for its business results.

With a correct understanding of the key matters set forth in Political Bureau Resolution 306 (draft) and with regulations which guarantee the independence of basic units so that enterprises are responsible to themselves for the results of their business operations while also sharing a common responsibility for the work of the country, that is, to help solve the difficulties being encountered by the country in production, we will surely achieve better returns from the business operations of basic economic units.

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REVAMPING THE CROP PROTECTION MANAGEMENT MECHANISM IN AGRICULTURE

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 79-81

[Article by Duy Nghi]

[Text] In agricultural production, crop protection is considered an important job because it protects the crop yields resulting from the other production jobs and technical measures. To achieve increasingly high crop yields and output, increasingly large investments must be made in crop protection. Studies by many world scientists have shown that to increase crop yields two-fold, it is necessary to apply 5 times more fertilizer and invest 8 to 10 times more in crop protection (in the developing countries). In the advanced countries, the chemicals invested in crop protection account for more than 30 percent of the total value of the chemicals invested in agriculture.

There is currently a very serious shortage in our country, from the standpoint of both quantity and variety, of crop protection materials, which consist of chemicals, pumps and other special purpose implements. Yet, the management of these technical materials is administrative in nature and heavily subsidized and the distribution of these materials is decentralized. This has given rise to many negative phenomena, caused many difficulties and obstacles in crop production operations, caused the efficiency of crop protection to be very low and caused major harm to the agricultural production of many localities. Our agricultural production is developing with each passing day. As a result, the changes in pest populations in fields are also becoming increasingly complex. This situation demands that our crop protection work be revamped from the standpoint of the management, distribution and use of the existing crop protection technical materials of the country so that we achieve high technical efficiency and economic returns and can, together with taking other pest control measures, support production well and increase the output of agricultural products for society.

For many years, the crop protection sector in our country, from the central to the basic levels, had only served the function of providing state management. That is, it had only assessed the pest situation, issued estimates and forecasts and advised that certain technical measures be taken in production. No one had the responsibility of guiding basic production units in crop protection and determining whether what they were doing was right or wrong and

whether the results being achieved were good or poor. During the past few years, a number of crop protection stations in the provincial and district levels (in a number of localities) improved their work methods and shifted the focus of their organization to crop protection technical services provided under contracts with cooperatives. At these places, production has been protected and pest damage to crops has declined 1.5 to 2 times compared to those places where crop protection services are not provided. The introduction of technical advances in fields has improved. The crop protection network has been strengthened. The management, distribution and use of technical materials are rational and economical (1). All these developments have been welcomed by cooperatives and given farmers a sense of assurance in production.

Revamping the management mechanism of the crop protection sector under the present conditions of our country essentially involves revamping its organization and mode of management, not changing its technology. Provincial crop protection stations must become crop protection branch offices and district crop protection stations must become crop protection service corporations and perform both of the crop protection sector's functions of providing state management and providing technical services. The management, distribution and use of crop protection technical materials cannot be based solely on plan norms, but must be provided in accordance with actual technical requirements. Crop protection measures also demand that basic production units receive very close technical guidance. Therefore, our crop protection organizations must fulfill both functions of providing state management and providing technical services under crop production economic-technical contracts and must bear responsibility for the final product of the production unit and the laborer.

Crop protection services mainly entail providing technical guidance. The objective of these services is to support production. The standard by which these services are evaluated is how well production is protected. In the past, the crops protection sector only provided instructions in how to prevent and control pests. Now, the prevention and control of pests for each type crop are an integrated program. This is the substance of the technical guidance provided in crop protection service contracts. This program consists of using high yield, pest resistant varieties, planting crops on a strict schedule, cultivating crops well (fertilizer, irrigation and so forth) and using chemical and manual pest control measures at the right time and in the best way. Specific economic-technical quotas governing the techniques employed, labor and finances are set to insure that the management of crop production services complies with the program and is effective. Principles and policies clearly define the material interests and responsibilities of each organization and each cadre regarding production and enable the cadre to keep abreast of production and introduce scientific and technical advances in fields.

Crop protection services must be organized and the various modes of operation must be applied in a manner consistent with the uneven development among areas and localities in terms of their level of farming, the number of cadres, cadre qualifications, material-technical bases and the urgency of production. Technical materials are the prerequisite to service corporations implementing

the best possible technical policies. Therefore, the mode of operation employed in contracts and the ratio among the different types of contracts within an area must be carefully studied and be based on specific conditions, that is, the number and qualifications of cadres, the level of production, the availability of materials... These contracts include, for example, the insurance contract (comprehensive contract) of the kind being used by Kien An in Haiphong, the technical investment contract (safety), which provides varying degrees of guidance and assigns varying degrees of responsibility for production, now being used at many other places... These modes give the farmer a sense of assurance concerning the prevention and control of pests and enable him to do more to support production. The fact that all matters concerning technical guidance, revenues-expenditures and end of the season rewards and penalties are clearly defined in these contracts and based on the principles of equality and mutual benefit in economic activities creates even better conditions for strengthening and improving crop protection services.

Being responsible for production demands that the crop protection cadre be well versed in the technical aspects of his work and mobilize the masses to perform technical work. The service organization cannot take the place of the laborer. However, it also cannot allow the laborer to incorrectly apply crop protection techniques. The technical cadre and the laborer who participate in crop protection receive material compensation commensurate with their contribution to the results of production. Here, the farmer does not rely upon the state and the state does not leave everything up to the farmer. In crop protection technical services, the work of keeping abreast of the situation lies mainly with the technician at the basic unit. On many jobs, he must mobilize the masses to assist him. The network of technicians at basic production units plays a very decisive role in the service activities of this specialized sector. It consists of a large force of technical cadres who directly participate in guiding the dissemination of general scientific knowledge to each farmer. The previous method of management was not thorough and lacked a reasonable policy defining the material interests and responsibilities of this large corps of cadres. Under the new mechanism, depending upon the area, each technician is in charge of 25 to 50 hectares under cultivation (the equivalent of the amount of area of which a production unit is in charge). This force directly implements the crop protection service contract, from the first to the last job in the production process. The service corporation assigns technical cadres to observe each village and area. These cadres are responsible for all crop protection operations within the area of which they are in charge. Revamping the management mechanism of the crop protection network in this way will build and strengthen both the organization of this network and crop protection itself and truly create for the countryside a force of laborers who possess the scientific knowledge needed to effectively support the development of agricultural production.

Revamping the management mechanism of the crop protection sector requires that we change our views and perceptions concerning crop protection work in support of production and change the ways of thinking and acting of scientific-technical cadres in order to achieve practical returns for agricultural production. This revamping demands the close leadership and assistance of local party committees and administrations.

The shift from subsidized, administrative management units to organizations that provide crop protection technical services under contracts with basic production units--this revamping will enable the crop protection sector to cover its costs through its own revenues and gradually adopt socialist economic accounting and business practices. However, the purpose of these business practices is not to earn large profits for the crop protection sector, but to support production so that the largest possible profit can be earned--producing many products for society. The revamping of the crop protection management mechanism will benefit both the state and the farmers without ever increasing the contributions made by farmers.

FOOTNOTES

1. Many places that provide good crop protection services have been using 20 to 30 percent less pesticide than the average amount used over many years.

7809

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WHERE IS THE DAIRY CATTLE SECTOR IN MOC CHAU GOING?

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 82-87

[Investigative report by Huu Hanh]

[Text] I. The Only High Yield Dairy Cattle Growing Area in the North

The Moc Chau plateau (in Son La Province) lies at an altitude of more than 1,000 meters above sea level. The climate is divided into two distinct seasons. During the cold season, which lasts from November to March of the following year, the average temperature is 13 degrees Celsius. During the hot season, which lasts from April to October, the average temperature is 24 degrees Celsius. The average temperature during the year is 18 degrees Celsius, which is similar to the climate in temperate zone countries. Such weather conditions are very well suited to high yield dairy cattle, especially pure bred black and white Holsteins.

A rather large amount of area on the Moc Chau plateau is available for production. About 30 percent of the area's land (14,420 hectares) can be put into agricultural production. The terrain of rolling hills lying among high, rocky mountains and broad valleys also consists of many sloping grasslands suited to the grazing of dairy cattle and land suited to subsidiary food crops for use as fodder and to livestock feed crops. At present, the total amount of agricultural land in use at the Moc Chau Federated Enterprise (the land of the former Moc Chau State Farm) is 4,480 hectares. Of this amount, 2,095 hectares are under cultivation, 996 under the cultivation of tea and 1,099 under the cultivation of annual crops. There are 2,385 hectares of grassland for grazing: 1,579 hectares of man-made grasslands and 806 hectares of improved grasslands. With these land conditions, nearly 1,000 tons of grain, in paddy equivalent, and roughly 5,000 tons of supplemental green fodder for the dairy herd are produced each year.

In late 1969, 129 head of Holstein cattle supplied by Cuba (called Holstein-Cuban dairy cattle) were sent to the Moc Chau plateau. In a 5-year pilot project, the Holstein-Cuban dairy cattle (as well as the other imported high yield dairy breeds) grew well and produced high yields. The average cow produced 13 liters of milk daily. Some produced as much as 9,000 liters in one milking cycle. In 1975 and 1976, Cuba provided us with 746 head of Holstein-Cuban dairy cattle (which were also sent to the Moc Chau State Farm).

At the same time, the party and government of Cuba sent cadres, workers and materials to Moc Chau to help us build 21 cattle farms, which included 16 breeding farms, one center for calves less than 4 months of age with a capacity of 500 head and four centers for cows producing milk on an irregular basis. These farms include a system of pens that are relatively well equipped for raising dairy cattle. The Cuban cadres and workers also helped us to plant and establish 900 hectares of grassland. This grassland was divided into blocks and lots which were enclosed in sturdy barbed wire fencing on steel reinforced concrete poles, thus making it possible to raise livestock by the new method of "organized rotation on grasslands." The herd spends most of the day grazing, returning to the pens only to eat grain and drink water. Milk cows are brought back to the farm for milking. The cattle spend two-thirds of the day and night on the grasslands. During the cold season, they spend more time in their pens due to the need to consume supplemental green feed.

Along with this system of pens and grasslands is a relatively large-scale system of support projects: a separate electric generating plant and electric wires extending all the way to the various cattle farms. Electricity is supplied 24 hours a day to keep the equipment at these farmers in operation. To promptly and effectively support the care and feeding of breeding cattle, there is also a feed processing plant which has a capacity of 2 tons per hour. All feed ingredients are processed in accordance with technical standards. The majority of the transportation of feed as well as the cultivation of grasslands has been mechanized through a system of trucks, tractors and agricultural machines.

A corps of cadres and workers skilled in the techniques of raising dairy cattle was trained. This corps includes 30 college-educated cadres, 41 cadres who have a middle school education and 283 livestock workers who have attended a 6-month elementary course in animal husbandry. In addition, there is a force of skilled artificial insemination technicians who have attended technical training classes for 6 months or more and have gained experience in production.

The weather and climatic conditions, the land and grasslands, the material and technical base, the organization and the skills and qualifications described above permit the establishment in Moc Chau of a high yield dairy cattle center (in actuality, one was established) raising cattle by industrial methods capable of supplying a large quantity of milk to our people.

II. The Dairy Cattle Sector in Moc Chau Is on the Decline

In the early years, the Holstein-Cuban dairy herd at the Moc Chau State Farm was given thorough care and was well fed. As a result, the herd developed well. Raised under proper conditions, the herd stabilized after the first few years. It grew at the average rate of 10 percent per year. The structure of the herd developed to include more than 50 percent brood cows, a suitable percentage.

However, this development of the high yield dairy herd was only maintained for the first several years. As time passed, particularly in recent years, many

of the economic-technical performance figures on the dairy herd have declined, which has gradually led to the point at which the dairy sector in Moc Chau is today--on the decline.

During the early years, the breeding and artificial insemination program was well organized and diligently maintained. Full records were kept on the entire imported dairy herd. The quality of breeding stock was assured and animals were paired in accordance with technical standards. The entire herd was inseminated by means of frozen semen tablets. The results achieved were quite good. Of the cows inseminated, 82.45 percent bore calves, 6.8 percent miscarried and 1.5 percent calved prematurely. Since then, very many difficulties and shortages have been encountered in the breeding program. For example, there has not been a full or regular supply of nitrogen and semen. There is no equipment for transporting semen and nitrogen to basic units. The cow herd has not been receiving an adequate supply of food and water and is malnourished. There is also a shortage of drugs to treat diseases of the reproductive system. As a result, cows do not come into estrus during the breeding season. In addition, increasingly lax adherence to technical standards has had a major impact upon the growth potential and production capacity of the breeding herd.

At first, the care of the calf herd was very thorough. Calves were raised on many different whole milk formulas during the nursing cycle. Feed was of high quality. The herd was well nourished and grew well. Fifteen month old calves weighed 250-312 kilograms (the average 15 month old Holstein-Cuban calf imported to Moc Chau only weighed 225 kilograms). At 18 months, the average calf weighed 322-357 kilograms and came into estrus and was inseminated for the first time. In subsequent years, due to shortages of feed and water, due to poor quality feed and particularly to shortages of the minerals needed for the growth of youth livestock (such as protein, minerals and trace elements), the growth of calves slowed: at 18 months, the average calf weighs only 240 kilograms. It now takes 24 months for a calf to reach roughly 300 kilograms, come into estrus and be inseminated for the first time.

The brood cow herd was also well cared for and well fed on grain and supplemental green fodder during the early years. But, in recent years, grain and supplemental green fodder have not been supplied in the quantities needed and their quality has been poor. For example, 1 kilogram of powdered mixed feed contains only 0.8 unit of feed. At the Vietnam-Cuba State Farm (which raises the most dairy cattle in Moc Chau), there is a shortage of 2 months worth of grain each year (350 tons). Because grain must be fed to milking cows, the rations fed to calves and dry cows have been greatly reduced, thus causing their weight to steadily drop.

Feed and grasslands are decisive factors in the survival of dairy herds. The entire economic-technical performance of a herd is determined by these factors. In recent years, the grain from all sources--produced by units themselves, supplied by the state, obtained through trade...--has only met 80 percent of needs and the quality of this grain has been very poor. The responsible agencies of the state have only been supplying 50 percent of the

feed they are required to supply under the plan. The composition of feed has been very poor, containing only 10 percent of the protein and 15 percent of the minerals required.

Grasslands are the herd's main source of green feed. In Moc Chau, the months during which cows produce the least milk are the months when the quantity of grass in grasslands is the lowest. The months when milk output is the highest (from May to September) are the months when the grasslands grow the best and produce the most grass. This proves that the milk output of the herd is dependent upon the growth of pastures. In recent years, the grasslands in Moc Chau have been declining due to Moc Chau's limited ability to replant and restore grasslands. Only one-sixth to one-eighth of the grasslands can be restored when time comes to replant grass. This situation exists because the season for replanting grasslands is also the season for planting annual crops, as a result of which there is a shortage of trucks, tractors and fertilizer. The capital and materials needed to replant grasslands are also unavailable. The various methods of rebuilding grasslands are not regularly practiced. Thus, grassland has been deteriorating at an increasingly serious rate. In the early years, newly established, well cultivated grassland produced 67 tons of grass per hectare. Now, each hectare is yielding only about 30 tons. Although basic units have looked for every way to use their land to raise many feed crops to compensate for the shortage of grass caused by low grassland yields and the decline in the growth of grass during the winter, they have only been able to meet 50 percent of the herd's need for supplemental green fodder. The failure to solve this problem is the major shortcoming of the dairy cattle sector in Moc Chau. This is the cause of the serious decline in the herd's growth rate and production capacity.

The milk yield has also gradually declined over the years. Between 1978 and 1982, the average yield per milk cow dropped from 12.48 to 11.30 liters per day. Between 1983 and 1986, it dropped from 10.35 to 9.05 liters per day. The reason for the gradual decline in milk yields is that although the dairy herd imported from Cuba to Moc Chau is a high yield breed, the slow deterioration in the conditions under which these cattle have been raised has exhausted the herd. The brood herd in Moc Chau (the offspring of the imported Holstein-Cuban cattle), having been challenged under poor conditions since they were calves, still retains the high yield output trait of their breed. However, this only occurs in the first to the third generation. With subsequent generations, milk yields also gradually decline. The steady decline in milk yields and the percentage of milking cows in the herd (from 1978 to 1980, the number of milking cows rose from 72 to 84 percent of the herd; from 1981 to 1986, it dropped to 60-66 percent) has caused the economic returns of the dairy cattle sector in Moc Chau to decline, thus having a major impact upon the income and living conditions of the livestock worker.

Developing the dairy herd without promptly setting up an automated milk processing plant to make full use of the milk produced is a mistake that has persisted for many years in Moc Chau and has yet to be rectified. There have been many plans and projects to build milk processing plants for Moc Chau (on one occasion, the construction of a 40 ton per day milk plant was started, on another occasion, a 5 ton per day plant was brought in from the lowlands) but all have been abandoned before reaching completion and not one project has

been put into production. Once, a special air field was constructed to transport fresh milk to market. But this proved to be uneconomical and only caused waste. Later, a plan was adopted to build a 20 tons per day milk processing plant. But, 2 years have passed since then and nothing at all has been built in Moc Chau! As a result, the entire processing of milk has had to be done by hand for many years, done in a patchwork fashion that provides no assurance of product quality, particularly at times when more milk is produced than can be processed (because of the lack of a full and timely supply of sugar, sheet iron to make cans, a canning line...).

Year	Milk Output (tons)	Milk Processed into Canned Milk	
		tons	cans
1980	2,227	343.6	343,643
1981	2,601	329.3	329,374
1982	2,771	519.9	519,995
1983	2,988	385.6	385,640
1984	2,847	212.3	212,310
1985	3,052	412.1	412,186
1986	2,850	317.1	317,131

Not counting the fresh milk fed to the calves born each year, the quantity of milk that needed to be processed during the past 7 years (from 1980 to 1986) exceeded 16,000 tons, the equivalent of more than 16 million cans of milk. However, only 2,500 tons of fresh milk were processed into 2.5 million cans of condensed milk with sugar. The problems in the processing of milk made it necessary to use 13,500 tons of fresh milk (more than 84 percent of the milk that needed to be processed)--which could have been processed in 13.5 million cans of condensed milk with sugar to meet the consumer needs of the people, particularly the ill, the elderly, children and persons working at hazardous places--to be used to make milk bread, glue and hog feed (2), which is very wasteful and has caused major harm to the dairy cattle sector in Moc Chau. Not processing milk into products of higher economic value and having no choice but to make glue and other products of low economic value have caused the dairy cattle sector in Moc Chau, which has always operated at a loss, to incur even heavier losses! Thus, how much longer can the dairy cattle and milk processing sectors in Moc Chau survive?

III. Some Solutions

In the nearly 15 years it has been raised at Moc Chau, the pure bred Holstein-Cuban dairy cattle herd has acclimated to the difficult conditions there to survive and develop. It has become a good dairy herd of Vietnam. The economic-technical performance figures on the herd have steadily declined as a result of improper care, of poor quality feed and the failure to provide the full amount of feed needed on a timely basis. Focusing efforts on solving the problems of supplying the necessary quantity of high quality feed to the cattle herd on a timely basis will restore the high milk output of the parent herd (the one brought over from Cuba) and the offspring of this herd. To be well fed, each head of cattle must consume at least 10 tons of fodder and 1 ton of grain each year. Milking cows must consume 15 tons of fodder and 1.5 tons of grain to be well fed and be able to produce roughly 13 liters of milk

daily. With Moc Chau's farmland and grassland, it is entirely possible to solve the problem of green feed for the cattle herd. Appropriate investments in the intensive cultivation of grasslands (fertilization at the rate of 200-250 kilograms of nitrogen and the machinery needed to replant and maintain grasslands in accordance with technical standards) will result in an output of 40-45 tons of grass per hectare, which will provide enough green feed (in pastures and supplemental reserves for the winter) to keep the herd well fed throughout the year, keep it healthy and insure the production of much milk. As regards grain, Moc Chau is only able to grow a portion of what it needs. The remainder must be supplied by the responsible agencies of the state in quantities sufficient to meet the herd's needs. Enough raw protein in the form of corn, soybeans and so forth is grown in the region of Son La Province surrounding Moc Chau to supply Moc Chau with enough to meet the needs of the herd. Thus, it is necessary to discontinue the long-standing practice of shipping Son La corn and soybeans to the lowlands for delivery to the central level at a time when Moc Chau must go all the way down to Dong Nai Province to pick up grain, which spoils. This is costly and extremely wasteful!

Urgent steps must be taken to establish for the Moc Chau dairy sector and automated milk processing enterprise with a capacity of 20 tons per day to insure that all the milk produced each day for the next several years is promptly processed. This is an indispensable prerequisite to processing milk into many consumer products of high quality and high economic value and earning a profit. The items needed to process milk (such as sheet iron for cans, sugar and so forth) must be supplied in the quantities required to enable this milk processing enterprise to meet and exceed the norms of its plan on the delivery of milk products to the state each year. If these items cannot be fully supplied by the concerned agencies of the state, the Moc Chau dairy cattle sector must establish ties and joint businesses with other basic units in order to process all the milk produced each day and market this milk to increase its income, not waste the milk being produced and have to endure the difficult living conditions that have long existed!

In addition, the organization of the dairy sector's management apparatus must also be improved along lines that stimulate the development of and expand production. Separating this apparatus into individual units which do not have the status of an individual under the law, which practice financial reporting, not accounting, which are only independent from the standpoint of production and which do not, in practical terms, enter into contracts or establish ties with one another within a federated enterprise, as has been the situation during the past several years--these practices are posing obstacles to and reducing the production efficiency of the member livestock units. The solution to this problem is to establish specialization within the dairy cattle sector (animal husbandry, the production and processing of feed and milk processing) in a way that brings all these units together within one economic unit which has the status of an individual under the law and is independent from the standpoint of its production and business accounting. The task of organizing the management and business of the dairy cattle sector must be assigned to specialized technical cadres and livestock production economic management cadres. An appropriate remuneration policy must be adopted to attract technical workers back to the dairy cattle sector. If these steps are taken, the dairy cattle sector in Moc Chau will restore and

develop the high yield pure bred cattle herd for the country and the milk processing business in Moc Chau will earn the large profits befitting a major center of high yield dairy cattle production in our country.

FOOTNOTES

1. Our country has only two regions, Moc Chau and Lam Dong, that have the natural conditions for raising high yield dairy cattle. According to the socio-economic strategy of Son La Province, Moc Chau can develop its production to 8,500 high yield dairy cattle by the year 2,000.
2. The processing of 1 kilogram of milk bread requires 3 kilograms of fresh milk. One kilogram of glue requires 50 kilograms of fresh milk. If there is no coal to operate ovens to condense and dry milk to make milk bread and glue, fresh milk must be fed to hogs.

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A DYNAMIC MODEL IN THE COMMERCE BUSINESS

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 88-91

[Article by Xuan Hoanh]

[Text] Nam Bo Department Store Number 5 lies in the center of Hanoi, a center for trade with every region of the country. In recent years, years during which commodity production has failed to meet the needs of the people, the store has quickly moved to control the sources of goods and serve the daily needs of the people, thereby helping to transform and manage the market. A unit that practices cost accounting and is independent in its business operations, the store has been completing its task in a dynamic fashion and become a good model of the capital's commerce sector.

I. Organizing Sources of Goods

To do a good job of providing goods to the people, it is first of all necessary to organize the sources of goods well. The store has, therefore, given its attention to organizing the receiving of goods from the corporation and various basic units.

During the past several years, the store has been coordinating on a regular basis with the corporation to take delivery of goods at the Van Dien General Warehouse and at basic production units within the municipality. By means of three-party trade, the store takes delivery of goods directly in Haiphong, thus avoiding unnecessary intermediaries. Regardless of how difficult circumstances might be, whenever the store has receiving papers from the corporation, it is able to go to basic units and pick up its goods immediately, never having to wait for more than 3 days. Products for which the store has signed contracts, such as products of the Lightbulb and Thermos Bottle Factory, the Chien Thang Sewing Enterprise, the Winter Woolens Mill and so forth, are picked up by the store whenever they are needed. Prior to being stored in the store's warehouse, goods undergo a very strict inspection. First, it inspects the boxes and bales. Then it counts the goods by hundreds and dozens. Lastly, it counts each individual piece. The store only puts into its warehouse goods that have been inspected. It never puts goods into its warehouse on the basis of the figures on the bills of lading issued by the places where products were sold. In this way, shortages, extra goods and damaged goods are dealt with by the store before being put into its warehouse.

Gaining experience as it went along, the store arranged its counters by type of product and improved its method of selling, thus displaying the independence of a basic economic unit in commerce. Whenever goods arrive, the store has them inspected and immediately put on counters for sale. It always puts on its counters whatever products are on hand in its warehouse. Each day, the warehouse custodian must inform the personnel at counters of the new products that have arrived. All the goods put on counters are priced. At the same time, the store is quick to inform its customers of its new products. As regards rationed goods, in addition to serving customers well at its counters, the store also takes rationed goods to the homes of families of war dead for sale. With regard to troop units stationed within the municipality that have registered with it to make purchases, the store sees its task as providing good service in accordance with policies, standards and rationing regulations. In the distribution of goods to agencies on the basis of canteen books, the store is always dynamic and flexible. It distributes goods in a fair and reasonable manner depending upon the availability of goods. It replaces goods that are in short supply with goods of equal use value. As a result, the store has not had one problem in many years in the distribution of goods on the basis of agency canteen books.

To overcome the difficulties stemming from the failure of production to meet consumer needs, the store has signed contracts to buy goods in such localities as Ho Chi Minh City, Cao Bang, Quang Ninh, Haiphong, Thai Binh, Ha Nam Ninh and so forth. In Ho Chi Minh City, the store procured 50 million dong in goods in 1983, 30 million dong in 1984, 13 million dong in 1985(*) and 8 million dong in 1986. For the most part, the store sells these goods at prices 10 to 15 percent lower than market prices. As a result, goods and capital are turned over quickly. The business revenues of the store have steadily increased (1983: 172 million dong; 1984: 390 million dong; 1985: 650 million dong(*) and 1986: 201 million dong).

Whenever a new sources of goods is discovered, the cadres and personnel of Nam Bo Department Store Number 5 calculate the business returns from these products and their impact in the struggle to transform the market in Hanoi. The store manager has personally gone to localities to sign procurement contracts and keeps abreast of market prices in order to guide business operations in a manner consistent with the policies of the state and consumer needs.

Although goods are scarce, the store regularly has more than 2,000 products on its shelves to serve the people. However, many of the products on sale, including goods produced under contract, still do not meet the needs of the people because their quality is low.

At a time when goods are in limited supply but must be concentrated in the hands of the state so that they can be distributed in a planned manner, the store has tried to display dynamism and creativity in its business operations in order to bring itself to the point where it can control the market. The store prepares a supply of appropriate goods to meet consumer needs during the season of the year, on Tet and holidays and on the opening day of school.

In addition, the store has also opened counters that sell goods on consignment, which have attracted customers. Beginning with only one such counter, the store now has three counters selling three groups of consignment products: ready-made clothing; general merchandise and electrical appliances; and art products on the basis of customer orders. During the 1st quarter of 1986 alone, the store sold 11 million dong in consignment products, a four-fold increase over the amount sold during the 1st quarter of 1985. Facts have shown that the store's practice of selling goods on consignment is convenient to both sellers and buyers and avoids the problem of private merchants buying goods cheaply, selling them at high prices and monopolizing the market. On the other hand, persons who sell goods on consignment earn about 10 to 15 more than they do by selling their goods to private merchants. At the same time, customers have confidence in what they are buying and do not have to worry about mistakenly buying fake goods. At a time when goods are difficult to obtain, this flexible approach by the store has attracted domestic and foreign goods to the organized market and helped to make market prices more stable.

II. Improving the Management of Its Business

The release of goods to counters is closely controlled by the store. The goods released to sales persons are always counted in the smallest unit, from individual rulers to kilograms of sugar and meters of cloth. In the case of goods that come in many different types, the store instructs its personnel to sell each type separately to avoid confusion and prevent products from being sold at the wrong price.

The store routinely conducts three inspections when personnel change shifts: money is checked, the ration stamps and coupons turned in to personnel are checked and books, invoices and receipts are checked. Through these inspections, the store has been able to discover such mistakes as turning over fewer products than should be turned over to the next shift, counting more goods than are actually on hand, money shortages, allowing poor quality goods to remain on shelves... After each "shift," sales personnel must immediately turn in ration stamps and coupons to the store's management unit. In the management of stamps, coupons and invoices during the day, the store keeps clear records and does not allow stamps or coupons to be "recirculated."

If the store, which is located in a densely populated area in which the situation is complex and there are many private merchants, did not manage goods well, private merchants would find it easy to practice their trade or would be able to use their money to bribe store personnel to siphon goods to them. Before putting them on counters, the store examines each product from two perspectives: the consumer needs of the people and the price necessary to prevent private merchants from buying up goods, hoarding goods and waiting for a scarcity of products to throw these goods on the market at high prices. The store sets its prices according to the time of year. Ordinary consumer goods are sold at commercial business prices, prices which are higher than stable prices but not based on market prices. The store sells high grade products at flexible prices, all of which are under the guidance of the corporation. If it is found that certain consumer goods have been bought by private merchants in large quantities, the store redistributes these goods to the canteens of agencies. It only puts them on sale on its counters if agencies do not buy

all the goods available. These specific, practical and dynamic steps taken by the store have contributed to the struggle to stabilize market prices and have earned profits for the state.

In organizing and arranging its material-technical base, the store has constantly made improvements to insure that its counters are aesthetically appealing and convenient for shopping. To avoid mistakes, skilled sales persons have been put in charge of those counters where products are distributed on the basis of standards and some customers buy large amounts. Many other steps have been taken by the store, such as organizing socialist labor sales teams; having each sales person wear a badge so that customers can easily offer their opinions concerning sales persons; and praising, rewarding and encouraging sales persons who display a spirit of responsibility in their work. In addition, the store holds various symposiums: a "skilled sales persons" symposium, an "outstanding escorts" symposium, an "exchange of work experience among the store's sales persons" symposium and so forth.

To develop its role and strength in the best possible manner, the store needs to have a corps of cadres who possess good personal qualities and are skilled in their profession. In conjunction with attaching importance to providing specialized training, sending cadres and personnel to commerce schools, standardizing cadres who have a middle school or college diploma and assigning personnel new to the business or whose skills are still weak to work alongside veteran personnel, the store also teaches its cadres and personnel to be "diligent, frugal and honest" in their work. President Ho said: "If we do not maintain the habit of being frugal, we will want to eat like gluttons and buy luxury items. And when our wages are not enough, where will we get the money? There are then only two ways: either to steal it from the government or take it in bribes."⁽¹⁾ The line between good and bad is a very fine line. One moment of vacillation, of unsteadiness in the face of the day to day temptations of money can lead a person to crime. The store has given very much attention to helping its cadres and personnel struggle to overcome such incorrect thinking as "whatever your occupation is, there is always money to be made" and prevent such wrong behavior as theft, conspiring and siphoning goods to private merchants... The store has also taught its cadres and personnel to respect customers, be polite toward customers and be honest with customers. It has taught them to be responsible toward their work and the interests of the people. The store prohibits personnel from putting their own goods on consignment sale at the store in order to avoid negative phenomena. It has also put an end to disputes among personnel in the procurement and sale of products and to the practice of buying and reselling goods, which pushes circulation costs and prices upward.

By taking a dynamic approach and managing its business correctly, Nam Bo Department Store Number 5 has completed its tasks well for more than 20 years and is worthy of being the leader of the Hanoi General Merchandise Corporation.

Besides the achievements it has recorded, the store still has weaknesses and limitations that must be overcome. At times, the store's cadres and personnel have not been closely managed. Consequently, negative phenomena still occur. Some sales persons still take advantage of price differentials and provide

goods to private merchants or sell goods to persons who do not meet standards and ration requirements, are impolite toward customers...

The store has the potential for raising its sales revenues. However, it is restricted by many factors, including a shortage of cash. As a result, it encounters many difficulties in procuring products. On the other hand, the store is only permitted to sign contracts with a certain number of basic production units, not permitted to sign contracts with any business agency it pleases. Consequently, many difficulties are also being encountered in the procurement of goods in the various localities.

The store regularly holds "customer conferences" to improve its sales methods and the distribution of goods to suit the different people it serves. On the other hand, from these customer conferences and the suggestion books kept at the various counters, the store learns the needs of consumers so that it can serve them better.

During the different seasons of the year, the store does not have an adequate supply of the products needed to meet customer needs. It still experiences a shortage of electric fans in the summer, warm clothing in the winter and so forth.

Being located in the center of the capital, the store has, from the perspective of business, many advantages in its favor. However, the store itself is cramped for space. The store can be remodeled and additional counters can be opened on the second floor or kiosks can be set up outside to serve customers.

In order for commerce stores to fulfill their function well, I think that they need to be given price management responsibility to permit them to set the prices of good they obtain on their own in a manner consistent with wholesale prices in order to avoid interference in the store's operation when it sets the prices of some products that are not included in the plan sent down from the corporation. On the other hand, stores also should not operate solely on the basis of profit and take it upon themselves to set prices that do not comply with the price scale of the state, thus pushing up market prices and causing difficulties for the consumer.

FOOTNOTES

* Monetary figures prior to 1985 calculated in old money.

1. "Bac Ho voi nganh thuong nghiep Viet nam," [Uncle Ho and Vietnam's Commerce Sector], published by TAP CHI NOI THUONG, 1986, p 52.

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CSO: 4210/8

LETTER TO THE EDITORIAL BOARD: 'WE MUST KEEP OUR PARTY TRULY PURE'

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 92-93

[Letter from Le Hung]

[Text] With the party being the party in power, there is a cause and effect relationship between the quality of the corps of cadres and party members and the social situation.

In my opinion, one of the important and pressing measures that must be taken to change the situation, particularly to overcome the negative phenomena in society, is to make the corps of cadres and party members pure. Purifying the party is a need tantamount to a law which guarantees that the party is solid and strong. At the same time, it is a fervent aspiration of party members and the masses.

However, purifying the party is not easy. It demands that we be determined to immediately expel degenerate and deviant persons from the party.

The realities of recent years show that the following two types of persons must be expelled from the party:

--Type 1: elements who are corrupt, take bribes, steal property from the state and collective and look for every way to make themselves, their families and their neighbors rich. These persons usually conceal themselves behind the title "party member" and take advantage of their position or the conditions on their job to collaborate and conspire with one another and make money illegally. These are new parasites, the addresses of some of whom were recently reported in the press. Their tactics are the same: lying to others, deceiving, threatening and pressuring others... And, for the most part, they live in luxury and extravagance and are no longer qualified to be a party member in any way.

--Type 2: this type consists of the opportunists. There are all sorts of opportunists: economic opportunists, persons who are opportunists for the sake of fame and power and even political opportunists. Here, allow me to point out that whereas parasites operate openly and earn money in unlawful ways, these opportunists conceal themselves and are very sophisticated. There are even some economic opportunists who manifest none of the characteristics

of a parasite. An opportunist who does manifest these characteristics is a poor opportunist, because his true identity is easily known.

In addition, there are ignorant, conservative elements who stubbornly refuse to give up their position. These persons at first show such signs as diminished ability and not being able to keep pace with the demands of their work. However, they gradually become conservative and stagnant and impede all change. They find all sorts of reasons and ways to retain their positions and keep their place on one council or committee or another and will not yield to qualified successors. The inertia in their thinking and style is tremendous. They are truly not qualified or competent to serve as leaders and managers in the face of the new requirements. When they sense that their position is shaky, they become obstinate and use their authority to quash new factors. They are very easily bribed, controlled and rendered ineffective by undesirable elements.

As regards persons of this type, if it is deemed that it would be beneficial for any of them to remain in the party, they should be assigned jobs compatible with their capabilities. As regards ignorant elements who truly are not qualified to be party members, we must be determined to expel them from the party.

Thus, how do we find out who the persons described above are and expel them from the ranks of the party and state?

"Without the support of the people, no job, regardless of how easy it might be, can be completed. With the support of the people, every job, regardless of how difficult it might be, can be completed." Recently, practically all of the scandals that have occurred within agencies of the party and state have been brought to light by the masses with the active support of the press and legal agencies. As a result, it is necessary to closely combine criticism and self-criticism within the party with mobilizing the masses to expose and struggle against these persons.

Experience has shown that whenever the masses are mobilized, they are the fairest judges. However, mobilizing the masses is not easy. The problem we face is that conditions must exist which insure that there will not be retaliation against the masses and that persons who commit crimes are seriously prosecuted. Inspection groups must be skilled in their profession, possess a high spirit of responsibility and perform their work in a fair and just manner. The members of these groups must be highly responsible and impartial, not persons who lack a sense of justice or who go about their work in a fearful manner. At the same time, legal agencies must reach clear, definite conclusions and prosecute cases promptly, resolutely and in the "fair, just and impartial" manner taught by Uncle Ho.(1)

The press also plays a very important role. Incisive newspaper articles that speak the truth have the effect of bringing secrets to light, defending the truth, defending that which is right, generating public opinion, putting an end to corrupt practices and creating additional conditions for the masses and legal agencies to wage a resolute struggle.

Of course, all these efforts must be under the close and correct leadership of the authorized party committee. If a leadership level has been corrupted by negative phenomena, the upper level must provide direct "support." Every effort started in this area must be seen through until the end, must be carried out thoroughly and not allowed to drag on or be left unfinished.

In my opinion, purifying the party is a very necessary and urgent requirement. It will have the effect of building the fighting strength of the party and will make a direct impact upon efforts to overcome the negative phenomena in society. If we must expel a large number of members from the party, it will not weaken the party, but only make it stronger.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ho Chi Minh: "Toan tap," [Collected Works], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1985, Volume 5, p 53.

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PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS OF COUNTRIES--ASEAN AND INDOCHINA

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 94-98, 106

[Article by Hoang Hien]

[Text] Southeast Asia Up to the Year 1945

Since the end of World War II, several sciences--geography, ethnography, ethnology, archaeology, linguistics, history, politics and so forth--have confirmed that Southeast Asia is an entity with peculiarities that distinguish it from other parts of the world and not merely an incoherent land mass situated between China and India, with one part of it belonging to the Chinese system and the other part to the Indian system.

Through countless millennia, the people of Southeast Asia, be it continental or insular, have shared many highly original traits. These are people who specialized in wet rice cultivation, a practice which may have started as early as 6,500 years before the Christian era, favored by tropical sunlight and humidity brought by rain and monsoon. These people once lived in houses on stilts, engaged in forestry and fishing and used boats to travel the seas and rivers. The sea here did not keep continental Southeast Asia and insular Southeast Asia apart. Thanks to the monsoon and sea currents, communications between different parts of the region was fairly developed. Based on a common "civilization of the rice plant," this contact has left astonishingly similar features among the Southeast Asian nations: Vietnamese pottery bears a strong resemblance to that of the Philippines; the Dong Song bronze drum has been found not only in Vietnam but also in Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand; agricultural rights and popular games of the Southeast Asian countries do not differ much from one another; and even in the field of language, agricultural production expressions throughout the region are fairly similar.

Despite the influence of the Indian culture--which was exerted mainly through trade and missionary work--and of the Chinese culture--which was imposed by invasions, pressure and the establishment of hegemony based on a tribute-paying system--the Southeast Asian countries have managed to preserve a particular national character resistant to all assimilation.

Western capitalism came to Southeast Asia in search of spices. It started out by setting up trading posts along the coast of the insular Southeast Asian

countries then moved into continental Southeast Asia. A number of countries in the region were occupied and colonized. During the final decades of the 19th century, when capitalism turned into imperialism, the colonial system spread and became deeply rooted in the region, spurred by the exploitation of minerals, rubber and some other industrial crops. The demands for mine and plantation workers led to the hiring of Chinese laborers to work in various Southeast Asian countries, thus constantly increasing the number of overseas Chinese and Hoa people there.

The founding of the colonial system in Southeast Asia (with the exception of Thailand) virtually cut off relations among the nations in this region, leaving each state to live mainly with its "mother country." However, Western colonialist rule also created a relationship among the countries sharing the common yoke of domination imposed by the same imperialist power, such as in the case of Burma and India under British rule, and especially Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia under French rule. Another exception was the Hoa people: they always kept their ties with their original country--China--and, through these ties, indirectly maintained relations with one another in the Southeast Asian countries.

The Second World War visited a new disaster upon Southeast Asia: the occupation and exploitation by Japanese fascism. In Thailand the ruling class followed Japan during the war and was condoned by Tokyo in expanding into and occupying the territory of Laos and Cambodia.

Southeast Asia after 1945

The founding of ASEAN and the birth of ZOPFAN [Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality--FBIS].

The victory of the Soviet Red Army and allied forces forced fascist Germany, Italy and Japan to capitulate. That was the time when the movement for national independence surged like a storm in Southeast Asia, stronger than in any other parts of the world. By 1950, the West European imperialist states, "voluntarily" or under U.S. pressure, struck a deal with the bourgeoisie in the Southeast Asian countries and gave them back their independence.

However, an overall look at the entire region shows that from the end of World War II to 1975 and subsequent years, Southeast Asia has never had peace and stability. Since 1945, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia had to continuously fight old and new colonialism. The fiercest and longest wars took place in these countries. This is easy to understand because the national liberation struggle in the Indochinese countries, which was placed under the leadership of the working class party, was a positive revolution. It was a struggle that did not compromise in an unprincipled manner with the imperialists, who were also determined to fight for their survival. In particular, the Vietnamese people's resistance struggle against the U.S. imperialists--the archimperialist and international gendarme--was really an historic, head-on confrontation.

The U.S. intervention in and aggression against Vietnam has sabotaged peace and stability in Southeast Asia. SEATO's Southeast Asian member countries

were driven into the war against Vietnam and Indochina as a whole. The United States has brazenly intervened in Southeast Asia not only because Southeast Asia possesses great potentials in terms of resources and manpower, which U.S. imperialism eagerly desires to exploit, but also because the United States wants to cooperate with the regional bourgeois in establishing capitalist relations in Southeast Asia in order to keep these regional countries within the world capitalist orbit and to check the socialist influence that--as the United States fears--will spread from the Indochinese countries. The 1965 abortive coup in Indonesia has repelled the progressive forces in this country, created favorable conditions for rapprochement between Indonesia and Malaysia, and led to the establishment of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines (Brunei added later on). This is a political and economic organization that receives mainly U.S. and Japanese investment.

Not very long after the formation of ASEAN, a general offensive and upheaval of the southern Vietnamese troops and people broke out in 1968. This event held an extremely great international significance and influence: it compelled people to reconsider a series of quite prevalent ideas in the early 1960's--primarily fear of and admiration for the United States.

As a result of the decline of the United States, the vigorous growth of the Soviet Union, and the development of the three revolutionary currents, a period of detente has opened worldwide.

In Southeast Asia the ASEAN member countries hoped to rely on the United States and the United Kingdom. However, the United Kingdom has weakened to the point of declaring withdrawal from east of the Suez Canal, while the United States, whose aggressiveness was heavily affected by the 1968 Tet offensive, had to talk about de-escalation and withdrawal from Indochina. The ASEAN countries clearly realized that they could no longer rely on U.S. military strength and had to initiate another line in order to have conditions for survival and development. It is the line of accepting peaceful coexistence with countries of different political and social systems. This trend was reflected in the 1971 Kuala Lumpur statement of ASEAN countries on the establishment of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality (ZOPFAN) in Southeast Asia.

The victory of the Vietnamese revolution and Indochinese countries forced the U.S. troops to withdraw from Indochina in 1973 and then from Thailand in 1976. Once again, the ASEAN countries asserted their ZOPFAN policy: to coexist peacefully with the Indochinese countries and to maintain balanced relations with major countries in the world in order to cope with the main threat of internal subversion. This was the content of the first 1976 summit conference of ASEAN countries in Bali (Indonesia). For its part, Vietnam also declared in 1976 the four principles on relations of peace, friendship and cooperation among Southeast Asian countries.

The development of the situation from 1975 to 1978 consolidated all the more strongly the trend for peaceful coexistence advocated by both the ASEAN and Indochinese countries. The ASEAN countries' foreign ministers met on 5 July 1977 in Singapore, deciding unanimously to promote relations with Vietnam,

Laos and Cambodia. In fact, the diplomatic relations of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia with nearly all of the ASEAN countries were gradually established during that period. Vietnam has exchanged ambassadors with every ASEAN country except Singapore (but Vietnam has representatives of general trade corporations in that country). Although Vietnamese-Cambodian relations were then worsening because of Pol Pot's reactionary, genocidal policy, ASEAN's sympathy for Vietnam did not decrease. In September and October 1978, Comrade Pham Van Dong visited five ASEAN countries and signed with their leaders a common communique asserting the principles of peaceful coexistence and solemnly declaring respect for each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity; non-interference in each other's internal affairs; and abstention from either direct or indirect subversive acts against each other. The LPDR initiated similar activities toward ASEAN countries. It is regrettable that since 1979 the trend for peaceful coexistence between ASEAN and Indochina has been temporarily impeded by conflict. The hegemonist forces have gathered in Southeast Asia to oppose the revolutionary movement here. The ASEAN countries seem to think that they have found a new support on which to rely to protect their survival. Nevertheless, unlike the time of the U.S. war in Vietnam, now the ASEAN countries' confrontation with Indochina is not military but political and economic. Moreover, it will not last long.

Victory of the Trend for Dialogue

Since 1979, the situation has increasingly favored the revolutionary forces and peace in Southeast Asia. First there is the vigorous growth of the revolution in the three Indochinese countries and the development of the solidarity bloc both of the three countries on the Indochina peninsula and between the Indochinese countries on the one hand and the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries on the other. Some specific factors can be cited: the marvelous, undeniable rebirth of Cambodia; the treaty of peace, cooperation and friendship signed in February 1979 between Vietnam and Cambodia; the first Indochinese summit in February 1983 in Vientiane; the attachment of Vietnam to the Soviet Union and the socialist community as a whole, ranging from our joining the CEMA in June 1978 and the treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union signed on 3 November 1978 to the recent Vietnamese-Soviet summit; and the wholehearted and effective support of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries for Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. These are important factors deciding the orientation toward a peaceful, stable Southeast Asia.

Also over the past 7 years, although the Pol Pot remnant troops and other reactionary Khmer forces have been fostered by their boss and have been supported by the United States and other reactionary forces, they have proved to be impotent and unable to reverse the situation in Cambodia. The 1984-85 dry-season military operations, during which the Cambodian revolutionary forces played an outstanding role, have wiped out the bases of the Cambodian counter-revolutionaries along the Cambodia-Thailand border. The reactionary forces' attempts to infiltrate into Cambodia for sabotage in 1985-86 were also neutralized. The PRK's military and political maturity has allowed the Vietnamese volunteer troops to partially withdraw from Cambodia in 1982 and, since the Indochinese summit in February 1983, similar partial troop withdrawals have been conducted annually and will be completed in 1990.

For a long time, in Malaysia and especially Indonesia--a major ASEAN member--political circles have correctly realized that the threat to Southeast Asia comes from a direction other than Vietnam. Many Indonesians think that Vietnam must be assisted to become a dike to prevent expansionism and hegemonism from spreading to Southeast Asia, and Vietnam must not be confronted. In several ASEAN as well as many Western countries, people have increasingly recognized that Vietnam has security interests in Cambodia. For this reason, the elimination of Pol Pot for the sake of the Cambodian people's survival as well as the security of the Indochinese countries and all Southeast Asia has received increasingly broad support from the world's progressives.

The policy of holding a dialogue to settle the Cambodia issue in particular and the issue of peace and stability in southeast Asia in general has been warmly welcomed and promoted by the summit conferences of the Non-aligned Movement, including the recent 8th Summit Conference in Harare. This policy has also been supported by many political circles in the ASEAN countries. The symposiums of Indonesian and Vietnamese scientists as well as between Malaysian and Vietnamese scientists, the exchanges of visits between Vietnamese and Indonesian officials in charge of national defense and foreign affairs, and the rounds of bilateral talks between the two countries have created an atmosphere of mutual understanding and have narrowed the gap between their viewpoints. Even in Thailand, many voices have clearly expressed disagreement with the policy of confrontation, which jeopardizes peace but does not benefit Thailand. It should be added that recently the political and economic situation of the ASEAN countries has obviously not been good. After years of relatively favorable development, the economies of these countries have slowed down and worse still receded in some countries due to difficulties in international market prices. The price of oil, which some ASEAN countries produce, has dropped, for the first time in 50 years, to a terrifyingly, unprecedentedly low level. Politically, some ASEAN countries have become unstable, including the Philippines with the collapse of Marcos and the current discord within the government of Mrs. Aquino and Thailand with the 9 March 1985 abortive coup and the endless infighting among various factions. Increasingly aware that they cannot rely on foreign countries to oppose an imagined danger that has never materialized from the Indochinese countries and to overcome the real crises in their countries, many political circles in the ASEAN states hold that it is imperative to return the policy of peaceful coexistence, normal relations and mutually beneficial cooperation that prevailed among the Southeast Asian nations in 1975-78. On their part, the Vietnamese people welcome any policy that is beneficial to peace in Southeast Asia, the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of the world. We will ceaselessly strive for the development of relations of friendship and cooperation with Indonesia and the other Southeast Asian nations. We hope for and stand ready to start negotiations with other countries in the region to settle the problems of Southeast Asia, to establish relations of peaceful coexistence with them and to build Southeast Asia into a zone of peace, stability and cooperation. We totally agree with the remarks of Comrade M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, in his address to the grand meeting in late July 1986 to present the Order of Lenin to Vladivostok: "There is no obstacle that cannot be surmounted in advancing toward establishing acceptable relations between the Indochinese and ASEAN

countries. If they have good will and there is no external interference, these countries can settle their own affairs and, at the same time, promote the common security of Asia."

What everyone can clearly see is that peace, stability and cooperation in Southeast Asia depend largely on the normalization of relations between Vietnam and China. Concerning this question, we have time and again clearly stated our viewpoint. The Political Report of the CPV Central Committee at the 6th Party Congress once again affirmed: "The peoples of Vietnam and China once entertained time-honored friendly relations and once united with and assisted each other in the struggle against imperialism and for independence, freedom and national construction. The people share common interests, namely peace, independence and economic development. The Vietnamese government and people consistently treasure and are determined to do their utmost to restore the friendship between the two peoples. They have put forth numerous proposals aimed at normalizing relations between Vietnam and the PRC at an early date. Our stand is to attach importance to the fundamental and long-term interests of the two countries. We hold that it is high time for both sides to sit down together and start negotiating to settle immediate as well as long-term problems in bilateral relations. Once again we officially declare: Vietnam is ready to hold talks with China any time, at any level and anywhere to normalize relations between the two countries in the interests of peace in Southeast Asia and the rest of the world."

Peaceful coexistence among countries with different political and social regimes and elimination of war of aggression are emerging as a highly attractive historical trend. The comprehensive peace plan for the Asia-Pacific region put forth by Comrade M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, has enjoyed increasingly strong support from people of conscience throughout the world. In the irreversible common advance of human history, we sincerely hope that the ASEAN countries will restore relations of peaceful coexistence with us and the other countries on the Indochina peninsula soon to build Southeast Asia into a zone of peace, stability and cooperation.

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THE NATURE, CHARACTERISTICS AND HISTORICAL POSITION OF IMPERIALISM

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 3, Mar 87 pp 99-106

[Article by Professor Bui Ngoc Chuong]

[Text] In mid-1916, V.I. Lenin completed the draft of his major work on imperialism while living in political asylum in Zurich, Switzerland. The draft was sent to M.N. Pokrovsky in Paris to be forwarded to "Sails" Publishing House, a lawful publishing house under the Czarist regime. Due to delays caused by the Mensheviks, who controlled this publishing house, it was not until mid-October 1917 that this work was printed and put into public distribution under the revised title "Imperialism, the Newest Stage of Capitalism." It was not until later that this title was changed back to the title chosen by Lenin: "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism," with the subtitle "A Popular Outline."⁽¹⁾ Although the book was written for widespread dissemination among the laboring masses, particularly youths and students (as Lenin said in a letter to M.N. Pokrovsky), it was very rich in theory and its contents were precise and profound from a scientific standpoint. Lenin researched a large volume of materials and data on the economic and political issues of imperialism, drawing from hundreds of books, newspaper articles and statistical charts published in many languages in many different countries. He analyzed and made critical use of these materials and statistical data, along with admissions by bourgeois scholars in all countries, to illustrate his arguments, which were based in science and practice.

As we know, in the second half of the 19th century, many new technical inventions in the developed capitalist countries led to the birth of heavy industry. Holding the promise of large profits, heavy industry took the place of light industry as the foundation of the capitalist economy. This caused a leap forward in the development of production forces marked by the expansion of mechanization and the increased socialization of these forces. Socialized production forces stimulated the agglomeration and concentration of capital. On the basis of these two processes, production became centralized in large enterprises. The inability of these enterprises to take one another over in the process of competition gave rise to the trend to join together in monopolies controlling each industrial sector, beginning within heavy industry. The growth of monopolies within industry stimulated the concentration and agglomeration of capital within the banking field and the

formation of bank monopolistic capital. The bank monopoly and the industrial monopoly combined to form financial capital groups with unlimited power that controlled both the economy and politics of the country. They intensified exploitation at home while expanding overseas in two ways: exporting capital and struggling against one another to divide the world economically and territorially through brazen and ruthless oppression and exploitation of the peoples of the countries occupied and turned into colonies by them. This situation brought about the intense development of the revolutionary movement in the mother country and the colonies. These socio-economic phenomena were generalized by theoreticians of that time as "imperialism." However, everyone had a different definition of this concept. Some persons considered imperialism to be the attainment of each living thing's inherent strength, others considered it to be nothing more than the policy of aggression of industrial capital, etc. This was also the argument of the leaders of the 2nd International. In the name of "Marxism," their explanation of imperialism distorted its nature and laid the groundwork for their policy of reformism and class cooperation. These unscientific explanations led to political mistakes that caused the struggle of the proletariat to take the wrong direction, to only oppose specific policies and external manifestations of imperialism instead of opposing imperialism because of what its true nature is. As a result, they impeded, not stimulated, the advance of revolutionary movements. The urgency of the interests of the world revolution and, most immediately, the Russian revolution, demanded a scientific analysis of imperialism and, on this basis, the formulation of a correct strategy and correct tactics for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and the oppressed peoples in this new age. Through "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism" and many other works, Lenin met this demand of history. "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism" was a direct continuation of Marx's "Das Kapital" and represented the development of the theory of Marxism "on capitalism and the proletarian revolution," enriching it with the theory on "imperialism and the proletarian revolution and the revolution in the colonies."

This work consists of two prefaces and 10 chapters.

In the two prefaces (one written in 1917, the other in 1920), Lenin defined the objectives of the book as exposing the economic character of imperialism, the imperialist nature of the 1914-1918 war and the opportunistic, reformist-pacifist and traitorous nature of the 2nd International and prove that imperialism is the stage in which the proletarian revolution becomes a state of direct revolution.

In the first 6 chapters of the work, Lenin analyzed the new phenomena of the world socialist economy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, presenting the special economic characteristics of the transition from laissez faire capitalism to monopolistic capitalism and, on this basis, pointing out the inevitability of the emergence of imperialism.

In the last four chapters, on the basis of the results of the above analysis, Lenin revealed the nature and characteristics of imperialism and the laws governing its movement and development.

The nature of imperialism, according to Lenin, is not only political, nor is it only the policy of the rulers of the developed capitalist countries of annexing and committing aggression against other countries. Employing the dialectical, materialist method of Marxism, Lenin found that the nature of imperialism is economic and stems from production. He defined imperialism as, first and essentially, economic, that is, as capitalist production relations moving under a new form of organization of production (the monopolistic organization or enterprise taking the place of the private enterprise in controlling the economy) and on the basis of new capital ownership relations (monopolistic capital or finance capital, that is, the collective capital of the ruling capitalist groups taking the place of private industrial capital). He summed up imperialism as a special stage of capitalism⁽²⁾ and explained: "Imperialism emerged as the development and direct continuation of the fundamental characteristics of capitalism in general. But capitalism only became capitalist imperialism at a definite and very high stage of its development, when certain of its fundamental characteristics began to change into their opposites... Economically, the main thing in this process is the replacement of capitalist free competition by capitalist monopoly."⁽³⁾ This economic nature of imperialism is manifested in the five basic features of the capitalist economy: 1--the concentration of production and capital has developed to such a high stage that it has created monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life; 2--the merging of bank capital and industrial capital and the creation, on the basis of this 'finance capital' of a financial oligarchy; 3--the export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities acquires exceptional importance; 4--the formation of international monopolist capitalist associations which share the world among themselves; and 5--the territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed and an inevitable struggle to repartition the world takes place. These are also the five basic features of imperialism.

On the basis of these economic features and this economic character, the fundamental economic law of capitalism is expressed as the law of high monopoly profits. These high monopoly profits are realized by intensifying the exploitation of the working class and people at home, particularly by "exploiting an increasingly large number of small or weak nations."⁽⁴⁾

These economic bases and this economic nature inevitable gave rise to the imperialist political system, of which colonialism is only a part of the overseas politics of imperialism. Because the character of imperialism is economic monopoly, the imperialist political system, in particular, and the entire superstructure of imperialism, in general, are reactionary in every field of domestic as well as foreign affairs. The political features of imperialism, as defined by Lenin, are: "Imperialism is the ethic of finance capital and of monopolies, which introduce everywhere the striving for domination, not for freedom. Whatever the political system, the result of these tendencies is reaction everywhere and an extreme intensification of antagonisms in this field. Particularly intensified is the yoke of national oppression and the striving for annexations, that is, the violation of national independence (for annexation is nothing but the violation of the right of nations to self-determination)."⁽⁵⁾

Imperialism is also the cause of wars because "finance capital and the trusts do not diminish but increase the differences in the rate of growth of the various parts of the world economy. Once the chauvinist relation of forces is changed, what other solution of the contradictions can be found under capitalism than that of force?"(6)

Imperialism is also the economic base of opportunism of all kinds. The imperialists are able to spend a small portion of their high monopoly profits to buy a number of the upper strata of the working class and turn them into a worker aristocracy in order to divide and undermine the worker movement. As a result, "the struggle against imperialism, if not closely tied to the struggle against opportunism, is nothing but an empty phrase, a sham."(7)

After establishing the economic and political character of imperialism, Lenin defined the place of imperialism in history, that is, the laws governing its development in the future. He defined imperialism as a special stage of capitalism with three distinctive characteristics: imperialism is monopolistic capitalism; imperialism is parasitic and corrupt capitalism; and imperialism is capitalism in the throes of death. These characteristics indicate that capitalism in this final stage has clearly shown itself to be outmoded, deviant and degenerate. Private ownership and free competition have now become collective capital and monopoly. Capitalism maintains its irrational existence through this negation of itself. Therefore, it is inevitable that capitalism will perish and be replaced by a new and more progressive system--socialism. Thus, the conclusion of the work, as Lenin stated, is: "Then it becomes evident that we have socialization of production...and private property relations constitute a shell which no longer fills its contents...a shell which may remain in a state of decay for a fairly long period(...if, at the worst, a cure of the opportunist abscess is protracted) but which will inevitably be destroyed."(8)

Viewed against the historical background of the times, when practically the entire world was still dominated by imperialism economically as well as politically and ideologically, these scientific conclusions were of major revolutionary significance. Therefore, the work "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism" was truly a torch lighting the way for the proletariat in its struggle within each country and throughout the world. As a result of correctly and clearly recognizing the nature and the laws governing the movement and development of imperialism, the proletariat and its parties in all countries were able to adopt correct policies and take correct steps to mount continuous and effective struggles against imperialism, against the ideology of reactionary imperialist powers, against opportunism and every reformist policy of compromising with imperialism, which had deeply infiltrated the worker movement in many countries.

Some 70 years have passed since this work first made its appearance. The basic issues set forth in it are as contemporary, urgent and real today as they were then. The bitter and relentless struggle between capitalist ideology and communist ideology concerning these issues continues. In this struggle, Lenin's work is an effective weapon and always strikes fear and panic in the capitalist class. Under its scientific and revolutionary light, imperialism has been continuously pushed back. Whole segments of imperialism

have been toppled. Imperialism is now deep into the period of its decline and has lost its influence over a large portion of mankind ever since capitalism was toppled in Russia and a host of other countries in Europe and Asia. This work has been a strong inspiration to colonial countries in their struggle for national liberation and in selecting the course to be followed by their country to free themselves from oppression by imperialism, from dependence upon imperialism and build a progressive society. The Marxist-Leninist theory on the building of the new society has been tested in practice. Socialism has become a world system and is having a strong impact as the factor determining the trend of development of mankind. "More and more nations are not placing their trust in capitalism and do not want to tie their future development to capitalism. They are determined to find and chart courses for carrying out the socialist transformation of their countries."(9)

Since World War II, many new socio-economic phenomena have emerged within the economies of the imperialist countries, most notably the increasingly deep intervention by imperialist states in domestic and foreign economic relations. These socio-economic phenomena have their origins in the early period of the general crisis of capitalism and were called state monopolistic capitalism by Lenin. The high level of development of production forces and the steady worsening of the economic-political situation, an unfavorable development from the standpoint of the fate of capitalism, made it a pressing need for the capitalist state to deeply intervene in the economy to maintain the existence of imperialism, thus causing state monopolistic capitalism to develop and become widespread. However, the rapid and widespread development of state monopolistic capitalism does not represent a transition by capitalism from the stage of imperialism to some special, post-imperialism stage of capitalism. Nor is it the beginnings of the emergence of socialism within capitalism as some revisionists point out. It is still imperialist capitalism. In essence, state monopolistic capitalism is the new form of movement of capitalist production relations. It came into being in the stage of monopolies, when capitalism became deeply mired in a serious general crisis and needed the regulation and business of the bourgeois state itself. Therefore, it manifests itself as direct intervention by the bourgeois state in the economic process, as the combination of the strength of monopolies and the strength of the bourgeois state with the aims of regulating production and combating the worsening economic crisis "in order to save the capitalist system, to make every effort to increase the profits of the imperialist bourgeois class by exploiting the working class and stealing from the broad stratum of the people" at home and in the dependent countries.

Present day imperialism, although it moves under a new form with sophisticated tactics of domination and exploitation, remains unchanged and its economic base is still domination by private and state monopolistic organizations, by private and state finance capital. With this economic base, imperialism continues to be reactionary in every respect. The 27th Congress of the CPSU asserted: "From a political standpoint, the characteristic trend of imperialism is that it is becoming increasingly reactionary in every respect."(10) This trend is seen primarily in the widespread development of neo-fascism, militarism, anti-communism and radical anti-Soviet sentiments, in aggression against or brazen intervention in the internal affairs of other countries, in terroristic threats and the suppression not only of

revolutionary and progressive forces, but also of everything contrary to the intentions of the imperialists. As the progress of history has further shaken the position of imperialism, the policy of the most reactionary imperialist powers has become strongly hostile toward the interests of other nations. They are bitterly opposed to social progress, look for every way to impede the advance of history, of socialism and plot ways to achieve social revenge on a worldwide scale.

As state monopolistic capitalism and the scientific-technological revolution develop, the fundamental economic and social antagonisms of imperialism are becoming sharp. Economic uncertainty and instability are growing. The cyclical crisis and the structural crisis are becoming increasingly serious. Unemployment is rising sharply. Inflation has become chronic. State debt has reached towering proportions. The raw materials, energy and environmental crises are acute, etc. The burden of each of these social tragedies has been thrust upon the laboring people of the imperialist countries and the dependent countries. At the same time, the imperialist countries have been shoving these burdens off onto one another.

In the strongholds of imperialism, monopolists are using the state and the achievements of the scientific-technological revolution to redistribute national income to their advantage, thus causing major harm to the laboring people. Forced by the increasing influence of world socialism and the widespread struggle by workers and laborers at home to make minor concessions with regard to improving working conditions and the standard of living, state monopolistic capitalism has combined deceptive tactics and bribes with a direct assault on the standard of living and the rights of the laborer. Therefore, the struggle of the working class and the broad strata of the people against the arms race and against the imposition of an austerity policy by monopolistic capital and the state is growing in intensity.

Under its neo-colonialist policy, imperialism has stripped young nations of their newly won sovereignty. It is taking advantage of the economic and technical dependence of these countries and their unequal position within the capitalist world economy. It is severely exploiting the developing countries through the export of capital, through unfair trade, through high interest rates, etc. In the majority of these young nations, debts are towering, the economy is crippled, the life of the laboring masses is one of poverty, hunger, illiteracy, disease and so forth. It can be said that the continued existence of imperialism depends, to a very significant degree, on ruthlessly plundering and exploiting the developing countries. Hating imperialism for having committed and continuing to commit heinous crimes, the newly liberated nations are intensifying the struggle to free themselves from the yoke of neo-colonialism and achieve true political independence. In this struggle, they have been winning important victories since the early 1970's. Many dictatorial regimes, all of them lackeys of neo-colonialism, particularly of U.S. neo-colonialism, have collapsed. Many countries have chosen the path of non-capitalist development and are moving toward socialism.

The struggles that the working class and laboring people in the mother country and in the dependent countries have been waging for more than a decade have dealt heavy blows to the domination and exploitation by imperialism. These struggles have helped to exacerbate the antagonisms among the imperialists.

Weakened following its tragic defeat in Vietnam and Indochina, as well as at many other places in the world, and due to the impact of the law of the uneven development of capitalism, U.S. imperialism has lost its position as the only center of imperialism in the world. Three centers of imperialism, the United States, Japan and Western Europe, came into being in the early 1970's. The international competition of capital has developed into a sharp economic and political struggle among these three centers. Although the interests of the class demand a certain degree of unity to combat socialism and the surging revolutionary and democratic movements, the imperialists of the world cannot set aside the antagonisms that exist among them because these economic and political antagonisms are becoming increasingly sharp. Fights among the imperialists in the form of "economic wars," "trade wars," "monetary and interest rate wars" and so forth have been very bitter. This opposition among the imperialists is causing deep splits within imperialism and has the potential of dividing and weakening them further.

In recent years, the United States, the fanatical anti-socialist ringleader of imperialism, has been making extensive efforts to restart the arms race and carry out the militarization of space with the aim of generating lucrative orders for the military-industrial complex and in the hope of reviving the militarized economy, which has long been in crisis, and regaining military superiority. These insane and adventurous actions of the imperialists, particularly the U.S. imperialists, compel all mankind to be vigilant. The peace movement, a forward element in the attack on imperialism, has experienced unprecedented growth in recent years. With its powerful economic and military might, the socialist community, the pillar of which is the Soviet Union, is the solid bulwark, the dependable base of support of all mankind in the struggle to eliminate the nuclear threat and safeguard peace.

The insane tactics, measures and actions of imperialism in the current stage have brought the imperialists large profits and enabled them to maintain a certain number of economic, political, military and other positions and to temporarily maintain their existence. But the overall result of their efforts as well as each of the measures being taken by the imperialists today are a double edged sword. In the immediate future, they will make things better and provide a certain amount of stimulation in order to maintain economic development and combat the crisis. Over the long-range, however, they will cause the emergence of new factors which will exacerbate the inherent antagonisms of imperialism. This is because state monopolistic capitalists will try to keep huge, highly socialized production forces within the increasingly small shell of private capitalist ownership relations on the scale of a small group of powerful capitalists and on the basis of intensifying the exploitation of the working class and laboring people. This has been and is making the basic antagonisms within present day capitalist society deeper and must inevitably be resolved in accordance with the law of the evolution of history.

On the basis of Lenin's arguments concerning imperialism, the 27th Congress of the CPSU asserted: "No 'metamorphosis,' no tactic of modern day capitalism can cancel the laws that govern its development, eliminate the sharp antagonisms between labor and capital, between monopolistic capitalists and society or lead the capitalist system away from its unavoidable destruction from a historical perspective and from the general crisis. The dialectic of development is that the measures being taken by capitalism to achieve the objective of strengthening its position will inevitable exacerbate the antagonisms within capitalism. Imperialism is parasitic, corrupt capitalism in the throes of death, is the night before the socialist revolution."(11)

FOOTNOTES

1. V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works," Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1980, Volume 27, p 383.
2. Ibid., Volume 27, p 489.
3. Ibid., Volume 27, p 488.
4. Ibid., Volume 27, p 536.
5. Ibid., Volume 27, pp 531-532.
6. Ibid., Volume 27, p 500.
7. Ibid., Volume 27, p 538.
8. Ibid., Volume 27, p 539.
9. The Platform and Statutes of the CPSU, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi--Novosti News Agency, Moscow--1986, p 16.
10. Ibid., p 20.
11. Ibid., pp 22-23.

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