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No 4, April 1990

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**The 8th Plenum of the CPV Central Committee
(6th Term)**

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 4, Apr 90 pp 1-4

[Article Published in FBIS-EAS-90-060, 28 Mar 90
pp 66-67]

**Put the Lofty Thoughts of President Ho Chi
Minh Into Actual Practice in Today's Life**

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 4, Apr 90 pp 5-8, 20

[Article by Nguyen Van Linh; published in FBIS-
EAS-90-095, 16 May 90 pp 53-56]

**Dialectics in the Military Thinking of President
Ho Chi Minh**

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 4, Apr 90 pp 9-13, 30

[Article by Hoang Minh Thao; not translated]

Ho Chi Minh—A Great Culturist

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 4, Apr 90 pp 14-20

[Article by Song Thanh; not translated]

**President Ho Chi Minh and the Implementation
of Human Rights in Our Country**

902E0261A Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN
in Vietnamese No 4, Apr 90 pp 21-25

[Article by Dao Tri Uc, PhD in Law, head of the State
and Law Institute of the Social Planning Commission]

[Text] The target of establishing and solidifying the
people's regime was clearly expressed by President Ho
Chi Minh as follows: "Today, we have built the Demo-
cratic Republic of Vietnam. But in an independent
country, if the people don't have freedom, independence
is meaningless." [Footnote 1] [Ho Chi Minh: "For Inde-
pendence and Freedom and for Socialism," Su That
Publishing House, Hanoi, 1970, page 58]

Thus, our regime must be a regime "of the people, by the
people, and for the people." To talk about a regime "of
the People" is to talk about the origin of power and the
subject of power. The power of the people refers to the
"state using the people as the root." The "masses" are
not just people who create material strength and produce
property. Here, the word "masses" means "citizens."
The strength of the system is the strength of its citizens
and of the concept of citizen.

Here, when talking about the principle of all power
belonging to the people and the fact that power cannot be
divided, we cannot avoid discussing the class nature of
political power and state power. Political power in a
society with classes and conflicts will above all manifest

the interests of the ruling class. If that is so, why do we
say that "all power belongs to the people?" Concerning
this, Marx wrote: "Only through the common rights of
society can a class demand widespread rule." [Footnote
2] [C. Marx and F. Engels, "Selected Works," Su That
Publishing House, Hanoi, 1980, volume 1, page 30]

Within the sphere of bourgeois democracy, particularly
just after the victory of the bourgeois revolution, in
exercising its political power, the bourgeois class, too,
must accept a diffusion of power. Moreover, even within
the bourgeois class, there are various interest groups.
Recognizing the interests of the various classes is a good
way to maintain the interests and political power of the
bourgeois class.

In the socialist revolution and in socialist construction,
combining the class nature and human nature of political
power is a fundamental problem. Above all, this is
manifested in the interests of the workers in conjunction
with the interests of other laboring classes. Because of
this, this must not and can not manifest power in an
isolated manner. On the other hand (and this is an even
more important problem), to reach its class goals, which
are also the common targets of society, the worker class
must have various forms of power to promptly and
adequately acknowledge and reflect the interests of the
other elements of society and represent the different
needs of social progress.

But the problem is not simply one of a quantitative
increase in social interests but new qualitative develop-
ment if we are to have a formula for satisfying the
different interests. This is a dynamic political mecha-
nism. In this, one factor does not have to yield to
another. Instead, this must be a coordinated mechanism
with the various factors stimulating each other based on
interests and the motive force of interests—economic
interests, social interests, political interests, and so on.

If the powers "of the people" and "for the people"
symbolize the nature and targets of our system, political
power "by the people" is automatically implemented.
Besides the functions that manifest the nature of this,
this is the "total amount" that indicates the level of
development of socialist democracy in our system.

When talking about the party, President Ho Chi Minh
clearly said that "party solidarity is not enough for the
revolution to succeed. There must be solidarity among
the people of the entire country." And "as compared
with the total number of people, there are very few party
members, with only one party member for hundreds of
people." [Footnote 3] [Ho Chi Minh, "Collected
Works," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1984,
volume 4, page 450] This viewpoint shows that President
Ho was imbued with Lenin's view that "a small number
of people, meaning the party, cannot implement social-
ism.... Only after tens of millions of people have studied

ways to establish socialism will it be possible to implement socialism." [Footnote 4] [V.I. Lenin, "Collected Works," Progress Publishing House, Moscow, 1977, volume 36, page 68]

When talking about the thoughts of President Ho on mass work, many researchers have focused only on the concept of serving the masses. Because of this, mass agitation has been viewed mainly from that perspective and based on the need to "become deeply involved with the masses," "listen" to the views of the masses, "associate closely" with the masses, and so on. Naturally, those are very important themes of mass agitation. President Ho strongly criticized the "revolutionary mandarins" and "gentlemen" in the zones and provinces who put on airs when they go to localities. [Footnote 5] [Ho Chi Minh, "Collected Works," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1984, volume 4, page 461] He criticized those who thought that they could gain the love of the people just by calling themselves "communists." [Footnote 6] [Ibid., volume 5, page 184] He pointed out that an important standard for evaluating the revolutionary quality of various echelon cadres is whether they "stay in close contact with the masses and always give attention to the interests of the masses." [Footnote 7] [Ibid., volume 4, pages 494, 495]

But there is another aspect of President Ho's thinking to which researchers have given little attention. That is his thinking on the true role of the masses with respect to the regime, or his ideas on a regime "by the people." He referred to the people as the "masters" of the country and regime and as the subject of civil power as implemented by citizens. No one can grant them power or give them "more" or "less" power. Since the very first days of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, he realized that the regime could maintain its popular nature and struggle on behalf of the people only if the people built that regime. As everyone knows, the first general election in Vietnam was organized in very difficult conditions only several months after seizing power. But the election was a brilliant success. President Ho made an emotional appeal to the people to vote:

"Tomorrow is 6 January 1946. Tomorrow is a day that will put our nation on a new path. Tomorrow is a glorious day for our people, because tomorrow is the day of the general election and tomorrow is the first day in Vietnam's history in which the people will begin to exercise their human rights. Tomorrow, our people will freely choose people worthy to represent them and carry out the tasks of the country." [Footnote 8] [Ho Chi Minh, "Selected Works," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, volume 1, page 228]

On the other hand, just after the new regime was established, President Ho realized that steps had to be taken to guard against and oppose bureaucratic centralism. He saw the danger of the regime becoming corrupted and of the masses being left out of the power mechanism. He spoke many times about "revolutionary mandarins," just as Engels had talked about "proletarian

mandarins." In his well-known work "The State and Revolution," Lenin clearly said that a proper state is a worker state. But using tricky bureaucratic practices, there are those who want to prevent this.

Why is there political corruption, and why are people left out of the power mechanism?

The reason for this has to do with the bureaucratic and command mechanism and dogmatic views concerning socialism. That mechanism and those views have held back the development of the people's political character and their social activeness. Every manifestation of independent thinking is in danger of being labeled as "leftist" or "rightist." Individuals and individualism are synonymous with "petty bourgeois manifestations" or the "bourgeoisie." In "Change Work Methods," which was written in 1947, President Ho discussed the evils of such manifestations. He said that we have many talented and creative people. But because our leadership methods are weak and bureaucratic practices are still strong, these people are buried and not promoted. [Footnote 9] [Ho Chi Minh, "Collected Works," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1984, volume 4, pages 452, 453]

The bureaucratic apparatus and mechanism must be subordinate to the individual and not to laws, which could easily lead to granting and maintaining special rights and privileges. The changes have reached the point where special rights and privileges are part of the steps for evaluating people. It has reached the point where people have become the target of subjective desires: The head of an organization has the power to "promote" whomever he wants or to abuse or dismiss "stubborn" people. President Ho pointed out that in such circumstances, the masses don't say anything, not because they don't have ideas about this, but because they don't think that higher echelons will listen or take action and because they fear being reprimanded. [Footnote 10] [Ibid., pages 456, 457] Such changes have stunted the creativity and active nature of the people, and so how can we talk about the people's concept of citizenship?

But the main reason for the slow development of a concept of citizenship and of a political culture is the low level of economic development. Even now, in building the economy and renovating politics, the correct observations of President Ho on the "main characteristics" of our country in the process of advancing to socialism must be used as the basis for proposing policies and measures.

Clearly, given our poor and backward economic conditions, even though the regime is theirs, the laboring people do not have an adequate economic basis to become closely involved with it. The strongest motive for maintaining political power is still economic interests. Added to that, the localities have been divided into closed in, self-sufficient zones that have little interaction with and that are not dependent on the centralized distribution mechanism of the state. In such conditions, certain people now "think and act on behalf of the

people." It has reached the point where the interests and desires of the people are ignored.

On the other hand, during the war, the state apparatus had to take the lead in organizing the national welfare and the people's livelihood. As a result, the people became used to depending on the state. They did not clearly see their role. That was fertile ground for the growth of bureaucratic centralism.

The question here is: Should and can democracy and the powers of the people and by the people be implemented in conditions in which the economy is still poor and backward or must this wait until a certain level of economic development has been reached?

The past 45 years of building and consolidating the regime in our country have shown that this is essential and that the problem of building a political structure and power mechanism is one of the leading problems.

The above arguments about the process of building political and legal mechanisms that can be used as tools by the people in performing their role as political masters in our country have affirmed that in Vietnam and in a number of other Asian and African countries (unlike in European countries), the process of developing political mechanisms, political character, and political culture takes place both within and outside the scope of economic interests. Or this can precede economic interests, particularly in the sphere of democratic freedoms. The aim of strengthening and promoting democratic values and preconditions before the economic preconditions are right is to accelerate the democratic process, create the conditions for the people to learn about democracy, form the capabilities of citizens, and use the intelligence of the people in building a civilized and progressive society. After the economy has been solidified, stabilized, and expanded, political concepts and mechanisms must be given more attention and placed within the orbit of economic development and economic and social interests. Creating and solidifying the economic and social preconditions will build a clear path for implementing the powers of the people.

By implementing the ideas of President Ho, we are giving attention to basic methods and paths in order to perfect democracy, improve cultural and political standards, and improve the self-management capabilities of the people. This is the path for developing the economy and renovating the economic mechanism. On one hand, economic democracy is a recognition of the social role of the economic elements and economic forces. On the other hand, in the sphere of the state economy, this means giving production and commercial rights to the production installations. In this process, there will gradually be a reduction in the pressure applied from the top down, and the creativity and independence of the bases will be strengthened through implementing the ownership and business rights and clearly formulating the economic interests of the producers, collectives, populated zones, and territories. Society cannot have active

citizens unless the economic and social interests of the people are clear. Here, we can see more clearly the viewpoints on the relationship between economic renovation and political renovation. As the economy grows and becomes more varied, political concepts and the concept of citizenship will have a basis for developing and becoming more varied. That is the objective basis of political renovation and the construction of an effective political system.

President Ho frequently said that if an organizational or work method was not suited to the masses, we must have the courage to abandon or change that method. If a method is suited to the masses, even if we don't yet have such a method, we must take steps to implement it. [Footnote 11] [Ibid., volume 4, pages 459, 460] We must thoroughly understand that idea in order to renovate the methods and forms used to implement the powers of the people. That is, we must renovate the political system in our country. This political system must be the product of economic democracy, and it must ensure economic development. It must reflect and fully represent the interests and progressive needs of all classes, people, and elements in society. Such a political system must be planned in such a way so as to reduce manifestations of bureaucratism and individualism, misuse of power, corruption, and irresponsible acts as much as possible. To do this, there must be a structure of organizations that truly represent the powers of the people. These must have real capabilities so that they can represent the people. In doing this, the people's system of representatives must be maintained, and the management organizations must not be allowed to go outside the orbit of maintaining the powers of the people. There must be forms to implement democracy directly and laws to guarantee the democratic rights of the people in the spheres of carrying on press and publishing activities, establishing associations, holding meetings and marches, going on strike, and exercising religious freedoms. The laws must be of the people, by the people, and for the people. To this end, there must be a mechanism to formulate, promulgate, and implement laws in a democratic and scientific manner. There must also be a mechanism to control and inspect the activities of the organizations, agencies, mass organizations, and citizens to ensure that they are obeying the constitution and laws. The legal system—civil, criminal, and administrative laws—must be renovated. The organizations that uphold the laws and the laws that serve as a basis for the activities of these organizations—the Labor Law, the Civil Code and civil proceedings, the Criminal Code and criminal proceedings, the administrative laws, and the laws on the organization and activities of organizations such as the public security forces, the organs of control, and the courts—must be renovated. Today, this renovation is being carried on very slowly, and there are still no clear guidelines. The legal system must be thoroughly renovated in a democratic, humane, and effective manner based on ensuring the independence and objective nature of the judicial organizations, strengthening them materially and providing them with technical

equipment, raising the professional standards—particularly the level of understanding of the law—of the cadres in the judicial organizations, and clearly determining the objective and scientific bases in evaluating the results of the activities of the judicial organizations.

Thus, in order to implement the powers of the people, synchronized efforts must be made, and there must be basic and all-round renovation. As President Ho reminded us, we must not “cling obstinately to the old ways.”

President Ho's Measures for Building a New Culture

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 4, Apr 90 pp 26-30

[Article by Do Huy; not translated]

Fifteen Years—Look Back in Order To See the Future

902E0236A Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 4, Apr 90 pp 31-37

[Article by Tran Bach Dang]

[Text] Editor's Note: Summarizing the construction and defense of our socialist Vietnamese fatherland during the past 15 years based and, based on that, learning practical and useful lessons is a large and complex task that requires that all the echelons and sectors contribute actively if this is to be done well. We have printed the following article in order to add another voice in summarizing things. [end editor's note.]

Our country has been completely liberated for 15 years now. The world situation during those 15 years and the great changes that have taken place within Vietnam are very complex. Today, there are few people who would argue that waging war against the enemy is more difficult than construction. No one comparison is rational, because that is too simple and there are subjective and objective conditions. The specific needs of society in each historical stage change in terms of character, strategy, and methods of implementation.

The past 15 years are now a part of history. The most useful thing is that we can learn economic lessons from those 15 years for use now and in the future. We do not agree completely with the statement by Tuan Tu: Nature continues to operate normally without consideration for King Nghieu or King Kiet. Today, man is affecting nature through scientific developments. And in the social sphere, man plays a decisive role.

Although just a very short period, these past 15 years have been very rich years.

Economic historians in the country will have much to say about different periods of these 15 years of building, starting from after the great victory on 30 April 1975, using various documents and maps to reflect the progress

made and the challenges faced by our economy. In this article, I will start from phenomena that everyone can understand without requiring any special knowledge in order to highlight the main stages of the past 15 years. The value of the divisions in this article is relative and even subjective. Obviously, I have relied on the phenomena in Ho Chi Minh City and southern Vietnam—a region which, like it or not, is representative of our country's new period of development.

1. From 30 April 1975 to the end of 1976

In the space of about 18 months, the south's economy in general continued to function in accord with the things left over from the old system such as consumer goods and a number of raw materials. During that period, the currency was changed, and an “operation” was launched to reform the compradors. But the victory had a strong psychological impact on the people, and the material reserves of society and the industrial bases stagnated. As a result, this was viewed as a transitional phase. The people were waiting for a “permanent” form in the economic sphere even though they knew that it would be very difficult to “achieve a status quo,” not only for political reasons but also because we had to shift from a wartime to a peacetime economy, the old sources of aid had dried up, former foreign customers had canceled the contracts, foreign corporations had pulled out of the country, and international financial organizations refused to give us any loans or aid.

2. From the beginning of 1977 to the end of 1978

One of the special characteristics of these two years was the fierce border war. Another was that the “operation” to reform the compradors was expanded to the commercial bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie in general. Along with this, there were serious floods that did great damage to the crops in the Mekong Delta. In the rural areas, we began to transform agriculture. Production collectives, collectives, and state farms were established. The commercial sector was nationalized, the system of distribution in kind began to be applied in the urban and rural areas. The production of agricultural products and consumer goods stagnated because of the lack of raw materials, because the mechanism was not tied to commodity production, and because the management mechanism was changed suddenly and the people in charge lacked capabilities.

3. From the beginning of 1979 to the fall of 1985

The year 1979 was the lowest point ever in the south's economy. In that year, along with the successes in helping Cambodia topple Pol Pot, our country had to deal with a major military offensive launched by the Chinese along our northern border. At the same time, we had to continue to help Cambodia resist Pol Pot's forces. Because of the poor harvests in 1978, there was a shortage of grain. The policy of transforming agriculture achieved very little, the prices of agricultural products were irrational, control stations were set up along the

main river and land communications routes, and Ho Chi Minh City had to eat other cereals besides rice and potatoes.

At the end of 1978 and the beginning of 1979, this situation forced the Ho Chi Minh City party organization to consider ways to solve these problems. "Solutions" began to appear at a number of state enterprises that produced consumer goods. Long An Province participated in this embryonic renovation by "raising salaries." The resolution of the 6th Plenum of the CPV [Communist Party of Vietnam] Central Committee (4th Term) used the experiences of Ho Chi Minh City, Long An Province, and several other place to formulate a unified policy. A number of aspects of the mechanism were revised. In 1980, the results were very encouraging. However, this was a time of fierce struggle between the renovationist tendencies and conservative tendencies as manifested on one hand by the policy to free the production strength, switch to economic accounting, and give greater authority to the bases and localities and on the other hand by the policy to implement strict planning, deliver products, have state subsidies and bureaucratic centralism, continue to "transform" agriculture, and extend "transforming" industry and commerce to manual workers, small traders, the food and drink and ready-made clothing sectors, and barbers. As a result, there were advances and retreats. The positive "shoots" were easily destroyed. Or it was difficult to expand the sphere. Centralism and state subsidies continued to control the economic line, and the socialist construction model was still not in accord with Vietnam's special characteristics. Although it was said that "permission has been given to keep the five economic elements," everything depended on the state sector. Nothing had been done to change the form of ownership or the right to use the means of production in the industrial (including small industry and handicrafts), agricultural, commercial, or service spheres. Voluntarism was maintained, and the main emphasis was still on heavy industry. Furthermore, specific policies were often changed. Negative aspects appeared, and if the conservatives viewed something as negative, the "ax fell." Directives, including oral directives and even resolutions of the highest echelons of the party, regulated the policies.

In this long struggle, by the beginning of 1984, there were signs that the reform tendency was succeeding in saving the economy. Throughout 1984 to the fall of 1985, the economy gradually recovered, production expanded, the purchasing power of the dong increased, and the living conditions of the people improved. The state subsidies system was relaxed, and economic accounting began to be used in a number of service sectors such as the grain sector.

4. From the fall of 1985 to the end of 1986

The price and currency changes in September 1985 struck a hard blow at the economy, which had just found the right path. The conservative backlash attacked the

reforms and returned the situation to a point just as dangerous as that prior to 1979. There was a slowdown in production. State subsidies remained in control. Prices skyrocketed, as did inflation. The danger of economic collapse became clear for all to see.

The Sixth Party Congress faced the truth squarely: The party engaged in serious self-criticism and officially passed renovation resolutions on a marcosomic scale, with priority given to renovating thinking concerning the economic mechanism.

5. From after the Sixth Congress to the present

The years 1987 and 1988 were a time of healing the wounds caused by the disastrous incidents in the fall of 1985. This was done using a variety of new measures. This included gradually eliminating state subsidies, exploiting a number of society's commercial production capabilities, beginning to open the door to foreign commerce and foreign investment, privatizing a number of consumer goods production sectors and service sectors, recognizing the land use rights and agricultural circulation freedoms of the peasants after paying their taxes, decentralizing a number of sectors, giving more independence to the production and service organizations and the localities, and gradually democratizing social life.

It can be said that by the end of 1988, the most damaging legacies of prior mistakes and the old mechanism had been eliminated. And as we know, 1989 presented a varied socioeconomic face, which some people called "prosperity." Although this evaluation is not entirely correct and is somewhat of an exaggeration, the improvement in the socioeconomic sphere was obvious.

Stated differently, in 1989, renovation became a part of life on a broad scale and to a certain depth. And by the time this article is published, this will have been underway for only about 15 months. Obviously to have achieved such good results in only 15 months is the result of a process of struggle. But there are still things that must be eliminated, and this will be very difficult.

Something that is now very favorable to us is that the Vietnamese army has fulfilled its obligations to Cambodia. What is unfavorable to us is that almost all of the socialist countries have entered a period of great crisis. In some places, socialism, the leadership rights of the communist party, and the role of the laborers have been eliminated, or at least severely restricted. There are many complex reasons for this crisis, but the main reasons are incorrect ideas concerning socialism and the leading role of the communist party, the arrogance and corruption of a number of party members who are remote from the people, the lack of independence and realistic action, and the influence of outsiders.

The serious confusion in a number of socialist countries is indicative of the pressing need to renovate thinking

concerning socialism and the process of socialist construction. This also means that thinking must be supplemented and updated. There must be a thorough understanding of the methodology of the founders of scientific socialism in accord with the historical conditions and realities of each country. The contradictions that have arisen in life must be discovered and used correctly. Socialist construction must be tied to the interests of the nation and to the material and spiritual interests of each person in the realm of human rights and civic rights. And this must be tied to perfecting the leading vanguard units in a world that is very dynamic as a result of the leaps made by science and technology.

In the last 15 years—disregarding the war, which was carried on at various levels for 14 years—we have lost at least three important opportunities. First, after the country was completely liberated, if we had had a Marxist scientific viewpoint and had correct economic thinking, we could have made good use of our political power and our capabilities to mobilize the intelligence and talents of our citizens, the relatively modern material and technical bases, and the managerial practices and experiences of the south in order to enable the country to play an important economic role in Southeast Asia. This would have been true in spite of the embargo by the United States and its allies and in spite of the fact that China and reactionary groups in the country still nurtured the idea of restoring their evil system. This squandering of Vietnam's assets (including brainpower), stemmed from arrogance in victory, from the "self-reliance" of the small peasants, and from the dogmatism of the petty bourgeoisie in alliance with the feudal class mechanism. As a result of this, we slighted the production and scientific and technical forces and moved backward instead of forward. It must be said that the model of socialism that northern Vietnam had followed since 1955 was a copy of the Soviet and Chinese models. On the other hand, looking at the objective conditions in half of the country, because the infrastructure and potential there was very weak, because intellectual standards were low, and because of the need to aid the revolution in the south, help the revolutions in Laos and Cambodia, and oppose the enemy's cruel war of destruction, it was difficult for that model to manifest its capabilities. What is unfortunate is that our great victory in 1975 opened up a new opportunity, but the party did not respond quickly enough to grasp the new factors. Here, thinking became dogmatic, there was bureaucratic centralism, the cadres and party members became bogged down in outdated mechanisms, and rigid organizations bore most of the responsibility.

Second, after the shockwaves of 1978 and 1979, we woke up and went back to the socioeconomic construction models. Even though we had lost many bases and people, it was not too late. "Removing" the patches, whenever the microcosmic made progress, it was blocked or even smashed by the macrocosmic. Once again the old diseases caused mistakes to be made.

Third, the situation in 1984 and the beginning of 1985 improved. But instead of exploiting that, we "turned off the light" by adjusting prices in a subjective, voluntaristic, and authoritarian manner. In the final analysis, there was only one reason for the slowness of those 10 years.

Fortunately, the Sixth Party Congress launched a renovation movement aimed at overcoming this slowness and generating new development. The ups and downs of these 15 years have given us much valuable experience.

The country is seeing some initial "rays of light." The problems do not stop with the encouraging figures on grain production, the stabilization of prices, or the reduction in inflation. The problem, as others before us have said, is: If you use money as an example, you can mend the bonnet and gown neatly. If you use history as an example, you will know success and defeat.

Nurturing those initial rays of light is very painstaking. It's hard work and painful to bring about those rays.

These 15 years have been a great teacher of ours. They have taught us to avoid dogmatism and to avoid copying the models of other places. We must start from our country's specific circumstances in order to formulate targets for each period and formulate strategies and tactics and deploy suitable forces to hit those targets. We must not gain knowledge through hearsay only or imitate others blindly. The failures in 13 of those 15 years were, in the final analysis, due to dogmatism, from our viewpoints to our social organization. Our so-called "viewpoint" was not a proletarian viewpoint or Vietnamese proletarian viewpoint. Reforming, nationalizing, and cooperativizing things regardless of the specific conditions and results are the things that brought us close to feudalism. And there were many other things: background-ism and verdicts on matters large and small that were made by certain people in power instead of the public. The resolution of the Fourth Party Congress set a target of 20 million tons of grain, a target that was hit 15 years later. That shows the level of our idealism.

The old dogma is viewed as no longer having the strength to threaten our country, people, or party—although it is still dangerous. But today, there is a new dogma. This says: East Europe and the Soviet Union are carrying on reforms. Vietnam should follow their example.

We were foolish once, and this caused us much grief for almost 15 years—in the north, the damage began in 1955. No one can be so stupid a second time. What is happening in Eastern Europe? The tumors must be removed. But once the sphere of renovation has been broken and disturbances have arisen, it will be difficult for socialism to survive. National independence, democracy, and the material lives of each upright citizen are being threatened. Think about who is profiting from this. Many parties and organizations are disseminating all types of information, some of which is true and some of which isn't. So-called "data" aimed at slandering honest people have become the orthodox view. Is this what

those who had hoped to establish a wholesome and wonderful society want? Evil elements and opportunists will make use of injustices in many ways and, like magicians, turn everything upside down.

We must understand this lesson very clearly. Although we still face difficulties, we know what we must do. Some people have used Thailand as an example to criticize our slowness. We don't need to explain that Thailand's situation is different from ours. But based on the development trends of 1989, we do not think that Vietnam is "at the bottom" among countries in Southeast Asia. And this view has a scientific basis. I will cite a simple example. Vietnam is a socialist country. It is also a third-world country. But we have a very small foreign debt. Today, we owe only \$3 billion and 8 billion rubles (which is approximately \$1.3 billion if you use the ruble-to-dollar exchange rate announced by the Soviet government, that is, 6 rubles to the dollar [as published]) at a time when our gross social product is approximately \$16 billion.

The most important thing with respect to the nation's fate and the lives of the Vietnamese people is that the situation must be stabilized. The scope of stability is very broad: The state must not overturn the renovation policy as happened in the fall of 1985. A few deviations here and there must not cause us to restore state subsidies and administrative centralism. We must promote renovation even more and use economic results to evaluate the policies. The cumbersome management mechanism, which has many layers, must be replaced by a dynamic apparatus. A political program and long-term socioeconomic strategy must be announced soon, and laws must be promulgated in the near future. Democratic reforms must be carried out on a large scale through the legislative, executive, and judicial organizations and through the mass organizations. The leading party must be reorganized in accord with the formula of separating guided and intellectual leadership from administrative power. The quality of the party members must be viewed as more important than the number of party members. The party must not be turned into an ordinary mass organization. Rather, it must be composed of the "cream" of society. As the experiences of many socialist countries show, stability must penetrate deeply into the concept of responsibility of each citizen. The viewpoint must be: stabilize in order to renovate; renovate in order to stabilize. These are two sides of the same coin. Stability does not mean rejecting basic and necessary changes concerning key problems. The viewpoint is to build the country given the internal and international conditions, divide the responsibilities for leading and managing society under the light of the scientific advances, and rearrange the economic and social structure and the system, including employing people based on the renovation standards. Conversely, renovation does not mean denying or overturning everything. That would not benefit our country or people. It would lead to anarchy and irresponsibility and provide a good environment for opportunists who want to disrupt the work of the people and nation.

Another thing that is just as important is to eliminate the fear of wealthy people from renovation thinking. Social fairness must have a more scientific form in conditions in which the country's greatest task is to build a material and technical base, which will take several decades. It's true that there is an income gap between the different classes of people—based on their consumption capabilities. Illegal activities must be prevented. We do not want to reduce the incomes of those who have earned their money legitimately. Instead, the goal is to raise the incomes of those whose incomes are low. Social fairness should not be viewed in a feudal manner, which is not fair: excellent workers receive the same pay as inferior workers, sectors that lose money are treated the same as those that make a profit, and lazy people are treated just like hardworking people. If that is the case, there will not be real fairness, and with respect to principles, this will encourage ignorance and laziness.

Fearing wealthy people is similar to fearing wealthy zones. A good example for us is that if the Mekong Delta was not the key rice area and if Ho Chi Minh City was not the country's economic center—it would not be wrong to call Ho Chi Minh City our country's economic capital just like New York versus Washington, Bombay versus New Dehli, Shanghai versus Beijing, and Karachi versus Islamabad—it would be difficult for the country to pull itself out of a crisis such as the one that we recently experienced. The area from Quang Nam Province south accounts for 80 percent of the country's export value. From this, we can understand the economic role and position of each region and area. Lang Son and Hanoi do not lack rice. There was a terrible natural disaster in 1989 that affected the area from Quang Nam to Thanh Hoa, but rice prices remained stable, and Quang Tri was able to export rice. This shows that in running an economy, you must have a "fist zone," with the final results belonging to the entire country.

Of course, there must be a regulatory tax policy so that the state has sufficient budget funds to satisfy the needs of all of society. Here, I would like to interject an idea: We oppose state subsidies in production and commerce at a time when every government must provide state subsidies to the road and bridge sector, the education and public health sectors, and the sectors that deal with elderly people, children, disabled people, seriously ill people, and retired people. State subsidies must be given to those who truly need them. Otherwise, they must be eliminated.

For the Vietnamese people, the year 1990, which marks the 15th anniversary of the liberation of the entire country and the first year of the final decade of the 20th Century, provides an opportunity to look back in order to look ahead. This is the fourth year of renovation, whose results will be used to formulate major principles at the party's Seventh National Congress of Delegates.

Immediate difficulties continue to pile up. But the preconditions for industrialization—based on agriculture in a broad sense—are relatively adequate. The party's Seventh Congress will mark a major shift in our country through suitable industrialization.

With some reservations, we are optimistic about the future of socialist construction in Vietnam and the future of the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam based on the theories of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Ho Chi Minh.

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16 October 1990

Exchange of Opinions

9

Measures To Renovate Education

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 4, Apr 90 pp 38-42

[Article by Ho Ngoc Dai; not translated]

A Number of Political and Social Problems With Respect to Today's Youths

902E0244A Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN
in Vietnamese No 4, Apr 90 pp 43-47, 59

[Article by Vu Mao, head of the Office of the National Assembly and Council of State]

[Text] Today's social policy toward youths plays a very important role in the mass agitation work of the party. Today, to ensure that youths have confidence in the party and adhere to the socialist system, it is not enough to teach them about "ideals and traditions." We must also formulate and implement social policies regarding them. If the social policies are not implemented well and if these do not benefit them today, in the future the wonderful social models will be just sterile theories without the power to attract youths.

In order to have a system of social policies aimed at exploiting the potential of youths fully and quickly in building the country, I think that attention should be given to the following:

1. Recognize and properly evaluate the role of youths in society: Resolution 26 of the Politburo (Fifth Term) evaluated our country's youths in a basic and comprehensive manner and clearly determined their great role in our country's socialist revolution. But this resolution was not understood thoroughly by all the sectors and bases. Thus, in society, the role of youths based on the viewpoint of the party has not been recognized or evaluated correctly.

Today, more than 17 million youths are present in industrial and agricultural production, commercial and service activities, cultural activities, and national defense. In the labor force, 47 percent of the social laborers are youths. In particular, in a number of sectors such as agricultural production, science and technology, and the military, youths account for 60-90 percent. Young laborers have been assigned leading tasks in many production and capital construction sectors, and they have been stationed at key points along the borders and on the islands. On all the front lines, today's young generation is playing an assault role and completing the tasks in an outstanding manner.

As for the future, today's youths are the ones who will take over from their fathers and older brothers, the Vietnamese communists who founded this country, in running the country. Once they have done so, it will be they, and not us, who will determine the future of the country. They will build the life that they want in accord with their capabilities.

Thus, with respect to our social policies, the correct viewpoints of the party toward youths must be concretized in the form of laws. Concrete policies must be applied in the spheres of culture, education, public health, physical education, marriage, work, the distribution of social welfare, the training and use of young

cadres, and so on. The social role of youths must be affirmed, incorrect views in society toward youths must be corrected, and all of society must be mobilized to participate actively in training the young generation.

2. Help youths to have correct goals in life so that, based on those goals, they can actively organize their material and spiritual life and that of their family. The social policies must open up new opportunities to help the youths in seeking happiness.

Dogmatism and the old system of state subsidies, which existed for a rather long period of time, resulted in our youths gradually losing independence in thinking and made them passive in life. As for thinking, youths were forced to accept the ideas of their elders. As for "earning a living," they were bound by hundreds of irrational regulations.

To give one example, most of today's youths want correct and timely information concerning the situation in socialist countries, the plots of the imperialists, and predictions about the future of our country in the 1990s and the first years of the 21st Century so that they can set goals for their future. This is a legitimate wish, and this is necessary. But youths at the bases and in the localities are starved for information. The serious lack of information in our country today is causing a great imbalance in the understanding and thinking of youths. Thus, social policies must be formulated in such a way as to help youths overcome this imbalance.

Another example is that many of our youths have talents and will power in organizing production and commercial business activities. They want the state to formulate mechanisms and clear policies to develop things. But even though our policies and mechanisms have been revised, there are still many bonds. For example, many youths want to move and live somewhere else in order to open a farm, small enterprise, or service enterprise. But the regulations concerning household control and movement to another region still contain many restrictions. Other youths want to go abroad to work or to observe commercial production methods in highly profitable sectors such as the electronics sector so that they can build production installations here. But our regulations on obtaining an exit permit are very complex. Some people encounter difficulties in publishing their works or selling their plans or inventions. Others can't build their young family as they want for various reasons, such as housing.

In order to help youths escape the bonds of the old regulations and mechanisms, our social policies must liberate them, and the state must quickly reexamine things and eliminate the old regulations that are now outdated. It must formulate new policies and regulations in accord with development.

3. The state and all of society must concentrate on solving the two burning problems of youths: education and jobs. When reexamining things and formulating a new system of economic and social policies of a strategic

nature in order to train and exploit the potential of our youths, the state and society must concentrate on solving these two problems. These are the most pressing problems with respect to youths. As young people, youths need to study. And because they have just begun their lives, youths need to have work so that they can support themselves, contribute to building the country, and pursue even greater happiness. This is quite natural and easy to understand, but solving these problems is not easy. We are presently facing a dismal situation.

As for jobs, as compared with previous generations of youths, the level of education of today's youths is clearly higher. But in our country, the general level of education of the people is lower than that elsewhere in the region. This is the result of war and low investment in education.

Today, more than 30 percent of our youths are unable to attend school. There are 2,830,000 illiterates in the country between the ages of 10 and 30. A sparsely populated province such as Cao Bang has 40,000 illiterate youths. In the four Mekong Delta provinces, in the first quarter of 1989 more than 4,000 children dropped out of school. The percentage of youths with Level-III cultural standards is declining as compared with the total number of youths. The percentage of youths who have attended college and vocational middle school is very low. (South Korea has a smaller population than Vietnam, but it has 1 million students while we have only 300,000.) Moreover, the quality of the instruction at the general schools is very poor.

In order to overcome this situation, the social policies must advance general solutions based on the guideline of increasing the investment budget of the state in conjunction with direct contributions by the people for education. Immediately, specific policies must be formulated to make good use of the 20 billion invested by the state to eliminate illiteracy. In accord with the resolution passed during the sixth session of the eighth term of the National Assembly, tuition in Grade 1 and in the mountain areas must be abolished. Funds must be collected at the production units and businesses to subsidize families whose children have had to drop out of school in grades 1 or 2 because of poverty and encourage them to return to school. Specific regulations must be formulated immediately in order to make proper use of the tuition collected from students, contributions or direct aid given to the schools by people, and state budget funds allocated for education in order to improve the lives of the students and improve the material base and instructional materials of the general schools and colleges.

On the other hand, through specific regulations, the social policies must help the youths form new ideas concerning life and work. College is not the only door to life. Conversely, we must not create a dead-end for those youths who are eager for a chance to advance their level of education to the college level or higher.

Along with general education, vocational education for youths is also a pressing issue. Today, people with skills have difficulty finding work. Nevertheless, each year, 60-70 percent of the students who graduate from general middle schools and a large number of those who graduate from primary-level general school do not have any skills. Thus, there must be an investment policy to strengthen vocational education in the general schools, vocational classes must be opened, and holding vocational tutorial classes at the production installations must be encouraged.

In recent years, many of the vocational training installations of the ministries have used only 40-50 percent of their capacity. In the coming period, if the ministries do not have sufficient investment funds, they must transfer these installations to the localities. The localities can reserve one-third or one-half of the people trained for the central echelon, with the rest used by the localities.

In order to expand vocational training for youths, vocational training centers can be established based on the state and people working together. Excellent workers and skilled craftsmen can be encouraged to open training classes, and nonformal vocational training can be expanded based on voluntary contributions by the people.

The colleges must actively study scientific and technical and management subjects and apply these in actual practice. Recently, a number of schools signed training and production support research contracts with enterprises, and so there should be additional sources of funds to improve living conditions for the students. But many schools are still confused and have not done anything. The main reason is that most of the scientific and technical activities of the students and instructors at the schools are not tied to production, and they do not directly support production. As a result of the separation between scientific and technical research and production, the quality of our commodities is poor. As we know, in recent years, the price structure of almost all products in the world has undergone very basic changes and manifested the guiding role of science and technology. Today, in many products of modern production, the cost of intelligence, the quintessential content of science, accounts for 70-75 percent of the total price. The cost of raw materials accounts for 20-25 percent, and the cost of labor accounts for only three to five percent. However, in many of our products today, the cost of intelligence is negligible. Thus, how can we satisfy domestic and export needs and compete with other countries? Specific policies must be formulated to motivate the colleges and research institutes to bring many valuable inventions, models, and research projects to the production installations, corporations, and enterprise federations and to motivate these organizations to use these intellectual products.

As for labor and jobs, in 1988 our country had approximately 1.6 million unemployed people, most of whom were youths. In 1989, in the wake of the expansion of the

multi-faceted economy, a number of private production and service installations hired tens of thousands of young laborers. But the rearrangement of production in the state sector and the demobilization of a large number of troops resulted in the number of unemployed youths remaining at a high level.

Unemployment is one of the things that has generated crime and many other social evils. Unemployed youths who are not involved in building the country are not able to build a full and happy life for themselves and their families, and they are a heavy burden on the state economy, which is already very weak. Unemployment among youths is also limiting ordinary physical growth and having a bad effect on the race. The indices on the decline in height and weight and the lack of proper nutrition among youths have reached an alarming level. As a result of the fact that youths have not been hired, many organizations and enterprises are staffed by elderly people. Thus, providing youths with jobs is a key element in today's social policy toward youths. The resolution of the Sixth Party Congress clearly states that "providing jobs for laborers, particularly in the cities, and to youths is the leading socioeconomic task in coming years."

To create jobs for youths, the immediate task is to include this task in the economic and social development plans of each echelon and each sector from the central echelon to the localities and production installations. After that, everything possible must be done to encourage youths to look for work. Jobs must be arranged, and there must be suitable forms to deal with youths who have jobs but who refuse to go to work, preferring to "loaf about."

Immediately, we can formulate new policies or revise and perfect a number of existing policies in accord with the following guidelines:

First, things must be regulated through taxes, and resolute action must be taken to cut wasteful expenditures in order to increase state investment in the profitable state enterprises and enable these installations to expand production and hire more young laborers.

Second, older regulations that are no longer in accord with the new mechanism must be abolished, and new policies and resolutions must be promulgated. The economic elements must be encouraged to expand production and production support services, and youths must be hired. In the case of those installations that are highly profitable and that employ many youths, the state should reward them or reduce a number of the contributions of those installations. There must be special measures to encourage talented youths to come forward and reorganize production and produce products for society. And jobs must be provided for other youths.

Third, international cooperative labor must be promoted even more based on sending young laborers abroad to work whenever possible and promoting on-the-spot labor exports.

There are now about 180,000 young laborers working abroad. They have made positive contributions to the production of those countries and contributed to increasing family incomes and increasing sources of consumer goods in the country. But the state has benefited very little from this. During the first five years of cooperating with a number of East European countries, we have earned only 174 million rubles. This can be compared to Pakistan, South Korea, and the Philippines, which respectively earn \$2 billion, \$1.4 billion, and \$900 million each year from exporting laborers. Because we have never had a long-term and synchronized policy, because management has been lax, and because of the recent complex changes in East Europe, these activities now pose many problems. A number of items in the contracts signed with other countries must be reviewed and revised in order to guarantee the rights of our workers, ensure equality between our workers and local workers, and ensure the interests of the state.

Fourth, cooperative labor corporations must be established on the spot and abroad. These corporations must find customers, sign contracts, recruit and manage laborers, carry on operations based on independent accounting principles, and be responsible to the state for the economic results. Each corporation can appropriate 30-50 percent of the profits for the localities and installations that have sent people to engage in cooperative labor so that the localities and installations will have investment capital to expand production and create new jobs for these people when they return home.

Fifth, the network of centers that serve as intermediaries and that recommend jobs to youths must be expanded. These centers mainly help youths find jobs or new work places in the country. At the same time, they can recommend jobs and places of work in other countries that are suitable for laborers based on rational regulations promulgated by the state.

In summary, the state's policies must make youths, the economic elements, and society more dynamic in order to quickly end the passivity and find a way out of the present dead-end.

For the long term, in order to create jobs for youths, the population policies and economic development strategies must be implemented well in conjunction with building a new value system concerning labor. This process must start by eliminating the distinction now made between laborers who work for the state and those who don't. Labor contract measures must be implemented. Quality and labor results must be used to measure the value of each person. We know that it will not be possible to solve the job problem for youths in a short period of time. But with correct guidelines and positive policies, we can gradually solve this problem on a broad scale.

**Standardize and Control the Quality of
Agricultural Products in Our Country**

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 4, Apr 90 pp 48-53

[Article by Hoang Manh Tuan; not translated]

A Number of New Views on Foreign Economics

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 4, Apr 90 pp 54-59

[Article by Luu Van Dat; not translated]

**The Explosion of Credit Funds—Something That
Is Both Welcome and Cause for Concern**

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 4, Apr 90 pp 60-64, 42

[Article by Huy Minh; not translated]

**Consumer Goods Packaging and Labeling and
Export Activities in Our Country**

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 4, Apr 90 pp 65-68, 88

[Article by Pham Phu Uynh; not translated]

**The Buon Gia Vam State Farm Has Done a Good
Job of Managing Forest Assets**

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 4, Apr 90 pp 69-72

[Article by Nguyen Thanh Van; not translated]

**The Correct Orientation of a Local Industrial
Federation**

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 4, Apr 90 pp 73-77

[Article by Nguyen Ngoc Khiem; not translated]

The Employment Problem Based on Actual Studies in a Number of Southern Provinces

902E0261B Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN
in Vietnamese No 4, Apr 90 pp 78-84

[Article by Truong Xuan Truong, Research Cadre, Institute of Sociology, Social Planning Commission]

[Text] Entering 1989, throughout the country, many factories and state enterprises faced bankruptcy, and large numbers of workers and civil servants had to be furloughed using a variety of forms. According to a report of the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor at the beginning of 1989, there were 650,000 unemployed people in the country. That was equal to 23.21 percent of the total number of workers and civil servants in the materials production sector. According to preliminary studies, almost all of the production units had a surplus of laborers, with the surplus being 10-15 percent at some places and as high as 45-50 percent at others. In Gia Lai-Kontum Province, during the first 6 months of 1989, there was a surplus of 3,000 workers. In Thuan Hai Province, during the period June-August, 866 of the 4,000 workers and civil servants in the production and commerce sector were furloughed. During the past period, reporters and scientists have seriously analyzed this problem in the press. It is not my intention to raise this problem again just to "say how terrible" things are. Rather, I want to examine this through the prism of sociology with the aim of evaluating the social changes and changes in values and quantifying those changes based on negative and positive measures of social movement. Specifically, based on the burning issue of today, the employment problem, we must determine whether this has really had an effect on, and if so, how this has changed values and at what level this is operating.

From studies conducted in the state economic sector in six southern provinces in September and October 1989, we have obtained a number of initial data on this problem.

In the past, for laborers, work was an interest and need. It was also a value. In our country, during the past several decades, the problem of labor and the use of labor has exhibited a number of careless aspects and fundamental aspects lying outside the laws of production. However, the time came when management of social production had to undergo some basic changes, with the state subsidies administrative mechanism shifting to cost accounting. That is when the above problem became a burning issue. This means that during the past period, there were many times and places where "people were paid for doing little." But the time has come for "people to do an honest day's work for their pay." Thus, this problem has been clearly exposed. For a long period, there was a tendency to value the staff and work in state organizations and state enterprises and view work there as guaranteeing success and social position. In particular, work there provided "state subsidies" and freed people from having to worry about economic life. Thus, everyone looked for ways to join the rolls. Another tendency was to switch jobs and production zones regardless of whether the person's skills and training were appropriate as long as the new place offered status and money. The result was that the administrative and production apparatus swelled in an unorganized and unprincipled manner. During the period 1981-1986, 840,000 laborers were hired by the state economic sector. Of these, 560,000 did not have any skills or training. The report of the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor stated that today, only 76 percent of the workers and civil servants in our country are employed in the sector for which they were trained.

Thus, there is nothing surprising about the fact that we must correct the shortcomings of the past. It is essential that we reorganize labor and reduce the staffs. It's just that this problem must be posed as part of the overall changes in production and posed along with many other burning social problems.

Today, every production unit in the state sector is reorganizing its labor force. The production installations view this as the leading task and one of the key factors for stabilizing and expanding production. Table 1 on reducing the size of the staffs at a number of production and business units shows this quite clearly.

Table 1

	Vinh An State Forest (Dong Nai)	Tan Mai Timber Enterprise	Agro-Forestry Mechanized Branch (Gia Lai-Konum)	Bien Ho Tea Enterprise (Gia Lai-Kontum)	Building Materials Enterprise (Thuan Hai)	Pharmaceutical Federated Enterprise (Gia Lai-Kontum)	Engine Parts Plant No. 2 (Bien Hoa)
1st Quarter 1989	450	390	205	1,400	160	302	315
3rd Quarter	370	325	160	1,110	127	264	260
Percentage reducing processing	17.8	16.4	22.0	20.8	20.7	12.6	17.5

Thus, of the units mentioned above, the size of the staffs has been reduced anywhere from 12 percent to 22 percent. But this is just one step. This is just the initial phase. In the coming period, another large number of laborers must be laid off. Today, the production instal-

lations usually handle the surplus laborers as follows: switch to a different job, furlough according to the policies (retirement or disability), furlough based on the measures (01), and furlough without pay.

Thus, on a nationwide scale, there will be a very large number of unemployed laborers (who can also be called a notable unemployed army) who will be part of social life and who will influence social life. People who are unemployed must look for jobs and learn new skills. The lives of many families have been turned upside down, and they are confused psychologically. Suitable attention must be given to this problem in order to avoid negative phenomena.

It is essential to look at the change in attitude of laborers in general. Reality shows that level of concern and degree of unease among laborers depends both on the seriousness of the job situation in each sector, production zone, and locality and on the results achieved in solving this problem at the production installations and production units.

The results of the study done by the Ho Chi Minh City and Gia Lai-Kontum labor unions on the psychological condition of laborers at the production installations are as follows:

Table 2 (calculated on the Percentage of People Interviewed)

Psychological Condition	Ho Chi Minh City	Gia Lai-Kontum
Feel assured at work	44.2	25.0
work and worry	35.2	50.0
Do not feel assured	27.7	15.0

There are probably many reasons why laborers feel uneasy at work. But at the present time, the main reason is that they are concerned about their jobs. In social production, when half of the laborers are concerned, that is a danger signal. This reality is also in accord with the results of the survey conducted at 22 units in six southern provinces. In responding to questions about "the most most important problems today," the respondents interviewed all said that "jobs" was the No. 1

problem, ranking ahead of wages, improving material and spiritual life, social insurance and unemployment subsidies, and worker training.

However, as mentioned above, the concern about jobs in each zone and production sector and among the various classes of people was not the same. This can be seen in tables 3 and 4.

Table 3: Job Problems by Production Sector (percentages)

Geographical Zone/Production Sector	General	Dong Nai	Gia Lai-Kontum
Industry (factories, enterprises)	73.3	80.0	60.0
State farms and forests	29.6	33.3	16.7

Table 4: Job Problems by Targets Interviewed (percentages)

Workers	Directors	Party Members	Trade Union Members
58.3	64.7	57.1	71.4

What conclusions can be drawn from these two tables?

The problem of jobs is most serious in the factories and enterprises. The reason for this is that those places require technical and skilled laborers who have been trained, that is, high-quality laborers. Furthermore, almost all of the factories and enterprises are located in cities, which have always determined the direction of immigration of today's developing countries. In the state farm and state forest sector, the employment problem is not as serious, because the laborers in that sector don't have to be as well trained. Furthermore, most of the production installations are located in rural areas and mountainous jungle areas, where there has always been much work. Also, in these areas, secondary occupations and the family economy can be expanded.

Of the four targets interviewed about the employment problem—workers, directors, party members, and trade union members—it was the trade union members and directors who showed the most concern with 71.4 and 64.7 percent respectively. The most likely reason for this is that these are the two targets most affected by this difficult problem. In the new mechanism, the directors are the people who bear overall responsibility for the survival and expansion of their factories and enterprises. They are responsible for the lives of hundreds and thousands of people. Few people can ignore this. Unless production can be expanded and unless the workers can be provided with jobs, the factories and enterprises will go bankrupt, and more than anyone else, it will be the directors who will have to bear the responsibility and consequences. Today, the trade union organizations, whose function is to protect the legitimate interests of

the laborers, must continue to give attention to the problems related to the rights of workers and civil servants, with jobs being the most serious problem.

From the above analysis, it can be seen that the employment problem is a concern of wage earners not just in a number of southern provinces but throughout the country. This reality cannot help but affect social life. Specifically, in the state sector, concern about jobs will definitely affect labor productivity, cause psychological confusion, and disrupt the lives of the families of the workers and civil servants.

It can be said that behind the employment problem is a whole series of problems having to do with economic and social life. And it is no exaggeration to say that the employment problem is a leading problem that encompasses many other problems. Dealing with this problem in an appropriate manner will contribute greatly to lubricating the social engine and enabling it to run and expand normally. A sociological study was conducted among 5,406 cadres, workers, and civil servants at 21 state units in Ho Chi Minh City on the question "what is the main reason for working." The majority, 55.1 percent, said that the main reason was [to earn] a livelihood. Others said that they worked because they had a responsibility, because they loved their work, because they were tied to the enterprise, because they wanted a place to stand in society, because there was no place that was any better, and so on.

The highest percentage, 55.1 percent, reflects a fact about which no one can argue: people work mainly in order to maintain their standard of living and satisfy the minimum needs of humans—food, clothing, and housing. Having a job means having a present standard of living and having material and social reproduction. Thus, providing jobs means maintaining the standard of living, which is a decisive factor for social stability.

Concerning social production, normally, an enterprise that provides jobs for workers is an enterprise that is good at fulfilling the tasks. But today, just the opposite seems to be true at a number of production installations. If the annual plan is fulfilled early, that is a bad sign, because fulfilling the plan is synonymous with concluding the work. At a number of other production installations, when there is work, the workers are paid using a factor of 2.5-3, but when the work is completed, the factor drops to 1. Because of this, jobs are prolonged in order to earn wages at the higher factor. These are irrational things that are unacceptable. But these irrational aspects can be eliminated only after the employment problem has been solved.

As mentioned above, along with the worry about jobs, there is psychological confusion, and social life has been thrown into turmoil.

To contribute to overcoming the above situation, many production organizations have actively implemented various measures such as stabilizing and expanding production, raising the incomes of the workers and civil

servants, helping the workers to expand the secondary family economy, and so on. Studies have shown that the profitable production installations where production has expanded, the lives of the laborers have improved, and everyone is producing with minds at ease are installations that have actively implemented the above measures in commercial production. At these installations, the real incomes of the workers are quite high. For example, the average monthly income of workers and civil servants at Engine Parts Plant No. 2 (Vinapro—Bien Hoa) is 90,000 dong. At the Gia Lai-Kontum Pharmaceutical Federation, the average income is 140,000 dong. At the Thuan Hai Building Materials Plant it is 80,000 dong. At the Gia Lai-Kontum Mechanized Agro-Forestry Branch, the average wage is 150,000 dong, and at the Vinh An State Forest in Dong Nai it is 140,000 dong.

The effort on the part of the production installations to solve the problems is a very important factor for stabilizing and expanding production and providing jobs for laborers. However, in order to provide jobs for laborers, the state must give attention to this, too, by implementing economic and social policies on a national scope.

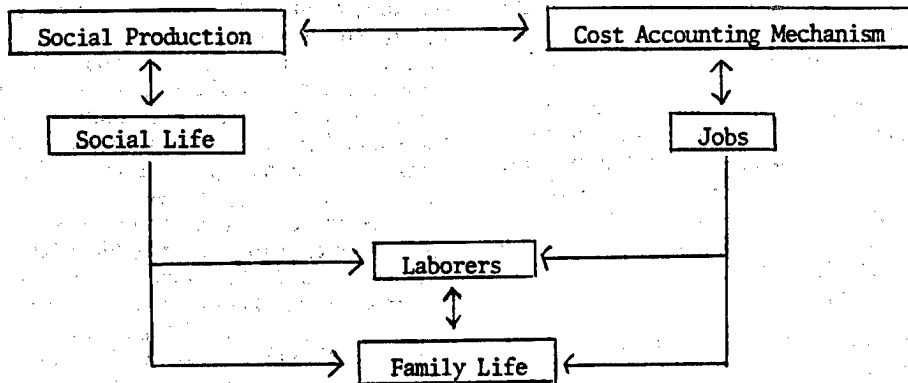
From the sociological data that have been analyzed, I would like to draw the following main points:

A labor market has appeared and expanded in our country. This reality stems from the conditions in our country's production. The multi-faceted economy has created new factors that have stimulated growth in production. Changes in the production mechanism will affirm the commodity and manpower factors. The employment problem must be viewed as a manifestation of this necessary tendency.

Today's laborers are at a point where they must make a value decision. Clearly, the changes concerning work have had an effect on social groups that work for a wage. There is a dialectical relationship in the system of problems that must be connected. That relationship can be represented as follows:

To survive in society, people must stay within the system of social relationships. To be more specific, to survive and grow, people must affirm themselves through their labor. At present, laborers who want to survive and grow must improve their skills and capabilities in their present occupation or be retrained. On the other hand, because of the requirements of production and social life, laborers must also reorganize their individual and family lives. A number of people in Ho Chi Minh City were interviewed about their "immediate plans." Most of the respondents said that their immediate plans were to "expand the family economy," "improve their skills," or "study a foreign language." Only a few said that they wanted to work abroad or open a private enterprise.

The concern about "expanding the family economy," "improving skills," and "studying a foreign language"



shows the urgency in the views of today's laborers, with everything stemming from their needs and interests.

Jobs lead to social differentiation. Above all, that is differentiation with respect to labor quality. The reorganization of labor, the training needs, and the need to improve skills in the new tendency will differentiate the various labor groups. The rule that wages rise over time, which people refer to as periodic raises, is now out of date. This will be replaced by a system of wages based on labor quality. That will lead to divisions in people's standard of living and social position. Clearly, once the labor market has been affirmed, labor quality will be given the respect it deserves. Both intellectual and highly skilled laborers will earn high incomes, and because of that, they will enjoy high positions in social life. They will be able to choose their place of work. They will earn higher wages, and have many opportunities to advance in life.

However, there are two sides to all social changes. On one hand, the above changes will give rise to an "army of unemployed" consisting of people with poor labor skills or unskilled people. Solving this problem and the many problems that follow in its wake will not be easy and will

require that directions be set ahead of time. On the other hand, socialism is very concerned that each citizen and laborer have a job and that they have the right to develop their personality.

In summary, the problem of jobs is one of the most pressing problems in our country today, not only in economic life but also in social life. Providing jobs is not just a problem of production but also a problem of society. The party advocates exploiting the human factor. Solving the employment problem will require giving attention to the key problem, which is to determine the motive forces for exploiting the human factor.

Solving the employment problem is the responsibility of the entire party and all the people. In this, the mass organizations, above all the trade union organizations, have a major role to play. The trade unions must protect the legitimate interests of the laborers. For many years, the tendency has been to nationalize and bureaucratize the trade unions. This has separated the laborers from their organization. Along with the state, taking steps to solve the employment problem is an immediate task (and which may continue to be a task far into the future) of the trade union organizations.

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[Article by Le Tinh; not translated]