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Southeast Asia ***Vietnam: TAP CHI CONG SAN***

No 12, July 1989

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CONTENTS

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[The following is a translation of the monthly theoretical and political journal of the Vietnam Communist Party published in Hanoi. Refer to the Table of Contents for a listing of any articles not translated.]

Looking Back at 10 Glorious Years of the Heroic Cambodian People [Heng Samrin; published in FBIS-EAS-89-045, 9 Mar 89]	1
Urgent Issues About the Task of Maintaining Security and Order, and Building the People's Public Security Forces [Mai Chi Tho; published in FBIS-EAS-89-027, 10 Feb 89]	1
The War for Defense of the Fatherland in the Present Era [Hoang Minh Thao; published in FBIS-EAS-89-028, 13 Feb 89]	1
Research—Exchange of Opinions	
Some Hot Issues in Our Country's Cooperativization [Tran Duc]	2
About the Relationship Between Education and Economy [Duc Minh; article not translated]	5
Renovation—Opinions and Experience	
The VFF Work Under Conditions of Renovation [Van Duc]	6
Architecture and the Management Issue [Nguyen Truc Luyen; article not translated]	8
What To Do To Consolidate and Complete the Basic Public Health Network [Vu Kien]	8
Implementing the Labor, Wounded Soldiers, and Social Policy in Thai Binh [Le Trong Chinh]	10
Some Thoughts on Law and Politics Today [Hoang Cong]	14
Investigation	
Why Does Hanoi's Individual and Private Small Industry-Handicraft Economy Develop Too Slowly? [Doan Dinh Hue]	17
Letters to the Editorial Staff	
Where Does State Capital Go by Way of Price Differentials [Pham Ngoc Phu]	21
Let Us Avoid Letting What We Have Obtained Slip From Our Hands [Phong Le]	22
Ideological Life	
Fortunately He Is the Head of Only One District [Vu Dang; article not translated]	25
The World: Issues and Events	
In the Revived and Developed Land of Angkor [Vu Tien and Trinh Cu; article not translated]	25
Debate on the French Revolution [Article not translated]	25
The Law American Style [Oscar Ferrer; article not translated]	25
Let Socialism Show a New Face—Our Road and Objective [Article not translated]	26
From the Publications of Fraternal Countries	
Consolidated 1988 Table of Contents of TAP CHI CONG SAN	26

**Looking Back at 10 Glorious Years of the Heroic
Cambodian People**

42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 12, Dec 88 pp 1

[Heng Samrin; published in FBIS-EAS-89-045, 9 Mar
89]

**Urgent Issues About the Task of Maintaining
Security and Order, and Building the People's
Public Security Forces**

42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 12, Dec 88 pp 12

[Mai Chi Tho; published in FBIS-EAS-89-027, 10 Feb
89]

**The War for Defense of the Fatherland in the
Present Era**

42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 12, Dec 88 pp 20

[Hoang Minh Thao; published in FBIS-EAS-89-028, 13
Feb 89]

**Some Hot Issues in Our Country's
Cooperativization**

42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 12, Dec 88 pp 26-31

[Article by Tran Duc, High-Level Economic Specialist]

[Text] Resolution 10 of the Political Bureau has been a turning point in the cooperativization movement and has raised hot questions that should be resolved about the role of the family-based economy, land and cooperativization, and renovation in production, leadership, and guidance.

1. The family-based economy plays a central role in the cooperative system in the countryside, while the cooperatives control planning and plans and organize technical services.

With the new contracting method, the interests of working people are kept bound together within their own families, instead of being diluted in the cooperatives as the man-day system dictates. Because their right to use land has been affirmed for a long period of time, cooperative members no longer distinguish between the 5 percent land and the cooperative's land and will concentrate on investing in their assigned land so as to obtain the greatest results.

Water buffaloes also become their families' animals after prices have been set at a reasonable level. Reality has shown that in the localities where animals are boldly assigned to cooperative members, they obviously get fat within a short time; furthermore, because the individual ownership right has been affirmed, cooperative members actively buy additional draft animals to use. And this way the cooperatives not only are self-sufficient in regard to draft power but also can supply the friendly cooperatives with additional animals.

As to other means of production, the same thing happens as the encouragement aimed at family-based economic activities has been urging cooperative members to buy farm implements, small tractors, processing machinery, and so on. To consider the family-based economy the central point also means to pay attention to initiatives in production and the interests of family households. The reason is that the interests of working people are the major motivation that propels production. The fact that for quite some time we did talk much about collective ownership and yet were neglecting the interests of working people has led to stagnancy in production. Naturally the interests of these people must be harmoniously combined with those of collectives and society. The reason why the Political Bureau's Resolution 10 has won the heart of people and restored vitality to the countryside is that it shows a concern about the interests of farmers.

Now since the management boards of agricultural cooperatives extend their hands to every family household and the role of unit chiefs is only to supervise and to see if families correctly carry out the cooperatives' plans, the question that is raised is what task do these management boards have.

In order to develop production and to gradually modernize agriculture, we cannot afford not to have plans. In the past, plans used to be unrealistic and when they were carried out, the points they outlined did not go along with reality. After we have affirmed that the family-based economy plays a central role, to draft plans must be different from the drafting in the past. Plans are focused on immediate production tasks but cannot underestimate basic and long-term issues. Cooperatives must have a hold over planning and plans, and organize technical services. If they do not do these things, there will be no reason for them to exist. Production plans are drafted by cooperatives, with the masses contributing ideas to them, and management boards are to help cooperative members to carry them out.

Many localities distinguish between the compulsory services to be directly handled by cooperatives and the agreed services to be selected by cooperative members. The compulsory ones include organizing watering and draining, planning and forecasting prevention and control of harmful insects, and using machinery in stabilized locations. To do so allows production to proceed smoothly and safely, for it is impossible to let families do these things by themselves at their convenience. The agreed services, such as producing seeds and supplying technical materials, can be done by cooperatives, state enterprises, or individuals on the basis of contracts to be signed by both sides. All of these services can be effectively done only if there is synchronized improvement in the activities of state organs at all levels, from central to provincial and district. Another matter that has to be raised is that with the general tendency to reduce the cooperatives' funds, the production reserve fund must be maintained and strengthened. Funds consist of contributions from families and are directly managed by cooperatives.

In our country, in the present stage, to switch cooperatives to doing technical services, something they must do under extremely difficult conditions, cannot be avoided: If cooperatives are not maintained in order to do that kind of work, the family-based economy will be developed in a chaotic manner; we do not mention yet some of the social functions that cooperatives must carry out because they cannot be totally entrusted to the administration.

2. Land is assigned to families but must gradually be concentrated.

In the land reform, we took land from landowners and distributed it to farmers; the cooperativization movement combined land into production units on hamlet

and village scales. Today, with the new contracting method, we take this land and assign it to farmers to use on the basis of family-based economic units. With this work method there unavoidably will appear a number of problems as follows:

a. The situation of excessive parceling of land will be unavoidable, particularly because after the policy of assigning land for 10-15 years has been announced, everybody living in the countryside, including those who for some time had nothing to do with land, would want to be assigned land. Resolution 10 has made farmers return to the land, but what should be prevented is the tendency to excessively parcel out land.

Through a survey we have found that cooperatives normally distribute land in two rounds: round 1 in accordance with basic needs, and round 2 for production of paddy as commodity.

In reality, although they usually plan to have a lot of land available for distribution in round 2, there is not much land left, and in some localities none is available at all for this round. A common happening is land assigned to cooperative members is now smaller parcels than before. The reason is land is now distributed on the basis of number of household members combined with number of laborers (in the past it was distributed on the basis of number of laborers). In round 2, many localities assign land to cooperative members who are capable of doing intensive cultivation, but it is not a simple job to determine who has this capability and it is easy to cause quarreling in the countryside because of this job.

An important source of land made available for additional assigning to the capable families is the one from the families that have made the assigned land unproductive. The debts resulting from the failure to make land productive are quite large: in Haiphong, 45,000 tons of paddy, or in average 250 tons/cooperative, and in some cases 600-700 tons. The main reason was that those families that failed to produce the assigned amount of paddy did not have enough labor, nor capital, and lacked the necessary experience; quite a few cooperatives did have such debts accumulating for a several years and then encountered more debts resulting from those members who would work only if the work were profitable.

On the basis of paying back those debts, cooperative members would be assigned an amount of land depending on how much they have paid. They could be assigned none at all. Consequently, no crop season was like the tenth-month crop this year in which cooperative members were paying back so much debt so quickly. Following the payment, each cooperative had at its disposal tens or even hundreds of mau of land which had been received from the indebted households and which could be assigned as additional land to the families having the capability of practicing intensive cultivation.

Poor land, far land, land that has been dug, ponds and lakes, all kinds of land were used to assign to or put up for bidding among families. However, the quantity of land, ponds, and lakes put up for bidding presently is not very great. Van Xa Cooperative (in Ha Nam Ninh Province) offered for bidding 32.4 mau of land, with the output assigned to successful bidders being 21.7 tons of paddy, as compared to 4.6 tons before. The same cooperative awarded to a group of 9 successful bidders an average of 3 mau of pond per bidder-household, and to another 6 households .1 mau of pond each, with the output assigned being now 18 tons of paddy, as compared to 11.5 tons of paddy in 1987 (this did not include the payment to be made by the cooperative at the time of contracting at the rate of .76 kilogram of paddy per kilogram of fish and 30 dong of labor per .1 mau of pond).

With the above-mentioned work method, following completion of round 2 distribution, the general situation of excessive scattering and parceling of land still remains, but in a number of cooperatives land is more concentrated. In the same Van Xa Cooperative, in the past households had in average .7 mau each, and there were only a few households having 1-2 mau each; following the redistribution of land, the cooperative now has 22 households having more than 2 mau, 394 having 1-2 mau, 863 having .4-1 mau, and 156 having less than .4 mau. In the areas where the average quantity of land is higher, such as the areas of low-lying fifth-month rice land and partly hilly land, and coastal areas, there is a greater possibility of concentrating land better.

In order to concentrate land better, the important thing is to apply the law of value, families being granted the right to use land. If they are granted it by law, in the countryside there will appear families having more land than others; the level of intensive cultivation will gradually become higher, with products-commodities getting more and more abundant; and the excess labor will be switched to services or will help to develop more occupations. The additionally assigned land in most cases is not of the good kind; and according to the Mitscherlich Law (the higher the productivity of land, the lower the effectiveness of fertilizers), to practice intensive cultivation as an investment in the far land and in the land of average or higher productivity will bring about greater results.

The mode of assigning land must be rational in order to finally let those who accept land till it in a stable manner and for a long time. In some localities, some land is put aside as a reserve for later distribution to additional members of families or to troops after their return to their native village. If this is the thing to do, a few percentage points will not be enough, but tens of percent or more will be needed to distribute to additional people as the population continues to increase between now and the year 2000; as to the troops still serving in the army, many localities already count them in the shares of land assigned to their families, and thus there is no need to wait until their return.

b. To have concentration of land is not enough, but the question is how to promote effectiveness.

Mr Ngo Van Kich is a member of An Nhuan Cooperative in An Hoa Village (Haiphong), has 5 laborers and 10 family members, and received from the cooperative 14 mau of poor high-lying land, where water was a regular problem, with the assigned output being 32-45 kilograms/.1 mau. His family has a water buffalo, a farm tractor, a water pump, and a mill. He bought spare parts and gas-oil at the market. In addition to growing rice in 9 mau of land, he had 2 mau of sugar cane and 3 mau of peanut, sweet potato, and eggplant. He used the tractor to plow not only his family's land but also other cooperative members' land and to transport things for them so as to get exchange labor for harvesting of his own rice crops. Because he cleverly used the available means of production to practice intensive cultivation, he was able to boost the rice output to 120 kilograms/.1 mau. With 7.5 tons of paddy harvested in the tenth-month crop, he got 5 tons of exchange nitrate fertilizer; after using it in his own land, he had 1.6 tons left, which he sold to other cooperative members. After delivering 1.3 tons of paddy as payment of tax and contribution to the fund, Mr Kich was able to loan the cooperative and its members more than a ton of paddy.

Through the typical case of Mr Ngo Van Kich, we can see that with tens of mau of land or more, if people know how to do good business and to produce effectively, economic results will be greatly increased and output will be 2-3 times higher than the highest assigned level. However, we cannot rely only on a water buffalo and a plow and manual labor, but instead we must combine manual work with machinery; use small tractors with various tools ranging from water pumps to mills, to maintain a closed cycle running from production to processing, from producing paddy to improving the soil; and simultaneously apply many forms of economic activities, such as providing plowing, harrowing, and transporting services, hiring labor for transplanting and threshing, combining paying for labor and getting exchange labor, borrowing from the cooperative and lending to the latter and its members, and so on. The outstanding point is that now or later the interests of working people must be respected. Let us suppose every cooperative has dozens of specialized households like Ngo Van Kich's, we will be able to boost the production of commodities to a higher level even under the present conditions, i.e., while there are not any major revolutionary technological changes and while we have the same land and material and technical base.

It is obvious that if we want to extend the scope of producing commodities, we must apply a new mechanism in order to allow the law of value to act on the production process and the combination of production factors. The hiring of labor, both seasonal and regular, will automatically take place if we adopt the policy of offering for bidding or assigning a few mau of land or more, or promoting active creation of additional occupations in the countryside.

With the new contracting method, we will gradually form specialized households who will be hiring labor and keeping their own accounts, and in fact will become rich people in the countryside. This is understandable because once the central task of liberating the productive power in order to obtain more commodities is fulfilled, the combination of production factors, particularly capital and labor on the basis of developing the family-based economy, will unavoidably lead to a distinction between rich and poor people in the countryside. We on the one hand encourage everybody to get rich in a legitimate manner but on the other should prevent and limit to a minimum poverty among a few households by taking a series of measures, including the important one being to help them to overcome difficulties in production. In addition, there must be a coordination between the administration and cooperatives aimed at implementing social policies in favor of the countryside.

3. It is necessary to renovate in time leadership and guidance.

Now that cooperatives no longer control production units as their main job and instead switch to considering the family-based economy as their central activity and the family households as production units, their leadership must basically be renovated.

a. First of all, in land management, in order to avoid excessive parcelling and to overcome the need for distributing land that should include both good and bad, near and far land, it is necessary to divide plots and to determine classes. On that basis, we should apply the law of value as the cooperatives in Vinh Phu Province have done: Tax and contributions to funds should be lower in the case of low-output land than in that of high-output land. Yen Dong Cooperative (in Ha Nam Ninh Province) drafted its plan by carrying out a soil survey aimed at dividing plots and determining classes and covering all of its land even in remote locations, and then by devising appropriate intensive cultivation measures, after getting ideas from the masses. Every cooperative needs a general (topography, agricultural chemistry, and soil) map, from which plot maps are made for individual households, and this map must be considered an important tool for its management board to carry out the production plan in each crop season. Every household receives a household contract book, which is used for several years and in which brief entries are to show the basic situation, the expenses to be paid by cooperative members, the state of assignment and acceptance of assignment, and the delivery of products as payment made in every crop season in a given year.

b. The management machinery of many cooperatives has been reduced in size, but the streamlining is no longer judged in terms of degree as when the piece-work contracting method was still in effect. Consequently, although the size of staff has been reduced, further streamlining must continue until cooperative members no longer feel that the organizational machinery weighs

upon their lean shoulders. In the past, power was concentrated on the unit level. Now many cooperatives have done away with the positions of deputy chiefs and secretaries of units, but in many others they still saved the latter and did away with deputy chiefs only. To reduce the liaison base can help to lighten the machinery. Marketing cooperatives must be reorganized and improved so as to operate more effectively. And if they can be merged with agricultural production cooperatives, the supplying of technical materials will be done by a single organization.

c. In order to have large quantities of products and commodities, we must encourage various forms of developed economic activities. We have put an end to the "closed door" situation that lasted for a long time, in which laborers in a cooperative were strictly kept in that cooperative. With the new contracting system, laborers become more mobile. Members of Truc Dong Cooperative (in Ha Nam Ninh Province) were free to go and to work for families elsewhere after they had finished their job of transplanting the tenth-month rice seedlings. District tractor stations are needed to perform technical services and to train people to operate plowing machines for cooperatives. When necessary the latter are hired to plow with either machine or water buffalo for other cooperatives. Various forms of popular credit, such as subward funds and tontines (monthly, seasonal, and yearly tontines), should be developed in order to help farmers to have capital to buy water buffaloes, to build houses, and so on, and thus to make the production front more active. The richer the various forms of economic cooperation are, the more favorable the combination of production factors will be and the more quickly capital will become available, with greater economic results ensuing.

d. In the past when the piece-work contracting method still was in effect, corruption in the cooperatives usually occurred in the form of stealing work points; now as we have switched to unit-price contracting, which lets cooperative members be their own masters in production and distribution, corruption is far from over but has greatly reduced and has taken more subtle forms. Cooperative members need to have the right conditions for checking and controlling the activities of management boards and unit chiefs. On the part of districts and provinces, they also must assist cooperatives by opening training courses to teach them accounting and bookkeeping, adopting a financial control system, and carrying it out on a regular basis, particularly among the cooperatives that have large turnovers.

e. Now and in many years to come, we must concentrate on developing the family-based economy, but we cannot make light of the cooperative system. Right now we must act in a timely manner to draft a new rural construction plan. As the family-based economy strongly develops, production will expand not randomly but within the

framework and in the directions set in the plan and will create favorable conditions for us to apply technical progress and to widen mechanization.

The plans of individual cooperatives naturally are not separated from those of districts and are closely linked with the agro-industrial economic model of their province. The state needs to have plans for and invest capital in building, improving, and repairing the important irrigation works. It must assist cooperatives in becoming self-sufficient in watering and draining, and in boosting crop yields through intensive cultivation.

Plans cannot be limited to agricultural production but must include industry, the countryside, and other occupations. In Ha Nam Ninh Province, the Nam Dinh Municipal Ready-Made Clothing Export Enterprise is helping Nam Thanh and Nam Long Agricultural Cooperatives to build a base for making ready-made clothing. Each cooperative is building a 3-story structure to house its members' 50 sewing machines and the cooperative's 2 special-use machines. The enterprise is training the cooperatives' surplus labor until they become skilled workers. The enterprise supplies raw materials and sells the products that the cooperatives will be making, while the latter organize production to fill orders. This is the way to reorganize and to divide labor, to develop industry in the countryside, and to promote self-development of agricultural cooperatives with the assistance of traditional and new occupations, and with support from central and provincial industries. This is the way, on the one hand, to provide jobs and to reduce the manpower devoted to crop-growing, and on the other hand to satisfy the needs of domestic consumers and of export.

Finally, as the family-based economy develops further, more concern and care must be extended to sociocultural matters in the countryside. Polarization in terms of the family households' income is something we cannot easily avoid. We must act in such a manner as to let it have very little effect on stepping up the rate of development of the cultural and ideological revolution in the countryside and to limit to a minimum the spiritual pollution that expresses itself by such activities as gambling, drinking, leading a depraved life, and so on, which usually exist in those societies that take the law of value as the major regulating force. To do so, the state, people, and cooperatives must have a specific investment item devoted to expanding schools, building clubs and radio and television networks, and aiming at such topics as popularizing science and technology, propagandizing the new way of living, and so on. Naturally, the above-mentioned job must go hand in hand with the permanent educational work performed through light and realistic activities in such mass organizations as farmers', youth, and women's unions.

About the Relationship Between Education and Economy

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No 12, Dec 88 pp 32

[Duc Minh; article not translated]

The VFF Work Under Conditions of Renovation
42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 12, Dec 88 pp 37-40

[Article by Van Duc]

[Text] A large sociopolitical organization like the Vietnam Fatherland Front (VFF) cannot give itself a sense of importance. In the last 5 years, i.e., during the period between its 2nd and 3rd national congresses, or in other words since the moving of our country as a whole to socialism, a most noteworthy point was that the VFF role remained a blurred one in everyday life and VFF activities failed to reach the level of its revolutionary task. There were many reasons for that situation, but an important one was the fact that people did not recognize its position and role.

Today the needs that the revolution requires the VFF to fulfill are greater than ever. After its two components, the Democratic and Socialist Parties, have fulfilled their historic mission, in reality under the leadership of the CPV [Communist Party of Vietnam], the VFF is the sociopolitical organization that must assume a greater responsibility. Therefore, along with the National Assembly, it must play a decisive role in representing and protecting the people's ownership right under the socialist system.

The VFF must maintain close relationships with all strata in society, represent and protect the legitimate interests of all classes and strata, and reflect all kinds of needs in the people's everyday life. Its activities make realistic contributions to properly resolving the relationships among all social classes and strata now undergoing complex changes. We must see to it that VFF activities have the clear character of mass activities. It is unlike a party staff having the function of studying and devising lines, positions, and policies. It is unlike an elected organ having administrative power or a specialized management organ directly administering socioeconomic activities. Nor is it a mass organization that limits its membership in a certain class, age group, or occupation. It is a political organization that gathers all strata in society.

Unlike in the past, today the VFF does not simply appeal to and mobilize the people for implementing the positions and policies of the party and state, but it also must collect many realistic and interesting ideas of member organizations (including specialists) contributing to drafting, supplementing, and adjusting the lines, positions, policies, and codes prior to their promulgation by the party and state, as well as their implementation in the everyday life, and to resolving complications and difficulties. In the present situation, to know how to develop the intelligence and creative dynamism of the masses can resolve quite a few complications and difficulties. The VFF is an organization that is in a position to be able to work among people of all social strata, to seek an understanding of the feelings and aspirations of the masses, and to reflect and recommend them in a timely

manner to the party and state, particularly in regard to the issues having to do with the masses' personal interests and urgent needs. It actively organizes within its power dialogues and questioning sessions among the people and cadres of party and state organs at all levels, thus creating multifaceted and multidirectional exchanges of ideas aimed at strengthening the close relationships and mutual understanding among the people, party, and state.

Today, in addition to the task of heightening the political understanding of the people and protecting their political interests, the VFF also protects the legitimate economic interests and social needs of all population groups, nationalities, and religious and nonreligious people in the Vietnamese social community, and concerns itself about the aspirations and demands of every object, every group of people, and even every individual. It must pay attention to grasping and helping to resolve contradictions among the people in the spirit of mutual love and reason; prevent regrettable things from happening; and at the same time take part in the fight against negative things, for protection of the right and the progressive, and against enemy destruction, thus promoting a pure and wholesome image of society.

Having the greatest mass character, the VFF is an organization that occupies a leading position in social democratization, creates an atmosphere of openness in exchanges and debates, contributes ideas, develops the mind, seeks the truth, and fights against violations of democracy. This is a central task that it must do very well. It has the responsibility for making active contributions to building administrations at all levels, making them become the true administration of the people, by the people, and for the people; and turning the elected organs into real organs of power. It exercises its power in an independent manner in the electoral process, selecting and recommending people as candidates for seats in elected organs. It helps to control the activities of state organs, particularly in terms of guaranteeing the people's democratic rights and interests. The task of controlling and checking the administration can be in three forms:

- To coordinate with and assist the elected organs and elected deputies in carrying out the supervisory and control function toward the state administrative machinery.
- To coordinate with and assist the state inspection organizations, mass organizations, and people's inspection organizations (at subward, village, and residential zone levels).
- To directly administer, control, and supervise the implementation of the positions and policies having to do with many population strata (particularly the social policies).

Through such forms of activities, the VFF proposes the necessary resolutions to assist the responsible organs in studying and resolving problems.

As an organization having the right to propose legislative bills, the VFF directs the intelligence of its members toward effectively taking part in drafting laws and making our laws both have an objective scientific base and conform with the country's need for socioeconomic development, and protects the legitimate interests of social strata.

With the above-mentioned functions and tasks, the VFF works as an independent organization. It must avoid the tendency to remain passive and dependent and to wait for things to happen, while the party organization and administration must avoid the tendency to turn it into a subordinate organization. In order to guarantee and develop its independent role, the VFF needs strict organizational regulations and should operate in accordance with its functions and tasks within the political system and along with other organizations; it should operate with a spirit of being actively on its own initiative and at the same time in close coordination with other organizations. Naturally, in order to become a really independent organization, it must renovate itself at all levels, from central to local, and perfect itself in accordance with the new needs related to its work today. The reviews of VFF activities in the past years are a very important basis for adopting correct and realistic renovation directions and meaning.

Our actual experience has indicated that where its activities were good, the VFF has made very important contributions to guaranteeing the basic civil rights of people in villages, subwards, and districts, the rights that have to do with living, traveling, learning, and getting medical treatment; resolving in a timely manner complaints, quarrels, and disputes among the people; and creating mutual love and solidarity on the basis of "affection in villages, attachment in hamlets" among all population strata.

To change the VFF's mode of operation currently is an urgent need. The nature and tasks of the VFF today determine the way this mode cannot be in the administrative style, nor consists of superficial and vague appeals and encouragement, but rather follows the many approaches to the masses, particularly the social strata that the party organization and state can hardly pay sufficient attention to; however, the VFF should not stress such approaches only during major campaigns, but a greater necessity for it is to involve itself in the everyday life of the masses and to grasp their feelings and aspirations, as well as the issues that they ask the administration to resolve.

The VFF at all levels must flexibly motivate people, in the meaning and ways appropriate for different objects and in different locations. The principal direction is to strongly direct activities toward the basic level, to avoid

turning the task of organizing itself into a bureaucratic and administrative exercise. When they draw up programs and work plans, VFF cadres should put themselves in the new situation, think, and decide in a manner that suits the reality at the basic level. As to its work in the cities today, the VFF should pay attention to contributing to building and consolidating neighborhood teams; in the countryside, building village and hamlet units, in connection with the people's internal relationships and the progressive and civilized way of living. As to its work in the economy, it should pay attention to the people in the nonstate-operated economic sectors; in society, to the areas where ethnic minority people and religious people live.

The VFF, along with the party and state, builds a unified administrative system and carries out the motto, "The people know, discuss, do things, and control."

The VFF participates in organizing legal services, assists the people in getting effective and quick solution to their complaints, and urges the responsible organs to handle lawsuits in a timely manner, thus reducing the amount of pollution in the social atmosphere.

The party leadership over the VFF under the conditions of renovation first of all is expressed in the correct directions set for the VFF to work in the socioeconomic situation now undergoing complex changes, and then consists of supplementing, changing, and suggesting in time policies for the basic strata of the population (such as intellectuals, ethnic minority groups, religious groups, people having done much for the revolution, retirees, overseas Vietnamese, and so on), and providing VFF cadres with new knowledge and information to make them capable of thinking about the meaning of their activities in conformity with the masses' feelings, with the hope to directly affect the masses. Particularly it means to be concerned about building and training a body of VFF cadres being really capable and having good qualities, thus putting an end to the situation in which incapable, old, and unhealthy cadres from many localities are sent to work in the VFF.

Not only the party organization but also administrations at all levels must be concerned about creating the material and spiritual conditions for the VFF organizations at all levels to operate effectively. In the present difficult situation and with the nature of its activities, it is very difficult for the VFF to operate unless there are minimum material and spiritual means. To adopt the salary grade system that includes appropriate encouragement and rewards, to strengthen the morale of VFF cadres, and to take good care of their living certainly is a factor that will strongly affect their feeling reassured and working with enthusiasm. Perhaps the VFF can create its own source of capital in order to step up its activities by, for instance, organizing appropriate forms of services and soliciting material and spiritual contributions to its activities from those members who are capable of making such contributions.

In the mass communications media and in party and state schools, there also should be propaganda and teaching to popularize basic knowledges of the VFF's work.

About organizing VFF committees at all levels, we should ask many people from outside of the party, personalities, and intellectuals to take part in them and keep only those party members who are really necessary for them so as to make sure we can develop the intelligence of people from many strata. Although it is necessary to retain the VFF character in the executive committee structure, this committee should be a machinery that is really capable of doing its work.

Architecture and the Management Issue

42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 12, Dec 88 pp 41

[Nguyen Truc Luyen; article not translated]

What To Do To Consolidate and Complete the Basic Public Health Network

42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 12, Dec 88 pp 43-46

[Article by Vu Kien, high-ranking Public Health Ministry specialist]

[Text] The strength of Vietnam's public health sector from the 1960's until now has been the basic public health network, particularly the village-level network which has been widely developed with quite total and effective activities, as it has been contributing to improving our people's health, working capacity, combat power, and life expectancy. However, since 1980, although many efforts were made to maintain and move this network in the new direction, the state of its organization and activities has continued to decline. This is a fact we should be alerted about, a threat to the daily direct care for the health of working people that society as a whole must worry about and quickly resolve.

The basic public health network is the foundation of the country's public health system, which regularly and directly serves the health of all people. It is the place of first contact with the people and brings health care all the way to where the people live, work, and learn, and to every collective, family, and individual, by means of appropriate techniques used in the prevention and treatment of diseases and in health improvement, which are convenient and inexpensive for all people to benefit from. It is the last place that receives and implements the public health policies and lines of the party and state, the goals and tasks of the sector, and the specialized programs proposed by the central medical and pharmaceutical organs, which also assume the leadership over their implementation. The basic level is where we can best organize a combination and coordination of specialized

activities, and mobilize all sectors, mass organizations, and the masses in the health care field under the leadership of the basic-level administration.

The daily changes having to do with the environment, epidemics, diseases, and the people's life and health take place at the basic level, in hamlets and alleys, on the streets, in shops, production units, and families. Only an active basic public health network can closely watch this changing situation, take positive and appropriate measures to prevent epidemics and diseases, discover them early in order to fight epidemics and to treat diseases in time, quickly supply medicines, satisfy the masses' urgent needs, and limit to the highest extent the need to transfer patients to better-equipped hospitals. As a result, we can greatly reduce difficulties and expenses in terms of human energy and wealth, for the benefit of production and learning.

As we have learned from the experience of the World Health Organization and of our own public health sector, today the function and task of the basic public health network are made broader and more total; it is no longer bound by the prevention and treatment of diseases but instead must also pay attention to caring for, supporting, and improving the people's health. These are the things to be done within the "initial health care," which our cadres and people are gradually becoming familiar with. They consist of teaching a good knowledge of health and ways to improve the natural and work environment; struggling to get a sufficient and rational diet; caring for mothers and children, promoting family planning; providing preventive inoculations, expanding the prevention of infectious diseases; preventing and controlling common diseases and epidemics; treating common diseases and injuries; satisfying the fundamental needs for medicines, mostly traditional medicinal materials, and widely applying methods requiring no medicines; and managing the health of people given priority health care, such as patients afflicted with social diseases, women of child-bearing age, infants, and elderly people afflicted with chronic diseases.

In order to visualize the great amount of work involving these tasks, let us cite a few actual figures. The basic public health network each year examined about 100 million people/times, or 75 percent of the total number of people receiving medical examination throughout the country, provided treatment in public health stations to nearly 6 million people/times, and gave first aid and emergency care to millions of accident victims at the local level. It delivered more than 2.4 million babies, or 75 percent of all babies born in the country, and cared for them and their mothers; and managed and provided family-planning services to millions of people, including 3 million women now wearing intrauterine loops.

We must say that there were two periods in which the basic public health network in our country was making quite outstanding achievements.

In the post-land reform period, from 1958 to the 60's, along with concentrating on opening classes to train physicians, midwives, and nurses for the basic level, the public health sector was very quickly building public health-maternity stations (later called public health stations for short) in villages throughout the north, from the delta to the highlands and remote islands. The policy of liberating and bringing technology to villages, which consisted of combining specialized work with the mass movement in the countryside and urban areas; carrying out the mottoes, "Clean villages, good ricefields" and "Clean streets, good fields," and the "Three cleans, four destructions" movement; building three sanitation works, namely, privies, wells, and bathhouses; protecting mothers and children; preventing and controlling epidemics and social diseases; providing first aid, emergency care, and treatment of common diseases; developing the traditional medicine, and so on, in hamlets, villages, and neighborhoods, succeeded in helping to reduce the incidence of diseases and epidemics and to raise the effectiveness of treating the wounded in the resistance against America for national salvation.

In the period from 1975 to 1978-1979, with the experience gained in the north, the basic public health network was extended to the entire country. The five-definite point movement aimed at achieving five public health objectives (quick control and annihilation of epidemics, reduction of the rate of population increase and protection of mothers and children, guaranteed supply of medicines, management of health and treatment of diseases, and construction of the public health network) was launched and developed in villages, subwards, work sites, state farms, state forests, and enterprises throughout the country.

Between 1980 and now, although the party committee echelons and public health sector took many measures to further develop the achievements that had been made, because of many objective reasons and subjective shortcomings, particularly because of the failure to make the public health positions and policies keep pace with the economic changes, the basic public health network in our country has degraded in a worrisome manner.

In many localities, particularly in many districts, precincts, provinces, and municipalities in the South and in a number of delta localities in the North, the public health sector, under the active leadership of their local administration, has taken advantage of this situation to make strong changes in making additional investment in the local public health organization by drawing resources from many sources; as a result, the public health network has been consolidated, with many good models having just appeared.

But, generally speaking, a majority of basic public health stations are now in a poor situation, work at a reduced pace, and do not fully carry out their function and task;

in some localities, mostly in the highlands and the areas that encounter many economic difficulties, the basic public health sector is almost inactive.

In 2 years, 1986-1987, malaria was spreading and brought about complex changes, with many epidemics breaking out in the highlands, Central Highlands, and eastern Nam Bo, and leading sometimes and in some localities to a paralysis of production. The rate of malnutrition and incidence of infectious, social, and occupational diseases were quite high, with a decline in the health of youths and working people. Consequently, the fact that the basic public health stations were unable to fulfill their function and task and had to transfer patients to a higher level created additional losses of energy, time, and money for the people and more difficulties for the state and society.

Why and in what manner did the public health network fall into such a declining situation? Who must bear the responsibility for this situation and must try to resolve and overcome it?

As we said earlier, we all know that when there was a change of direction in the economic policy, such as adopting the new contracting system in agriculture in 1980 and fighting state subsidies late in 1985, but **without a timely renovation of the procedures and policies** applicable to public health cadres and activities of the basic public health network, that should be considered a direct reason leading to a decline of this network. Naturally, we cannot afford not to mention the shortcomings of the public health sector in training and organizing management, nor the consequences of the socioeconomic situation that became more difficult and complex everyday.

The Council of Ministers has issued Decision 123 on implementing the procedures and policies applicable to the basic public health network. Many localities have adopted the wage procedures in favor of their cadres and people and for the first time set up occupational funds for village public health services. But in many other localities, because of budget difficulties or because the administration echelons failed to recognize the urgency of the matter, the low wages are still kept, at least on a temporary basis. Quite a few localities have decided to pay the new wages, but quarter after quarter they still do not have money to pay them; or even if wages are paid, people still must pay high prices for rice and find that their wages are not enough to buy rice.

Many basic public health stations must limit the treatment of diseases because they do not have the common medicines to sell to the people, nor spare parts to replace or fix the many broken instruments, and are short of cotton, gauze, alcohol, iodine to ensure antiseptic conditions during childbirths and treatment of diseases. Generally speaking, they lack the minimum expenses to pursue public health activities in accordance with the function and task of the basic public health network.

Putting village public health cadres in the payrolls as some provinces and municipalities have done, paying the new wages, and setting up occupational funds for village public health stations as some localities have recently done in accordance with Decision 123-HDBT have been acts of progress, but in the present situation of skyrocketing prices these efforts still cannot ensure the living and work conditions that basic public health cadres and staff members deserve. They still must cut many hours and half-days from their working days in order to moonlight to earn some extra money. We do not yet mention a rather large number of semiprofessional public health staff members in hamlets and production units who, because of very low funding, have neglected the job of monitoring the environment, epidemics, and people's health in the assigned areas. In the meantime, patients who need emergency care and treatment and pregnant women who need care during childbirth still require the regular presence of physicians and midwives in public health stations; children, elderly people, pregnant women, and people afflicted with social and chronic diseases still need public health staff members living close to their homes and knowing them to care for them once every week or fortnight, to give them guidance, and to readily assist them during sickness and emergencies.

These are the things that absolutely can be done if we are determined to properly resolve two problems: the living conditions and work conditions of public health cadres at the basic level.

Thoroughly understanding the views of the party and state on the unity of economic and social policies, the party committee and administration echelons in provinces, districts, and villages more than ever must clearly see that it is in the interest of production now that we consolidate and complete the basic public health network in order to actively and regularly care for the health of workers, farmers, and all working people. Therefore, we must make the organs in charge of economic affairs, cooperatives, enterprises, work sites, state farms, state forests, and private producers bear the responsibility for contributing to fully implementing Decision 123-HDBT so as to have enough wages, allowances, and grain to pay public health cadres and staff members at the basic level and to get enough money to cover the daily specialized activities aimed at caring for the people's health. As to paying wages and ensuring the supply of grain, if the village echelons were unable to take care of them, the district and provincial echelons would have to bear the responsibility for organizing such payment and supply.

According to the experiences of many districts, precincts, villages, subwards, work sites, state farms, state forests, and enterprises, in addition to the wages, allowances, and grain to be provided every month, the leadership has adopted regulations allowing basic public health stations to earn additional money from such services as medical examination, treatment of diseases, childbirth care, growing and processing of medicinal

plants and selling of modern medicines, and care for patients in public health stations and at home, and from the income of the VAC [Vuon Ao Chuong—for growing vegetables and raising fish and animals] ecological plots, which have been given to public health cadres and staff members, as either collectives or individuals, by localities or units. Thanks to this source of additional money, the basic public health network really is in a position to equip itself with medical instruments and traditional medicinal materials for use in public health stations, population centers, labor collectives, and private homes; to boost the income of each and every basic public health cadre; and to satisfy the needs in everyday life, which wages and allowances alone are not enough to cover. In many localities, the people have met and discussed with public health officials at the basic and unit levels, and have drafted contracts that would fully ensure the above-mentioned conditions and set positive needs for the public health network to fulfill in connection with its function and task.

Along with resolving the two urgent problems, in order to complete the basic public health network, a very important task that the public health sector must fulfill today is to continually provide public health cadres at different locations, from stations to population centers, with elementary and advanced training in initial health care methods, and at the same time to closely coordinate its work with the Red Cross in order to train its members and to bring public health work to the home. The public health sector, if need be, must assist the administration in reorganizing and rearranging the employment of basic public health cadres.

Consolidating and completing the public health network cannot be separated from stabilizing the socioeconomic situation. In this stabilizing process, we must urgently struggle to restore order in the very essential links which offer prospective capabilities. We cannot wait and remain dependent, but instead we must, on our own initiative, contribute to fulfilling such important tasks by doing the urgent and significant work mentioned above, for the health of the people and the interests of production and life.

Implementing the Labor, Wounded Soldiers, and Social Policy in Thai Binh

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[Article by Le Trong Chinh, director, Thai Binh Provincial Labor, Wounded Soldiers, and Social Service]

[Text] The renovation undertaken by our party and people in all fields following the 6th Party Congress has had a profound effect on the perception, as well as the organizing task, toward implementing the labor, wounded soldiers, and social policy in Thai Binh Province.

Our province has the highest proportion of people serving in the army compared to population (over 1.5 million) in the country. Through the 2 wars of resistance against France and America and after sending aid to the battlefields in the 2 friendly countries, Laos and Cambodia, we have had 50,000 dead heroes, 21,000 wounded and sick soldiers (including 600 seriously wounded soldiers), and 62,000 families of wounded soldiers and dead heroes. The number of elderly people whose families lack manpower accounts for 12 percent of our population. The number of retirees and people having lost their physical strength needed to work is 36,000. This year the estimated spending to implement the policy that benefits these people is about 7 billion dong. Some districts must spend 100 million dong a month. The implementation of the labor, wounded soldiers, and social policy is far from simple. Hundreds of thousands of beneficiaries belong to very many different groups; the socioeconomic life has endured long-drawn difficulties, while the cash and grain reserve funds are not always available or full. Many rules in a series of procedures and policies must be changed to conform with the newly-changed situation and to make things more rational (for instance, the monthly allowance given to a dead soldier's family used to be equivalent to 10 kilograms of rice, but now is equivalent to only 2.3 kilograms). The cadres who work in this field also need to be strengthened and perfected. By its nature, the work in this complex field is both generally scientific and full of devotion, affection, and responsibility that the state and society are showing toward people, particularly those people who have offered much to society and whose life has almost gone through the full closed cycle of working, fighting, getting sick, bearing permanent injuries, retiring, and dying.

In order to ensure properly doing this work in the present situation, the party organization of our province has decided that the labor, wounded soldiers, and social work should undergo a change of direction and provide properly organized care to beneficiaries so as to help them to quickly have a stable life and to attain a living standard equal to the average one among the local people. For the working people, it must create many directions and sources in order to gradually provide jobs, to ensure that those who are capable of working get jobs and contribute to producing material wealth for society. Implementing this policy, we have lately obtained some initial results and acquired some small experiences.

1. To closely combine management of policy implementation with organization of various forms of care at the basic level in accordance with renovation of the management mechanism in agriculture.

The wounded soldiers and social work, or the so-called social assistance work, consists of three major aspects covering many kinds of policies: privileges granted to individuals and families having done much for the revolution; insurance for working people and people no longer required to work because of their age; assistance

granted to people having encountered difficulties, accidents, calamities, and so on. This is a large-scale work which is still growing in scope (the number of people benefiting from the policy is 190,000). The nature of the work is very complex and difficult, with the policy concerned changing all the time and requiring constant adjusting—as soon as an irrationality is resolved, another one will pop up. Consequently, it always remains a hot and urgent matter. In the meantime, a number of cadres and people, because of a lack of understanding of the social-assistance nature of the policy, have demanded its abolition because they considered it a kind of state subsidy; as a result, some localities have not implemented the policy in a proper manner.

Being a province where the great majority of beneficiaries is in the agricultural sector, our province has first of all concentrated its efforts on the latter. The purpose of the wounded soldiers and social policy is to make beneficiaries have a stable material life and a happy spiritual one. Generally speaking, beneficiaries have many needs in their daily life. But in the present situation, first of all we try to resolve the grain problem, i.e., we worry about their daily meals.

In the present difficult situation, because the state was unable to ensure compensatory sales of large quantities of grain to make up for the differences in favor of beneficiaries, it has decided to let localities and the basic echelons bear the responsibility for doing the job. But the cooperatives' current public-interests funds did not allow Thai Binh to make sufficient adjustments in favor of these families, which will involve a large quantity of paddy, up to 10,000 tons a year. Then how could we resolve this great difficulty? Because Thai Binh had foreseen the situation early, it decided to change from making adjustment with grain to making adjustment with land at the end of 1987. The beneficiaries who were given land as adjustment, at the average rate of .06-.1 mau of land per share, were the wounded soldiers and families of dead heroes who have been receiving regular allowances. The families capable of doing productive work right away were given the additional land on a priority basis, with the understanding that they would till it in a convenient manner, by themselves, and for their own enjoyment of the fruit of their labor. Some localities assisted these families in soil preparation, plant protection, and irrigation; others also considered waiving payment of tax and irrigation service charges in their favor, or assisted them in some other ways.

Through three seasons in which that adjusting method was used, the families of beneficiaries were very enthusiastic. The cooperatives were able to reduce their expenses, while every family had higher income as what happened in the 1987 tenth-month rice crop in such cooperatives as Vu Doai, Dong Hoa, Dong Hoang, Dong Xa, Dong Co, and Quyet Tien. If the method of adjusting with grain had been maintained, the cooperatives would have spent 41.5 tons, but because they had switched to adjusting with land, they needed only 19.8

tons (only 47.7 percent of the adjustment-with-grain method), which included all of the assistance the cooperatives granted to beneficiaries. The families' incomes also were higher than before, reaching an average of 152.9 percent of past incomes, the least to 140 percent (Dong Hoang) and the most 186 percent (Quyet Tien). Generally speaking, all families had enough grain, and some families had small surpluses.

Through an actual survey, we have affirmed that our policy was right. Consequently, starting with 34 cooperatives (in the 1987 tenth-month crop), we extended the adjusting method to 220 cooperatives by the 1988 fifth-month rice crop, and to all cooperatives throughout the province as we entered the last (1988) tenth-month crop. The question that was thus raised was what basis we should use to calculate the amount of land for adjustment, and whether we should sign nonspecific contracts. We thought that we should start from the purpose of the policy, i.e., we should determine the amount of land on the basis of each person's minimum grain need, rather than on the per capita share, or distribute more land in comparison with the average share. That basis was 10 kilograms of grain converted to rice equivalent per month per person, or 84 kilograms of paddy/season/person. That also meant that following the adjustment with land and depending on the assigned crop yield, each person would still have 10 kilograms of rice left per month, after all expenses have been deducted.

In order to satisfy this need, it was necessary for us to correctly consider the actual capabilities of each family. Generally speaking, because they lacked manpower and only had few tools, little capital, and small quantities of seeds, we could not assign land to them as we could to other cooperative members. And in order to ensure the living standard of these families, the cooperatives adopted many forms of assistance, using their social funds or making labor and land area adjustments in order to carry out this formula:

- Cooperatives: assisting in soil improvement and irrigation.
- Districts: assisting in plant protection.
- Province: assisting in paying irrigation expenses.
- Central administration: waiving payment of tax.

With this formula, although Thai Binh had a lot of beneficiaries, the fact that each beneficiary was given in average .08 mau of land was enough to ensure the living standard in terms of grain supply. From there contributions were made to stabilize the general situation: The quantity of paddy put aside to assist families in a number of programs (including waiving of payment of tax and irrigation service charges) alone amounted to only 20-30 percent of the quantities of paddy that in the past had been needed for adjustments and for compensatory sales. Moreover, our province also had social assistance funds to be used to assist beneficiaries in such work as building houses for seriously wounded and sick soldiers, and for parents of single dead heroes; sending dead

heroes' children to school; helping families facing difficulties because of crop losses due to natural disasters, and so on. In Thai Binh, although these funds were started long time ago, they exist only in agricultural cooperatives. Every year, agricultural laborers contributed 2-3 man-days, an equivalent of 2-3 kilograms of paddy. Many mass organizations like those of women and youths, with typical ones being the Women's Union chapters in Quynh Phu and Vu Thu and the Youth Union chapters in Kien Xuong and Thai Thuy, also organized socialist labor days to benefit wounded soldiers and families of dead heroes. Thanks to their efforts, we were able to satisfy many needs related to the wounded soldiers and social work. However, in order to achieve social justice among families, production installations, and economic components, Thai Binh has decided that in the near future it would set up a unified social assistance fund on the provincial scale and would have a management board to run this fund in the economic accounting formula.

2. To actively develop the role of policy beneficiaries, particularly retired cadres, in carrying out the locality's socioeconomic programs.

Wounded soldiers, families of dead heroes, and retired cadres are not only beneficiaries but also participants in regard to implementing the policy. Being a part of the masses and being close to the revolution, they have a position and a role that are far from small in the locality. We, on the one hand, make them recognize their honor and responsibility in the locality and, on the other, create favorable conditions for them, mostly the retired cadres, to take part in social activities. Thai Binh has more than 20,000 retired cadres, with nearly 300 of them being senior revolutionaries. They make up a force with people whose entire life has been devoted to the revolution, with considerable contributions made to the training of present cadres, and furthermore they have good knowledge in many fields, particularly the ability to proselyte the masses and to build the party. But for many reasons, they also have many feelings, many worries and anxieties.

In order to develop the positive qualities of these cadres, Thai Binh was showing real interest and care about these retirees through specific activities. Every year we organized meetings among retired and active cadres at three provincial, district, and village levels; requested the opinions of retired cadres about the party-building task and development of the family-based economy; and specifically resolved the relationships between retired and active cadres. We made retired cadres take part in activities in the district-level committees of retirees' representatives and in the village-level retirees' clubs. At the present time, the province is continuing to urge retired cadres to take part in the organizations that are involved in social assistance, such as the associations devoted to old-age protection (they already exist in many villages), gardening, care for teenagers and children, and so on.

With the above-mentioned efforts, the group of retired cadres in Thai Binh is a relatively stable one. These retirees have good relationships with the party committee echelons and administration and are respected and liked by the people. More than 70 percent of them are still capable of taking part in social activities. Many among these retirees are very active advisers for local party committee echelons and administrations like the ones in the villages of Bach Thuan (Vu Thu District), Minh Chau (Dong Hung District), and Quynh Trang (Quynh Phu District), and Quang Trung and De Tham Subwards (in Thai Binh City). Many other retirees organize production and do family-based economic work in an outstanding manner, as in the case of Bui Van Bach of Ky Ba Subward (in Thai Binh City) who added to his family's income millions of dong a year.

3. To resolve the job problem on the spot is the main course of action.

In Thai Binh Province, every year the number of people in the labor age group is about 30,000; the number of laborers mainly in the agricultural sector, who are not quite busy because they do not have enough work to do, is equivalent to from 80,000 to 90,000 if we calculate by combining and exchanging their work. In average, every village or subward has 60 people in the labor age group and 250 people considered underemployed. Thus the labor/time reserve remains very abundant.

In recent years, as in many other provinces, in Thai Binh the job problem was a hot and sometimes very bitter topic. Because of an incomplete or wrong work concept, the majority of young adults, demobilized military personnel, and cooperative laborers returning from abroad only wanted to get into the state payrolls. Although many of them have so far begun to work as contractual labor, the desire to be able to work as staff members of state organs has not disappeared. The reality in our province shows that each year the state organs are able to accept only 800-1,000 laborers, to send abroad to work as cooperative laborers about 1,000-1,200 people, and send away to build new economic zones about 5,000 people, or a total of around 8,000 people altogether. There are no ways, therefore, to get out of this stalemate other than to seek new courses of action, to create sources, and to resolve the job problem on the spot.

With such a view, Thai Binh recently concentrated its efforts on resolving the job problem on the spot by adopting this course of action, **to combine industry and agriculture, and to let the state, collectives, and families deal with the problem together.**

- In the agricultural sector, encouragement was made to use surplus labor in in-depth investment in production (preparing the soil, making green manure, and producing seeds); in using land between the main crops (growing winter crops); and in expanding secondary and traditional occupations, technical services, and at the same time family-based economic activities. According to a

survey in two districts and 30 cooperatives, the number of laborers involved in growing crops remained relatively constant. Many villages used this model: rice production + secondary occupations + processing service. Many cooperative members' households like those in the villages of Bach Thien (Vu Thu District), Dong Phuong (Dong Hung District), Quynh Hoang (Quynh Phu District), Tay Giang (Tien Hai District), and so on did many things at the same time: tilling land under product contracts, making handicraft products, and doing VAC work. In these localities, only little surplus labor and few underemployed laborers remained and the desire to run away from the countryside also was declining.

- In the city and town sector, although the situation was more difficult, the province assumed leadership and created favorable conditions for them to develop production. In addition to expanding production in the existing handicraft cooperatives, our province paid attention to promoting the form of association among families-households aimed at organizing production and encouraging individuals to register their names for production and business, particularly for expanding family-based economic activities by making goods on order, raising hogs and domestic animals, growing flower plants, raising pet birds, and so on. As a result, thousands of people have been attracted to doing the above-mentioned work.

- In state organs and enterprises, unless surplus labor was used elsewhere, it was used right within these organizations to organize and expand secondary production on the basis of either individuals doing business on their own or laborers being contracted to do work.

Another course of action taken by the province in addition to continuing the movement for sending people to new economic zones outside of the province was to step up the sending of people to coastal areas, large river basins, and uncultivated low-lying and slightly hilly areas. In such areas, the province could also resolve the job problem for tens of thousands of people in a less expensive manner and with faster economic results.

As to beneficiaries of the wounded soldiers and social policy, to arrange for and provide suitable jobs remained the basic goal of this policy. In recent years and in the time to come, our province has been carrying out a program of vocational teaching and apprenticeship within village clusters and villages, with the production and service organizations that serve these beneficiaries taking part in it; giving priority to investing capital and raw materials and to sales of products for the purpose of expanding occupations, which will help to provide jobs to the wounded soldiers and disabled people still capable of working; and at the same time, creating favorable conditions for the families benefiting from the wounded soldiers and social policy to engage in family-based economic activities. We are studying the establishment of employment public relations and placement centers at different levels to grasp and satisfy the needs for jobs for the benefit of the working people.

Some Thoughts on Law and Politics Today
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[Article by Hoang Cong]

[Text] The socialist state manages the economy and society by law and in accordance with the law. This is the basic relationship between the law and politics. The questions that are raised, therefore, are:

1. How to build a complete, scientific, and progressive system of law in all aspects of social life?
2. How to make this system really become an effective tool to manage the state with, in other words, how to control and use this legal tool in an effective manner?

The socialist law today, whether it exists in any country, consists of similar legal branches because the fields of activities of society in socialist countries are much the same in nature and have similar aspects and relationships which the state needs to adjust. As tool of the socialist state in regard to the relationships and fields of activities of society and citizens, the socialist law in all countries basically has similar standards and limits applicable to either permitting or prohibiting the acts of people. However, due to the customs, habits, and national traditions of each country, the law in each country also contains dissimilarities.

The first matter involving building a complete, scientific, and progressive system of law is to be able to determine the whole of the objective political, economic, and social relationships. In these relationships, we must be able to define scientific and progressive standards and limits which reflect not only the worker class position but also the fine heritage of national cultural traditions, not only the positive national characteristics but also the progressive nature of humanities of the era, and not only institutionalize the current positions and policies of the party in the capacity of leader of society but also serve as a support of relatively long-lasting stability for the social activities of citizens, organizations, and the state itself. Consequently, the correctness of the socialist law greatly depends on the scientific character of the party line and on the level of legal thinking of legislators and regulations makers. But the socialist law is also the spiritual product of the people. Before the law has the value of being obligatory to every member of society, it must receive the spiritual recognition of the working people and, in a larger sense, of society. This is where the popular and democratic character of the socialist law comes from. Democracy is the goal of the socialist law and at the same time the basis for shaping its content and form. The greater its democratic character is, the more effective the law will be. This democratic character is shown more and more as an outstanding and common characteristic of the law of socialist countries in general, and as the spirit that guides the law of our state in particular.

Our law lacks a great many things. Important codes, such as the civil law code, civil legal procedures code, labor law, administrative law, and so on, have not been born yet. However, what is worth mentioning the most is that today there is a gap separating the spirit of the law and its reality, between the law in documents and the law in everyday life. This fact indicates that the respect for the law among people, including state officials, remains poor, but on the other hand it means that our law is far from realistic, not only because there is a lack of realistic regulations but, more important, a lack of the guaranteeing conditions accompanying it to make sure that the law is seriously carried out.

The 1980 Constitution defines the working people as the country's masters having the greatest power. This power is exercised by the people mainly through the state, actually through the National Assembly and People's Councils at all levels. These are the organs having the authority to decide on all the positions and policies of the state, to propose basic guidelines and measures to implement the positions and policies, and to exercise supreme supervision over this implementation. However, in reality, the National Assembly and People's Councils cannot fulfill this function. The organs of state authority are not the highest level where decisions are made about the state positions and policies on all matters, nor can they exercise the highest degree of supervision over all the activities of their executive organs. The right of these organs to nominate and remove people as it is applied to members of the executive organs like the Council of Ministers and People's Committees at all levels cannot be exercised or is only a formal one. On the contrary, the executive organs have the role and authority that in reality are much greater than those of the organs of state authority. One of the important reasons behind this situation is that the National Assembly and People's Councils at all levels have not yet been able to assemble the intelligence and voice of the majority of the people. They are not yet the really democratic people's forum. The people's democratic right to select, elect, and remove the delegates who represent them in these organs is not yet fully exercised. Although there have been electoral laws applicable to the National Assembly and People's Councils, in reality the democratic spirit is not yet high. The people's delegates are not yet attached to the people, nor do they dare to speak the people's aspirations. Many persons who have been elected to these organs are there because of imposition rather than because they are capable and can attain the standards set for people working in such a high state organ. This indicates that democracy in the National Assembly and People's Councils is dependent on the democracy outside of itself, i.e., democracy in society. Conversely speaking, this outside democracy, or democracy in society, also is dependent on the democracy in state organs, particularly the highest state organs. However, democracy within the National Assembly and People's Councils depends first of all and directly on the relationships between these organs and the leading party.

The reality indicates that the leadership of the party over the state has shown these weaknesses of late:

1. Instead of resorting to democratic discussions in the National Assembly and People's Councils, the party organs at all levels, from central to basic, usually imposed their positions and decisions, and therefore made the National Assembly and People's Councils passively accept such positions and decisions.

2. Instead of being made to act as organs consisting of deputies who would be capable of discussing and considering the positions set forth by the party, and turning these positions into other effective legal rules and measures to carry them out, these organs became the place to gather quite a few people who would only say yes because their understanding and working capabilities in connection with the state were greatly limited. This had a direct bearing on the process of selecting, nominating, and electing deputies of the National Assembly and People's Councils, which was not based on accurate standards.

3. The evaluation of the state organs' activities and the efforts to point out their shortcomings usually did not specify any addresses. Consequently, the removal of members of executive organs was not actively proposed to the organs of state authority, and there were cases in which it was very difficult to achieve the removal of anybody. Furthermore, among members of the organs of state authority, i.e., the organs that make laws and regulations and exercise the highest supervisory power, there was a large segment of members who held positions in the executive organs, including many leading party cadres. As a result, the National Assembly and People's Councils seemed to be an organization having the character of "both player and referee."

With this actual situation in mind, we need to review and redefine the membership structure of the organs of state authority so as to make the legislative and supervisory powers independent in relationship to the executive power. Although the organization and activities of the organs of state authority are put under the leadership of the party, they still can develop the democratic rights and intelligence of their members. The decisions that the organs of state authority put forth should not be a copying or repeating of party positions but rather a true product of the people's democratic spirit and intelligence. This indicates that we must have laws about the relationships between the party on the one hand and the elected organs and its own executive organs on the other. The Council of Ministers and People's Committees should adopt procedural rules and have plans to turn party positions and policies into state laws and regulations. And the latter must become the unified standards being used in the evaluation of all activities of society. All party members, including those who hold high positions in the party and state organs, are compelled to observe the state's regulations and laws. If they violate the law, they must first be dealt with in accordance with the law, rather than with any other standards and limits.

This first of all requires the state organs to have the ability to institutionalize the party's policies and to turn them into laws. The fact that for some time correct party policies failed to be institutionalized in time to become state laws has resulted in the common practice of using party resolutions and policies in the place of laws. Naturally, this institutionalization under present conditions is far from easy because of complex changes in the situation and because of the serious test for it to undergo in everyday life. However, if we let each person understand and apply these positions and policies in a different manner and at his own convenience, and if the state and people do not have common and unified codes, standards, and limits to use to evaluate and handle the cases of implementing these positions and policies, a situation in which those who deserve reward are punished and those who deserve punishment are rewarded will result from it.

The law of our state defines that the Organs of Control and People's Courts are organs having the function of protecting the law. These are organs that are responsible only to the National Assembly, and at different levels to their superiors or to the People's Councils. About the fulfillment of their political task, these organs receive control and supervision only from the organs of state authority. About the organizational and professional aspects, they obey the unified system going from central to local level. This principle ensures that the Organs of Control and People's Courts operate in an objective and independent manner in accordance with the law. This, of course, does not mean that these organs do not submit to the party's leadership, the reason being the laws and regulations adopted by the organs of state authority already bear the party's thinking and spirit. But in their practical activities, these organs often encounter interference from the party organizations, even from a single individual in the party committee echelons. This manner of exercising leadership on the part of the party committee echelons toward the organs of the law is irrational; or to say more accurately, it is also a violation of the law. The fact that many cases of violation of the law committed by party members in high-ranking positions and having authority, because of interference of party committee echelons in the work of the organs of control and the courts, have so far been dealt with too slowly or have not been dealt with at all causes adverse effects on society, particularly in regard to the attitude of people toward the socialist law.

The relationships of the party and state organizations with the mass organizations in the political system are in a similar situation. These organizations are unable to play the role that is defined in the Constitution. The reality demands that it is time to have laws about these organizations, to make sure they really are the ones that represent the interests of members (i.e., the groups, strata, and so on) and play an actual role in taking part in all aspects of management of the social life, including the making of laws and the supervision of observance of laws. The party does not exert gross interference in the

activities of these organizations. Its leadership over the latter is only aimed at making them become real democratic organizations and operate in accordance with the law.

In the economic field, today the economic components can exist and develop, with the participation of many strata of society, including the national bourgeois. As a result, in society we have various social groups and population strata. The point being raised is that the law must guarantee equality of legal standing for different population components, guarantee that they can take part in the activities of state organs, and guarantee their ownership right in connection with the means of production and other properties as well. However, because there exists a great income gap among the many population strata, the state should also study and issue income laws; and under the conditions of the capitalist production relationships remaining, we also need clear and complete regulations in order to regulate the relationships between employers and workers in private enterprises and economic organizations and to prevent excessive exploitation of workers.

As to farmers, the state regulations on their economic obligation to the state have great practical effects. Through the law, the responsible organs must strictly control the economic contractual relationships between farmers and the state and other economic organizations. The handling of violations in these relationships must be

legally equal, and even stricter in the case of violations of economic contractual relationships being committed by state organs against farmers.

The reality shows that in the relationships between the state and the social classes and strata, with the real meaning being relationships among the classes, the economic relationships and legal rules on economic relationships have a great political significance that cannot be underestimated.

Today corruption in our country has reached a serious level. What is worth mentioning is the fact that it has spread deeply inside the state organs and has involved quite a few high- and low-ranking state cadres. These are economic violations which, like a swarm of borers, have been destructive to the state apparatus, including the organs of law. The consequences of corruption are very serious in all aspects, including the political aspect. We absolutely should not underestimate its damaging effects.

Our state has recently promulgated the Criminal Code and will promulgate in the near future the Code of Criminal Procedures. The contents of these codes clearly show the determination of our state in preventing and fighting crime, particularly in firmly punishing any plots and acts to sabotage and overthrow the government, protecting and expanding the people's democratic rights, and protecting human lives and dignity.

It is necessary to make the codes fully display their effectiveness.

Why Does Hanoi's Individual and Private Small Industry-Handicraft Economy Develop Too Slowly?

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[Article by Doan Dinh Hue]

[Text] Hanoi, known for a long long time as a civilized place, has many traditional handicrafts. Many artists and skilled workers of Hanoi, with their clever hands, have been creating many handicraft and fine-art products, such as lacquerware, engraved and inlaid objects, sculptures, embroideries and lace, rugs, bamboo and woven articles, and so on, with beautiful designs, meticulous details, unique materials, and rich national colors, which customers, both domestic and foreign, like very much.

However, many artists and skilled workers lately had to reluctantly change their occupations because of a shortage of raw materials. A number of others, because of the restrictive management mechanism that would prevent them from further improving their skills, had to move to Ho Chi Minh City and elsewhere to carry on their trade. Small industries and handicrafts in Hanoi, particularly the handicraft occupations serving export, were developing at a slow pace. The reforming work aimed at "collectivization" has led to a gradual decline of these occupations in terms of both quantity and quality of products, as well as workers' skills.

After the resolution of the 6th Party Congress and Decisions 134 and 680 of the municipality on encouraging the development of individual and private economic activities were issued, small industrial and handicraft production in Hanoi has undergone noteworthy changes. A number of traditional handicrafts have been restored. The fact that some new production installations, such as Hoa Binh, making fine-art and handicraft articles; Star Electronics (SEL for short), making polarized glasses; Bach Khoa, casting metals; Dung Tien, making bicycle parts; Tan Phong, manufacturing automobile tires; Tay Mo, making fishing nets, and so on, were born has opened up the prospect for restoring and developing once again Hanoi's small industries and handicrafts. Since 1987 Hanoi has had nearly 3,000 additional production installations, with 8,376 workers. They included 243 production teams totaling 1,843 workers; 682 handicraft individual households, 1,248 workers; and 1,974 handicraft family households, 5,246 workers. In order to implement Decree 27/HDBT (dated 9 March 1988) and Resolution 16 of the Political Bureau on encouraging the development of nonstate-operated economic components, Hanoi decided to set up eight privately-operated enterprises and corporations, such as Toan Thang Machine Enterprise, Thang Long Fine Pottery and Porcelain Enterprise, Hoa Binh Handicraft and Fine-Art Articles Enterprise, SEL Electronics Corporation, for mica tops manufacturing factory, and so on.

Generally speaking, the policy on individual and private economic activities did show some openness, but it still failed to be really a part of the daily life, because of the following reasons:

1. The common mentality of individual and private producers was to have no real confidence in the state policy. Many people believed that the party's policy was to "untie the hands," but when it was actually carried out, it would again tighten the rope. Many residents of Hanoi witnessed quite a few cases in which private citizens had in the past invested tens of taels [= 37.5 grams] of gold in purchasing machinery and expanding production installations only to lose all of them because the local administration later was taking administrative measures and confiscating both machines and shops. As I talked with some producers, I came to know their view: "We are not afraid of expanding production, but we are afraid that after a while, after we have become rich, our properties would have to go into the state-operated sector or our business would have to close." Some people wanted to wait and to see whether the party members who have retired would be engaged in private economic activities in the capacity of either individuals or small owners in their locality. The resolution of the 5th Plenum of the CPV [Communist Party of Vietnam] Central Committee (6th term) pointed out: "If you are a party member, you must work and must not exploit others. This is a matter of principle." This has really made many private producers worry and have no peace of mind. While the state has a law to regulate foreigners' investment in Vietnam, it does not have any law on domestic investment to allow people to know exactly the basic principles of development of nonstate-operated economic components, their relationships with the state, their self-rule and independence, and the social fairness and equality in regard to the right to work and to have an income commensurate with the quality of labor.

2. The struggle between the new and old mechanisms was taking place in a very decisive manner. The old conservative mechanism still existed in the ways of thinking and working while the new mechanism was far from uniform. A number of cadres at all levels and the responsible sectors caused production installations many difficulties because they had not been fully aware of the matter. For instance, the municipality early in March 1987 issued a document on the new policy regulating the individual and private economic components, but by July and August 1987 the sectors concerned had not yet received any documents providing them with positive guidance about the ways they should do the work and the goals to be fulfilled in regard to tax. Many districts, subwards, and villages were still very confused about managing the individual and private production. And even when the sectors had received specific guidance documents, some financial and market management cadres, public security offices, and people's committees still carried them out according to their own convenience and thus caused a lot of inconvenience to the individual and private production installations. On the other hand,

some of these installations did take advantage of the new policy to register their names for doing productive work and business, but in reality they made the registration only for the purpose of making contact so as to get materials and goods from the state organs and to make profits from price differentials through speculation and hoarding.

For nearly 30 years, the majority of cadres and people, who found that their action had been restricted by the concepts on collective labor and socialist ownership, now had a certain complex toward individual work. That also was a considerable obstacle for the development of individual and private economic activities.

3. At the conference held in Hanoi to discuss the development of the small industrial and handicraft individual and private economic components, Nguyen Thanh Binh, former secretary of the Hanoi Municipal CPV Committee, concluded as follows: "The potential of the production units is very great, but the Municipal CPV Committee has been slow in grasping the situation in order to change it." This statement was very true in regard to the real situation in Hanoi. In the past years, the state's economic policies not only failed to promote but rather restricted the development of production and the circulation of goods.

First, the tax policy, which was both restrictive and full of loopholes, not only discouraged honest business people but also caused great losses to the state. At the present time, we are facing the phenomenon of business tax being collected several times. Products go from producers to consumers through many intermediary elements; at each intermediary level of the circulation process this tax based on turnover is collected. From production to wholesale and retail, this tax already boosts prices of goods to levels much higher than those at the cost level. In small industrial and handicraft production, almost all products were made in groups, with each production installation being a part of the production process and pay its own tax; and finally, tax would be levied on the finished products as they went through the circulation process. Here we do not include the business tax and commodity tax that were imposed on materials (at the entry end) and on products as they moved through the different parts in the circulation process. This manner of calculating tax both was imposed on consumers and adversely affected the activities of production installations.

Second, about the price policy, the state often adjusted the prices of small industrial and handicraft goods, but because each time the adjustment was made too late in comparison with price changes in the market, these goods remained unsold and as producers realized that their capital did not flow anywhere, they became discouraged. When the production installations signed contracts with the organs that bought their goods, they usually had to accept "forced pricing." They often had to accept lower profit levels in order to make their goods

move more quickly. Another difficulty was that because the sales made on contract were paid by state organs with checks, the production installations lacked the cash they would need to buy raw materials and to pay wages to their workers.

Since the beginning of 1988, although the prices of materials and raw materials were raised many times, the retail price framework often was lower than production costs; in some localities, the costs of products made market prices go up. In many cases, the production installations were unable to sell their goods in accordance with the directed price framework set by the state; if they wanted to sell at agreed prices, the commercial installations would not have enough capital to buy them. That also was one of the reasons which had led to a false unsalability of products.

Third, the operations of the banking system were far from suitable for the characteristics of an economy having many components. The production installations which had opened bank accounts had to make several withdrawals if they wanted to get money, and each time only 30 percent could be given in cash. That was a great difficulty that obstructed production and business.

Fourth, for some time the individual and private production installations were not allowed to buy raw materials from the state. They generally had to get raw materials by themselves and to use recycled raw materials. Consequently, in the case of some plastic products, such as clogs, sandals, hat crowns, hat ribbons, canes, raincoats, and so on, although their designs were attractive and suitable for consumers' taste, they were of poor quality and wore out or became broken within a short time.

Dealing with the question of materials and raw materials for production, Decision 517 of the Hanoi Municipal People's Committee had this to say in article 4, part 2: "Production installations are allowed to accept materials and equipment sent from relatives abroad and in unlimited quantities for expansion of production." But Directive No 202/HDBT had something else to say: "In the case of technical materials and raw materials for production, if they are brought home or sent home in quantities that exceed the official limits, within which they can be kept for personal use, the quantities above the limits must be sold to the materials sector at satisfactory selling prices, to which will be added a percentage as bonus, with full payment being made in due time." In my opinion, two points were involved here: First, the rules were far from clear-cut and uniform; second, the concept of "payment made in due time" was not actually carried out because materials and raw materials would be purchased by the state at the time of their arrival at a port of entry, and nothing would be left for the production installations concerned to use.

Fifth, about **capital**, the municipality did not pay any special attention to letting production installations borrow money to expand production and business, nor did it have an appropriate policy to encourage the individual and private economic components to boldly invest capital in expanding production and business. In some cases, the responsible organs even caused inconveniences to the people living abroad who sent foreign currency home to their relatives so that it could be used to expand production.

Sixth, the municipality encountered many problems in **exporting small industrial and handicraft goods**. For a very long time the state had not advocated the export of the various lines of small industrial and handicraft products to foreign countries. Producers had not been allowed to directly deal with "trade partners"; as a result, many handicrafts and fine arts disappeared, and the goods that had been made remained unsold. In order to have a commodity to export to a foreign country, a producer had to go through many intermediary levels that created inconveniences and many losses, for he would not be allowed to use foreign currency for reproduction, nor to make his goods convertible.

In order to make economic policies a real part of the daily life, I propose that attention be paid to the following points:

First, about the form, how to organize management of individual and private economic activities to make it really effective? To organize and control the nonstate-operated production installations does not necessarily require many levels of management and profound intervention in their production and business activities.

At the present time, in Hanoi there are four forms of individual and private small industrial and handicraft production. One, the people who have technical knowledge and capital open a production installation in their family. For instance, production installations making bicycle parts, agar, electric appliances, and so on. Two, the people who have technical knowledge and capital (or can mobilize capital) set up a production team or privately-operated enterprise consisting of friendly workers or hired workers, or do productive work in the family or in other installations owned by other families. For instance, the production teams making Vinh Cuong aluminum ware, embroidered sandals for export, Tan Phong automobile tires, Toan Thang machines, and so on. Three, the people who have technical knowledge and capital (or can mobilize capital) set up a production team or private enterprise, with family households doing work on contract for the team or enterprise, which gives orders for goods. For instance, the production installations making Tay Mo fishing nets, Hoa Binh handicraft and fine-art articles, Thang Long pottery and porcelain ware, and so on. Four, a group of people who have technical knowledge pool their capital and set up a production center or private corporation, with handicraft households making various parts of a product and delivering

them to the center, which assembles finished products. For instance, the SEL electronic products; the embroidered sandals made for export; the rattan, bamboo, and woven articles, and so on for export. As to this last form, there are production installations being located in the same place like the Bach Khoa metal-casting installation, the installation making formica tops, and so on. Generally speaking, their production mostly takes place within a family and in various forms (making finished products, making parts on contract, and so on). The privately-operated production teams, corporations, and enterprises all want to have workshops of their own so that they could expand their work and use them as a place to exchange materials and products.

For the time being, this form of family-run production activities is considered appropriate. The reason is that it is very active, compact, and light and that it costs less in terms of investment. Furthermore, it can best combine economic development (fully using spare labor time) with educating children and maintaining neighborhood security. The production installations that have the character of industrial assembly lines are permitted to be established close to one another in the same location, which should be far from residential areas to avoid causing noise and affecting the environment. Only certain production installations that are really needed should be permitted to be organized in such isolated production locations.

It is necessary to establish associations of small industrial and handicraft producers as organizations that ensure the legitimate interests of producers and exploit the capabilities of outstanding artists and workers. These associations will create favorable conditions for them to conduct their activities, to exchange experiences, to improve their professional skills, and to train young workers.

In order to make their work last for a long time and remain effective, the outstanding artists and workers need to get information about economic matters; the needs and tastes of consumers; and the customs and habits, cultural traditions, and psychology of customers in all markets. From such information they will be able to create designs, models, and colors to satisfy the needs of customers. The associations will also create favorable conditions for producers to directly study the size of their markets and help them to improve their professional skills, to have access to economic information, and to sign contracts for the sales of their goods.

- To give the seals of approval of brands of goods and quality of products, as well as the seals of individual and private production installations, is an important measure to control the quality of goods. Presently, there are quite a few goods made by both state-operated and nonstate-operated installations that are of poor quality. Many individual and private production installations are unable to sell their goods because they cannot guarantee their quality. This situation demands that the

responsible organs further strengthen quality control over products and take timely measures to prevent collectives and individuals from making counterfeit goods and to deal with counterfeiters.

Second, a series of economic policies applicable to the individual and private economic components must be drafted and uniformly implemented.

- About the tax policy, we should not allow the situation in which taxes are duplicated and repeatedly collected to create complications as it does today. We should replace the various kinds of business-license, income, and merchandise taxes with the kind of commercial tax computed as a percentage of the turnover and do away with computing income tax on the basis of the nontaxable parts (nontaxable pay). Tax should remain unchanged for a specific length of time in order to encourage installations to have peace of mind while continuing their production. Tax is to be levied upon groups of goods and all production installations without any distinction as to whether they are state-operated, collective, or individual; if the production of goods is the same, the same amount of tax must be collected. New production installations, which usually encounter many difficulties, can be granted a reduction of tax depending on their actual situation so as to be able to expand production and business. Reduction of and exemption from tax should be granted imported goods that serve production through the nontrade channel. Reduction of or exemption from tax should be granted any products made of fully-used discarded materials and considered essential in everyday life. For instance, in the case of laundry soap and regular wooden furniture, the normal 15 percent tax should be reduced to 10 percent. As to the products that are made on contract, which requires buying raw materials from and selling products to the state, the production installations concerned should pay only the tax based on on-contract purchasing prices, rather than pay the entire amount of tax, i.e., pay the share of tax for customers, too, because they paid wages only.

- Raw materials remain a common difficulty for both the state-operated and nonstate-operated production installations. In order to encourage expansion of individual and private production, the state can set aside a quantity of raw materials to be sold to them in accordance with the formula of buying materials and selling products, or in accordance with orders for goods. The reality indicates that a number of production installations currently do not operate at full capacity and that there is a threat of their being closed down because of a shortage of raw materials. Domestic raw materials are used to make many small industrial and handicraft products, but in the case of many other products, such as embroideries, laces, rugs, pottery and porcelain ware, lacquerware, electronic products, and so on, imported raw materials are needed. Consequently, we think there must be guidance about reorganizing production (for a long time, we have lacked planning and have allowed things to evolve

by themselves). Some localities having abundant sources of raw materials caused difficulties to the production installations that came to purchase raw materials by deliberately arresting their people and repeatedly collecting tax. On the other hand, the production installations that sold their products to get convertible goods should have been paid, i.e., received such goods, in time so as to avoid unnecessary adverse effects on reproduction. Reality shows that many state-operated units which actually received products for export have failed to give back the convertible goods to the production installations concerned. As to the materials and raw materials ordered by production installations through the nontrade channel, the state should levy tax in accordance with the law, instead of making purchases, particularly in the case of the raw materials that serve production.

About prices of products, to fix two kinds of prices as it is currently done is a necessity. If products are made of materials and raw materials provided by the production installations themselves, the latter will fix prices in accordance with the formula, "The market can buy, the market can sell." As to the ones that are made of materials and raw materials supplied by the state, prices will be fixed in accordance with the price framework set by the state. Naturally, this price fixing must conform with the actual conditions of production. If the fixed prices are too low, the production installations concerned will not be able to cover all production expenses. On the other hand, if they set prices too high, they will be unable to sell their goods and their capital will lie there for a long time. Individual and private producers mainly live on wages, and do not get any other benefits. In the present situation of price fluctuations, a positive measure to help to stabilize the jobs and living conditions of small industrial and handicraft producers is to set prices in time and to take rice or convertible goods as unit price for figuring wages. In addition to signing production contracts, individual and private producers have the right to organize the sales of their own goods by doing one of the many things: to consign goods; to sign sales contracts with export enterprises, foreign trade corporations, general merchandise retailing corporations, and consumer cooperatives; or to open their own stores and to register their names for selling the goods produced by their installations.

The common experience in the world shows that in order to promote development of the economy, whether it is individually run or is aimed at producing goods, it needs five factors: capital; labor; industries; machinery, materials, and raw materials; and social conditions (including the system of state policies). In reality, the individual and private economic production installations in Hanoi today do not as yet have all of these five factors. To try to find the ways to remedy the situation in order to create a goods-producing environment for the individual and private economies—that is the problem that has been proposed but no appropriate solution has been found yet.

Where Does State Capital Go by Way of Price Differentials

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[Article by Pham Ngoc Phu, a Hanoi reader]

[Text] At the present time, price differentials—the amounts of money resulting from the fact that the price mechanism used for centralized planning remains rigidly fixed while prices on the market constantly change—still are the matter of concern for many economic sectors and production and business units.

As we consider the price differentials computed through inventories of stocks of goods following the state's decision to increase prices, we find that the current system allowing state enterprises to retain them to add to their self-supplied capital sources is not rational. The reason is that the capital of state enterprises coming from their inventoried goods, in addition to the self-supplied capital, also consists of capital coming from such sources as loans from the bank, the state budget, and customers. The price differentials based on inventoried goods as they appear in the current accounts of state enterprises are much smaller than the total state capital that is lost because of decreases of the real value of other capitals supplied by the enterprises themselves and coming from bank loans and the state share in their stocks. Therefore, how to divide the price differential percentages in inventoried goods among the sectors in a rational manner is a very complex and difficult matter, a matter that is almost impossible to achieve. As we consider each state enterprise on an individual basis, we find that the price differentials as they appear in inventoried goods do not vary in proportion to the self-supplied capital. A few economic units which buy more and sell less, practice business accounting, hold their goods while waiting for prices to go up, are able to borrow a lot of capital from the bank, and attract much capital from the state budget and customers will find great price differentials in their inventories and be under favorable conditions to supplement their self-supplied capital. As to the majority of units which have small price differentials in their inventories, they naturally will not have enough to reinforce their self-supplied capital through compensation and reimbursement. The real value of these units' self-supplied capital continues to decrease and is slowly moving toward zero.

About purchase price differentials and selling price differentials, the current system requires that sectors and basic-level units make collection and put into the state budget. Because they do not get anything out of collecting these price differentials, state enterprises do not actively collect them. Even if they do collect these purchase and selling price differentials, they will temporarily keep them for their own use and change their nature in order to spend for capital construction, internal distribution, and so on.

When we consider the differences between prices of goods in the social market and the actual purchase and selling prices of goods of state enterprises, we will find that the more quickly prices go down and the more goods the state sells, the greater the self-supplied capital of state enterprises and their capital coming from bank loans and the state budget will become.

Being rather backward in terms of our concept of the objective economic laws, we divided the social market into two components: the organized market and the free market. In the organized market, the state did not pay a proper amount of attention to the right of self-support and material interests of production and business units. On the other hand, it was ready to provide the poorer production and business units with additional capital by selling them materials at low prices, lending them money at low interest rates, or moving capital from the out-standing units to the ones that have had losses.

As to the free market, we sometimes were anxious to reform it or want to abolish it and sometimes let it float. However, in reality, the two markets did not exist; instead, there was only one market. And because we falsely created two markets, we created an imbalance that expressed itself in price differentials, the reason for the negative phenomena like corruption, bribery, internal distribution, violations of the principle of distribution based on labor, and restrained production. The final result would still be a unified market, but this market has deformed.

As a consequence of the concept of existence of two markets, the wages of cadres, workers, and civil servants had to be spent at prices found in the social market; therefore, wages were enough to feed them for just 10 days. The state was forced to use prices as the tool for redistribution. The policy of redistribution through prices separated production from circulation, and production from market, and made commerce more and more cumbersome, with many intermediary levels, but results were poor. The policy of "state subsidies" through prices turned the state into a price holder and a provider of state subsidies to society as a whole. For production units, the more state subsidies were issued through prices, the poorer production would be, with more losses being involved. The state was then forced to take price-support action, and the price-support subsidies granted state enterprises were becoming greater and greater a burden for the state budget. The fact that such price-support subsidies were granted also adversely affected the economy by, for instance, maintaining the production installations and enterprises that had been showing poor labor productivity and driving individual and private economic units to bankruptcy, unless these units would try to evade payment of tax and to buy materials from illegal sources. Price differentials resulting from excessive centralized adjustment of prices by the state lead to these consequences:

- The state makes decisions too slowly about purchase and selling prices: This will lead to the situation in which goods wait for prices and cause obstruction to production and circulation.

- The state makes decisions too quickly. This will lead to these three situations:

+ The state adjusts prices to make them equal to prices in the social market—this is a situation that seldom occurs and lasts for a short period of time. In this situation, the state still loses its capital because prior to its decision about prices, state enterprises could have sold a large quantity of goods if state-adjusted prices were lower than market prices, and purchased a large quantity of goods if higher. This does not take into consideration the possibility that civil servants in the commercial installations make false statement about the quantities of inventoried goods.

+ The state makes selling prices lower than prices in the social market and purchase prices higher—this leads to a situation in which commercial activities seem to go in a circle, with circulation expenses "eating up" price differentials and with state capital being unavoidably transferred to private business people.

+ The state makes selling prices higher than prices in the social market and purchase prices lower—this leads to the tendencies to force sales, to force purchases, to divide the market, to abolish the market.

In order to change this real situation, there is no other way than to recognize a price mechanism that flexibly changes in accordance with the supply-demand relationships in the market. To recognize the right of state enterprises to set prices and to regulate and coordinate the movement of goods in the market. The price system must change in order to make all subjects taking part in the production of goods equal to one another in regard to the market (all economic subjects have the right to set prices for almost all lines of goods, except for the ones that are under state price management). The state must move forward in order to switch from its main function of adjusting prices to using indirect measures.

The financial system needs to be changed to allow the state, in the capacity of owner of capital in state enterprises, to avoid supplying capital and transferring capital to state enterprises but to make sources of revenue fixed instead. The state only collects tax and profit from state enterprises. State enterprises must be responsible for keeping intact the real value of their self-supplied capital. This means that the self-supplied capital of state enterprises at the end of a period must be at least equal to that at the end of the previous period multiplied by the price-decrease index. The sales and services turn-overs of state enterprises, minus expenses, the share of reimbursement resulting from price decreases and put into the self-supplied capital, and tax payment, will be divided in accordance with some percentage between

state enterprises and the state budget. The share of state enterprises will be used to pay wages, bonuses, social insurance, and so on and to supplement their self-supplied capital.

We can build the new price and financial systems only on the basis of an active market, in which such factors as labor, materials, and capital are put in monetary terms. Economic subjects are allowed to compete in the market; if they sustain losses and cannot find any financial sources to compensate for such losses, they must cease to exist. Power in the market is balanced between supply and demand by eliminating the monopolizing economic units. Prices and quality of goods are widely announced over the mass information network.

Price differentials are being an obstacle for our productive power and the food for those people who engage in corruption, bribery, and smuggling. It is time for us to wipe out the ill of taking advantage of price differentials and to bring wholesomeness to our country's economy.

Let Us Avoid Letting What We Have Obtained Slip From Our Hands

42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 12, Dec 88 pp 64-66, 68

[Article by Phong Le, director, Institute of Literature]

[Text] This point in time in our life today still is caught in the increasing trend of many social difficulties. "Prices-wages-money"—let us listen to the voices of those who live on wages, nothing else but wages, and housewives. The social ills do not decrease but rather show unusual aspects.

This point in time today also is that of incessant debate on all topics, in which there are many forms of "stick to one's opinion" because it is not easy to have a referee, a debate that reflects the state of undecided contest between the new and the old, when all standards of evaluation are not confirmed ones and when the actual results of the test still are to become obvious.

But not everything deserves being pessimistic about, for there still are things that are ok, in quite a few fields. Let me circle a few ok's in the cultural-spiritual field.

The ok's in the last 2 years, from the cultural-spiritual standpoint, were the democratic atmosphere, the "untying," according to a familiar word that has been around for a long while. Some people said there no longer were absolute power, iconic image, and favors and things awarded from superior echelons, or if there were any, they were no longer as "sacred" as before. That was an exaggerated way of saying, and if it were used for an unwholesome design, it could lead to disturbances, anarchy, and even a breakdown of all law and order. But at the same time, in addition to a well-meaning effort to

prevent signs of extreme behavior, we cannot and should not restrict the rising trend of the democratic spirit and avoid any curbing and intimidating aimed at obstructing this irreversible trend.

In my opinion, this is a good trend, which causes a crack—not a total annihilation—in all the things that are rigid and old; but what is more important is that it contributes to launching a positive and creative movement among the people, or in other words, it brings substance to the so-called “concept of ownership” of the people which has been around for a long time. In history, the phenomena similar to the above-mentioned trend usually signal a new era. The Renaissance in the West begins with Montaigne’s skepticism. Montaigne writes in “The Essays” as follows: “We can solemnly say, ‘Cicero said this, said that,’ or ‘Those truly were the words of Aristotle.’ But let us question ourselves what will we be able to say in our name. What is our judgmental opinion? What are our deeds? Otherwise, even a parrot can say the same!” It is this skepticism that is one of the basic traits defining the “greatness” of the Renaissance people, in the words of Engels: “They do not recognize any outside power, no matter what kind of power it is. Religion, the concept of nature, society, state system, all are criticized in a pitiless manner; all must appear in the court of reason to defend their existence or to give up their existence.”¹

As I read the history of our country’s culture and thoughts, I find this is a real state of affairs existing from the end of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century. It begins with the **complex of inferiority** of people like Cao Ba Quat, Phan Thanh Gian, Nguyen Truong To, and so on after their journeys to the “faraway oceans” to see the world. Then comes a whole trend of modernizing ideas early in the century, when the “travel to the East” movement is launched, along with the winds blowing from the West, with inspirations leading to unreserved criticisms against all things backward and old-fashioned having accumulated for thousands of years in the darkness and closed door of the long medieval night.

In our country today, the shortcomings, infantile behavior, and ignorance in the building of socialism have clearly demonstrated the limits of our vision. And gradually in our everyday life, when the accumulating socioeconomic difficulties emerge and increase day after day, the **complex of inferiority** appears and then overpowers and even drowns the sense of positiveness and psychology of superiority of the nation. This psychology was somehow legitimate and very necessary in the 30 years of the revolutionary war, but it has lasted too long, excessively so after 1975, and has caused so many damages. The **complex of inferiority** is linked with the concept of criticism, and at times an overacted negativism.

I now return to the idea of being cautious and protective but not obstructive toward the **trend of democratization** which is emerging as a victory and favorable condition of

the revolution, which the 6th Party Congress and recent party resolutions have succeeded in launching and planning. This is the trend that demands displaying the real ownership right of the people, not the empty words; it is the trend that demands raising all questions again to look into them from top to bottom, not in a midway manner; it is the trend that demands destroying certain powers and icons having so far failed to be effective, or having lost all confidence in the face of the new needs of history.

Somebody, reluctant or alarmed in the face of this trend, will raise the question, **the masses here, what are they?**, and then doubt the upward movement and initiatives from the bottom. Let me say this: These are the masses the majority of which has gone through war and has known the value of war and revolution. They are the common people who have been trained and made conscious. The people who have been longing for a chance to work, for jobs to do, and so on. It is obvious that in the common ok’s of today, in the democratic spirit, we cannot afford not to pay attention to and guard against those people who take advantage of it to cause disturbances, on the basis of the phrase, “the people are the roots,” which is being deliberately changed to “the people are wooden clogs” and “the people are chopping blocks.” We adopt the policy of attentively listening to the masses’ opinions and respecting the right of the basic level to take initiative of its own, but when the masses express the ownership attitude and act accordingly, we ask questions full of doubt and then continue to deter them and to impose things on them. We raise the question of restoring the party’s prestige and fighting power. The resolution of the 5th Plenum of the CPV Central Committee (6th term) on party building and the determination of the party as a whole to carry out this resolution, under the control of the masses, are one way to restore balance and equilibrium in order to make the country move forward on two legs that are no longer lame. But there is one thing we must be thinking about and planning, and that is the concept of how the party leads and what the organizing mechanism should be to ensure this leadership; and we must think about it and plan it on the basis of the historical lessons and our own experiences, and at the same time those of other fraternal countries as well.

Let me return to the atmosphere of democratization as the starting point of a process. From the historical experiences and the motives having to do with our concept and thinking, although they are important “pushes,” they do not easily and cannot create immediate and obvious material results in the social and economic fields. This is something natural and we should not be too impatient about it. At this moment, the forces of leadership and guidance have a very decisive role. About those motives that create many oscillations and disturbances, on the surface, along the breadth, with many undercurrents in the depth, leaders should be clear-sighted and know how to listen, to see, and to seize good opportunities in order to move them forward. To

repress and extinguish a new trend by means of the familiar inertia and pressure is a crime. To do so, anyway, is so much easier than to start and nurture something new.

With democratization (and doing things openly) as a lever, our country has had and is having motives that we should be happy about in close to 2 years now; I believe that, in the coming years, we will have remarkable movement in the economic and social fields.

In spite of that, we know well that life still encounters many difficulties, in new jobs, or in having to redo many things; and therefore, it is impossible to avoid worries and doubts. While we see good prospects in the question of the masses being the masters, the question of the party leading and the state managing, in my opinion, still shows many disorderly aspects. I am only raising some observation, which can be just some feelings, and do not dare to discuss it because this is the specialized field of politicians, economists, jurists, organizers, and so on. Organization perhaps is the most inactive aspect in this structure? It is this aspect that gives rise to problems, delays, or obstruction to different degrees on the roads to improvement, reforms, and reorganization. Generally speaking, the organizing task still lags behind the need and even stays aloof (in order to observe and to survey) and, in some cases, hampers in advance the urgent demands of the situation.

Is it true that it is in **management and organization** that we still are unable to strongly develop the **human capital and labor capital**, which excessively abound in our country? A large part of our social labor force remains unused

and undeveloped. The gray-matter labor force is extremely cheap and continues to be priced less. It is cheap not because we have plenty or there is a surplus of it, in accordance with the normal law of supply and demand, but the gray matter is too cheap while in our own country there is a serious shortage of it. We are short of it in all fields. We are short of it for the immediate needs, in order to escape the harsh difficulties of today, and will be in a greater shortage for future needs, for the needs of the 1990's. We dare not mention the 21st century yet. This is the paradox that our leaders must face.

The motive that generates the country's strength starts from the atmosphere of democracy and openness, which demands the active help and acceptance of the management and leadership circles. And in order to accept and launch the potentials of the masses, these circles themselves also need renovation. With initiatives being taken on both sides, which must be smooth and synchronized, between top and bottom, basic and higher levels, the masses and the leadership, in my opinion, it is necessary to promote quick renovation from the top, **from the higher echelons**. If things are not untangled from the top, the acts that are motivated at the bottom, and even the atmosphere of democratization, will be obstructed and even strangled.

Footnote

1. Marx-Engels: "Selected Works," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1983, Volume V, p 562.

Fortunately He Is the Head of Only One District

42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 12, Dec 88 pp 67

[Vu Dang; article not translated]

The World: Issues and Events

In the Revived and Developed Land of Angkor

42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 12, Dec 88 pp 69

[Vu Tien and Trinh Cu; article not translated]

Debate on the French Revolution

42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 12, Dec 88 pp 75

[Article not translated]

The Law American Style

42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 12, Dec 88 pp 78

[Oscar Ferrer; article not translated]

Let Socialism Show a New Face—Our Road and Objective

42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 12, Dec 88 pp 80

[Article not translated]

Consolidated 1988 Table of Contents of TAP CHI CONG SAN

42100005 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 12, Dec 88 pp 1-8

[Article not translated]

[text] **I. The Economy**

-Some Thoughts on Building Micro-Industry in Our Country (Pham Van Nghien)	1
-Correct Use and Transformation of Economic Components (Truong Son)	1
-Building a New Management Model for the Marine Products Sector (Nguyen Hong Can)	1
-Gradually Reducing and Moving Toward Ending Inflation (Minh Ho)	1
-Inflation and Anti-Inflationary Price Measures in Our Country (Luong Xuan Quy)	1
-Major Guiding Concepts for the 5-Year 1986-1990 and 1988 Socioeconomic Development Plans (Editorial) ..	2
-Frugality—a Major National Policy (Nguyen Khiem)	2
-Being Backward in Our Concept of Economic Theories (Tran Ho)	2
-Some Ideas About Inflation in Our Country (Dinh Phuong)	2
-Struggling To Stabilize Monetary Circulation (Quang Tue)	2
-Farmers and Rice Plants in Phu Chau (Tran Trung Nong)	2
-Building the Farm Products-Commodities Production Structure (Nguyen Dinh Nam)	3
-Seeking an Understanding of Applying Lenin's Cooperativization Plan to Vietnam (Tran Duc)	3
-The Real Situation of Inflation in Our Country (Nguyen Van Truong)	3
-Inflation in Our Country and Reducing the Rate of Its Increase (Le Thanh Long)	3
-Some Socioeconomic Problems in the First Stage (Book review) (Pham Van Duc)	3
-Some Views About Expanding Production of Goods in Our Country (Che Viet Tan)	4

-The Goods-Money Relationships and Renovation of the Economic Management Mechanism in Our Country (Tran Ngoc Hien)	4
-About Inflation (Editorial staff's preliminary review)	4
-Increasing the Effectiveness of State Management Apparatus (Vu Cao Dam)	4
-Defining and Dividing the Function of State Economic Management and the Function of Business Management (Nguyen Van Huy)	4
-Implementing the Political Bureau Resolution on Renovation of Agricultural Economic Management (Editorial)	5
-Renovating the State Management of the Economy (Truong Son)	5
-Renovating the State Management of Business Activities (Tran Thai Nguyen)	5
-Concerning the Law on Foreign Investment in Vietnam (Luu Van Dai)	6
-Urgent Anti-Inflationary Measures	6
-Let Us Discuss the Grain Problem in Our Country in the Coming Years (Nguyen Thanh Bang)	6
-Let Us Outline the Road to Cooperativization in Our Country (Tran Duc)	6
-Some Matters Related to Economic and Administrative Management (Le Hong Hanh)	6
-State Management of the Economy in Localities (Tran Quoc Buu)	6
-Ideas Contributed to the Discussion of Inflation (Pham Minh Nguyet)	6
-Economic Memoirs (Tran Bach Dang)	7
-State Management of the Economy and Business Management (Nguyen Van Thao)	7
-Equality and Lack of Equality (Do The Tung)	7
-Reply (to the article, "Equality and Lack of Equality") (Truong Son)	7
-Early Implementation of Product Contracting With Cooperative Members' Households (Tran Xuan Thi)	7

-Reorganization of Production and Management in Forestry (Phan Xuan Dot)	8
-Developing Transportation, an Important Section of the Infrastructure (Phan Van Nghien	8
-About Basic Changes of the Wage System (Tran Dinh Hoan)	8
-Xuan Tien and Its New Contracting With Households (Vu Dinh Tu)	8
-Some Ideas About Improving Foreign Trade in the Coming Years (Nguyen The Uan)	8
-The Formation of Our Country's Labor Market (Nguyen Huu Dung)	9
-Contracting With Households and Bidding in Hai Ninh Village (Phan Quang Niem)	9
-Seeking To Overcome Famine by Learning From Famine in the Preharvest Lean Period (Huy Hung)	9
-About Switching Banking Activities to Monetary Business (Vu Ngoc Phuong)	9
-The Role of Accounting and Statistics in Improving Management Efficiency (Le Van Toan-Truong Van Phuc)	10
-Farm Machinery and the Three Major Economic Programs (Nguyen Binh)	10
-Further Discussion of the Goods-Money Relationships (Le Huy Phan)	10
-It Is Necessary To Know the Laws When Organizing Inflation Debate (Vu Ngoc Nhung)	10
-On the Standard Price of Rice (Tran Phung)	11
-Necessary Steps in Agricultural Economic Management in Tra Cu District (Trieu Van Be)	11
-Tax Policies Must Be Aimed at Encouraging Commodity Production Development (Hoang Cong Thi)	11
-The Real Situation of Inflation in Our Country and the Measures To Overcome It (Huy Minh)	11
-The Argument of Marx and Engels on Money and the Vietnamese Currency Today (Nguyen Hoa)	11
-Some Ideas About Production of Goods in Our Country Today (Dan Tam)	11
-Some Hot Issues in Our Country's Cooperativization (Tran Duc)	12

-Why Does Hanoi's Individual and Private Small Industry-Handicraft Economy Develop Too Slowly? (Doan Dinh Hue)	12
--	----

-Where Does State Capital Go by Way of Price Differentials? (Pham Ngoc Phu)	12
---	----

II. Political-Ideological

-Raising Understanding of and Respect for Law Among Cadres, Party Members (Vu Duc Khien)	1
--	---

-What Should We Write? How? For Whom? (Minh Chi) .	1
--	---

-About the Movement for Renovation (Hong Chuong)	2
---	---

-Raising the Critical and Transforming Function of Marxism-Leninism (Vu Nhat Khai)	2
--	---

-We Interview: (On the Occasion of the Movement To Clean up and To Heighten the Fighting Power of Party Organizations): Nguyen Manh Can, Nguyen Tien Cang, Bui Nghe, Thai Ninh, Huu Tho, Nguyen Dinh Hung, Phan Duc Luan, Le Xuan Dong, Binh Phuong, Vu Xuan Can, Phan Hien, Do Tong, Dao Nguyen Cat, Vu Khac Si, Nguyen Tien Dam .	2-3
---	-----

-Some Ideas About Renovating Theoretical Thinking (Thai Ninh)	3
---	---

-About the Social Ownership System in the Transition to Socialism (Tran Dinh Nghiem)	3
--	---

-Achieving Social Justice (Dong Thao)	3
---	---

-The Land Law—the New Sign in Management of Our State (Ton Gia Huyen)	3
---	---

-Heightening Vigilance, Consolidating National Defense and Our Country's Security (Le Duc Anh)	4
--	---

-Some Basic Military Views of the Party Today (Hoang Minh Thao)	4
---	---

-About the Letter Pages (Readers' service staff)	4
--	---

-'Da-gie-nang' (Nguyen Chinh)	4
-------------------------------------	---

-Dividing and Defining the Functions Between Party Organizations and the State—First Condition for Observing the Law (Nguyen Huu Tho)	5
---	---

-Fighting Empiricism and Dogmatism, Renovating Theoretical Thinking (Nguyen Ngoc Long)	5
--	---

-Cultivating Higher Revolutionary Ethics To Follow the Great Uncle Ho's Example (Dang Xuan Ky)	5
--	---

-Democratizing Cadre Work (Tien Hai)	5
--	---

-Vietnamese Farmers and Countryside Today: Matters in Need of Attention (Dinh Thu Cuc)	5
--	---

-About Preparations for Mobilizing the Army (Doan Khue) .6	-Understanding and Properly Implementing the Criminal Procedure Code (Phan Hien) 10
-Uncle Ton and the Revolutionary Movement in Saigon in the Late 1960's (Pham Xanh-Dinh Xuan Lam) 6	-Some Socioeconomic Problems in Need of Resolving in the Central Highlands (Dang Nghiem Van) 10
-Some Thoughts About Openness (Tran Hau) 6	-The Concept of 'Exploitation' and the Question of Party Members Being Part of Economic Components (Do The Tung) 10
-Fashion (Nguyen Trung Thuc) 6	-Party Members Should Be Allowed To Have Individual and Private Economic Activities (Pham Van Khanh) 10
-Creative Activism and Maintaining of Discipline (Tran Dinh Nghiem) 7	-What Is Exploitation? (Tien Hai) 10
-In Memory of Uncle Ton (Ha Huy Giap) 7	-It Is Necessary To Continue 'Things That Need To Be Done Immediately' (Ho Si Thoai) 10
-Drafting Plans for Leading Cadres (Nguyen Dinh Huong) .7	-The Dialectic of Social Development in Our Era (Nguyen Dang Quang) 11
-Building Clean and Strong Basic Party Organizations (Nguyen Van An) 7	-The New Thinking and Practical Problems (Nguyen The Uan) 11
-The Youth Union Participates in Economic Building (Ha Quang Du) 7	-About Party Members Having Economic Activities (Ha Nghiep) 11
-TAP CHI CONG SAN in the Renovation Process (Ha Xuan Truong) 8	-The Categories, 'Exploiter' and 'Exploited,' Should Not Be Used in the New Economy (Dao Xuan Sam) 11
-Lenin's Method of Assessment and Attitude Toward Truth (Nguyen Bang Tuong) 8	-It Is Necessary 'To Open the Door for Ventilation' (Thiet Ngoc Phuong) 11
-Let Us Reorganize the Basic Party System in the Province's Domestic Trade (Ho Xuan Hung) 8	-Scientific-Practical Conference on 'Party Members Having Economic Activities' (Tran Binh) 11
<i>+Renovation of the Thinking (Roundtable Conference:</i>	-Urgent Matters Concerning Maintaining Security and Order and Building the People's Public Security Forces (Mai Chi Tho) 12
(Nguyen Duc Binh, Dao Duy Can, To Duy Hop, Vu Nhat Khai, Vu Khieu, Nguyen Ngoc Long, Thai Ninh, Nguyen Dang Quang, Nguyen Duy Quy, Le Thi, Le Duc Thuy, Ha Xuan Truong) 8-9	-The War for Defense of the Fatherland in Modern Times (Hoang Minh Thao) 12
-The Bourgeois Thinking and the Struggle To Overcome It (Nguyen Chi My) 9	-The Front Work Under Conditions of Renovation (Van Duc) 12
-Thai Binh Further Pushes Renovation Among Its Cadres (Cao Si Kiem).....9	-Implementing the Labor, Wounded Soldiers, and Social Policy in Thai Binh Province (Le Trong Chinh) 12
-Can Party Members Have Private Economic Activities? (Nguyen Phu Trong) 9	-Some Thoughts on Law and Politics Today (Hoang Cong) 12
-Party Members and the Question of Hiring Labor (Nguyen Van Khac) 9	-Let Us Avoid Letting What We Have Obtained Slip From Our Hands (Phong Le) 12
-Once You Are Party Members, You Cannot Be Small Owners (Bui Duc Lai) 9	-It Is Fortunate That He Is the Head of Only One District (Vu Dang) 12
-Improving the Quality of the Vietnamese Worker Class (Pham The Duyet) 10	
-Some Thoughts on Women Cadres' Work in the New Situation (Nguyen Thi Dinh) 10	
-Laborers' Interests and Trade Union Activities (Truong Xuan Truong) 10	

III. Cultural-Social

-Renovating Party Leadership in Literature, Art, and Culture	1
-Social Justice and the Balanced Development of Education and Economy (Bui Hien)	1
-Surplus or Shortage? (Vu Ngoc Lan)	1
-Let Us Step up Implementation of the 'Comprehensive Program for Scientific-Technological Progress by the Year 2000' (Dang Huu)	2
-Do Not Hold a Sharp Knife by Its Blade (Thuan Trung) ..	2
-Training Technical Workers, An Urgent Need (Hong Long) ..	2
-Preserving Historical Relics, National Cultural Values (Bui Thiet)	2
-Culture in Our Social Life Today	3
-'Damage Has Been Done, in Spite of Compensation' (Nhi Le)	3
+The Renovated Literature-Arts in the Party's Renovating Task (Roundtable Conference):	
(Tran Do, Hoang Trung Thong, Bui Hien, Nguyen Van Hanh, Xuan Trinh, Phong Le, Thieu Mai, Ho Si Vinh, Ha Xuan Truong, Te Hanh, Duong Vien, Ha Minh Duc, Phan Cu De, Phuong Luu, Bui Cong Hung, Tu Son, Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tu, Le Luu, Nguyen Van Luu, Le Thanh Nghi) ..	3-5
-Strengthening Management of Product Quality (Hoang Manh Tuan)	4
-Some Thoughts on Socialism and the Scientific-Technological Revolution in Vietnam (Ha Xuan Truong)	5
-Renovating Higher and Vocational Education (Tran Hong Quan)	5
-A Matter of Concern for Everybody, Every Home (Le My Van)	5
-Promoting Initial Health Care in Northern Border Provinces (Chu Thai Thanh)	6
-Developing the Vietnamese Movie Industry in the New Situation (Pham Ngoc Truong)	6
-Labor Cooperation With Foreign Countries (Hong Long) ..	6
-A Few Things in Need of Recounting (Nguyen Thanh Ha) ..	7
-Looking Back to the Reform of Education (Hoang Xuan Tuy)	8
-About the Housing Policy (Pham Tri Minh)	8

-The Theater Today—Its Facts and Problems (Tran Anh) ..	8
-Raising the Effectiveness of Using Scientific Potentialities (Vu Cao Dam)	8
-Planned Population Increase and Stabilized Socioeconomic Development (Do Muoi)	9
-The Right Direction Taken by a College (Vu Ngoc Lan) ..	9
-Let Us Abstain From Commenting (Hong Tam)	9
-Readers write about the management of culture and arts today: (Phan Dinh Mau, Xuan Trinh, Vu Tu Lan, Nguyen Trong Lo, La Thang, Tran Trong Dang Dan)	9
-Rural Women and Family Planning (Le Ngoc Van)	9
-Reflections on Literature-Arts in 1988 (Mai Ngu)	10
-This Is Where Confidence Starts To Decline (Nhi Le) ..	10
-The Relationship Between Literature-Arts and Politics Is Not That Between Two 'Hegemonies' in Society (Le Xuan Vu)	11
-Protecting the Environment (Vo Quy)	11
-The Cultural Exchange in the Present Era (Le Anh Tra) ..	11
-A Small Idea About Evaluating the State of Culture and Literature-Arts (Tran Khoa)	11
-About the Relationship Between Education and Economy (Duc Minh)	12
-What To Do To Consolidate and Complete the Basic Public Health Network (Vu Kien)	12
-Architecture and the Question of Management (Nguyen Truc Luyen)	12

IV. The World

-The Peace Issue in the Evolution of the Fundamental Contradictions of Our Times (Van Tao)	1
-Restructuring and the Great Hopes (Book review) (Ho Bat Khuat)	1
-Looking at the 1987 World Events (Kieu Nguyen)	1
-Expanding Tourism To Attract International Visitors (Nguyen Quyen Sinh)	2
-Some Thoughts About Renovating the Thinking in Foreign Affairs (Phan Doan Nam)	2
-Understanding the Meaning and Base of Creativity-Dynamism in the Peaceful Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union (An Manh Toan)	3

-The Developing Countries: The Struggle for Peace, Independence, and National Sovereignty (Tran Thanh)	4
-The New World Economic Age and New Economic Thinking (Nguyen Thanh Tuan)	4
-Creative Marxism—The Source and Base of Revolutionary Renovation (Nguyen Duc Binh)	5
-Scientific Conference in Berlin: 'Socialism and the New Stage of the Scientific-Technological Revolution'	5
-About the Theory on 'The Rational 3-Dimensional Space Strategic Frontier' (Phan Lang)	5
-A Few Facts About the United States (Hang-ri An-lech)	6
-Party Building Under Restructuring Conditions in the Soviet Union (Nguyen Phu Trong)	6
-Restructuring in the Soviet Union—Things That Have Been Witnessed (Ho Bat Khuat)	7
-New Development in the Movement Against the Apartheid System in South Africa (Quy Lam)	7
-The 19th All-Union Conference of the CPSU	8
-The Trend of Evolution in the Developing Countries' Socio-economic Development Strategy (Nguyen Thanh Tuan)	8
-Agricultural Reforms and Development in the DPRK (Xo Cvan Hi)	9
-Economic Reforms in China: Objectives and Measures (Le Tinh)	9
-The Leading Role of Theory in the Process of Restructuring in the USSR (Tran Khac Viet)	10
-The U.S. Military-Industrial Complex—A Radical Right Wing Power (Nguyen Khac Than)	10
-Vietnamese-Soviet Relations—A New Situation, New Heights [Editorial]	11
-Hungary, Reforms and Prospects (Vo Thu Phuong)	11
-Asia-Pacific at the Threshold of the 21st Century (Nguyen Ho)	11
-Looking Back to the 10 Glorious Years of the Heroic Cambodian People (Heng Samrin)	12
-In the Revived and Developed Land of Angkor (Vu Tien-Trinh Cu)	12
-Debate on the French Revolution	12
-The Law American Style (Oscar Ferrer)	12

From the Publications of Fraternal Countries

-About the Question of Reforming and Restructuring in Socialist Countries (Mikhail Gorbachev, Kurt Hager, Fidel Castro)	1
-The Process of Restructuring and History (V.A. Kozolov, Vadim Scander, Dmitriy Volkogonov, Martin Volkov) ...	2
-Lessons From the 1968 Crisis in Czechoslovakia (K. Horak)	2
-Cultural Leadership Under Restructuring Conditions (THE COMMUNIST, USSR, No 15, Jan 87)	3
-Restructuring and the Responsibility of Writers (THE SOVIET UNION TODAY, No 1, Feb 88)	3
-Studying Democracy (Vladimir Peturov, V. Afanasyev, PRAVDA, Anatoliy Logunov)	4
-Democracy, Dictatorship, and Self-Management by the People—Democracy Before and Under Socialism (Anatoliy Budenko)	5
-How To Carry Out Successfully Economic Reforms (L.I. Abalkin)	6
-About the Roads Leading the Countryside to Socialism (V. Danilov)	7
-One Must Combine Economic Development With Social Development (Fidel Castro)	8
-On the Question of Reforming the Present Political Institution in Hungary (Berecz Janos)	8
-Studying and Teaching Scientific Atheism Under Conditions of Restructuring (THE COMMUNIST, USSR, No 4, Mar 88)	9
-The Strategy of Socioeconomic Development of the GDR (Helmut Koziolk, Otto Reinhold)	9
-The Conditions for Developing Marxist-Leninist Theory (N. Iribatsekov)	10
-The Restructuring Campaign in Czechoslovakia (M. Jakes)	11
-Let Socialism Show A New Face (Marian Orzechowski) ..	12
-Our Road and Objective (Kurt Hager)	12

V. Documents-Materials

-Socioeconomic Development Guidelines and Tasks for the 3-Year Period of 1988-1990 and for 1988	1
---	---

-Address Delivered by General Secretary Nguyen Van Linh at the 14th Plenum of the CPV Central Committee (6th Term) 1

-Special Communiques of the CPV Central Committee, National Assembly, Council of State, Council of Ministers, and FF Central Committee Presidium on the Death of Council of Ministers Chairman Pham Hung 3

-Funeral Oration Delivered by General Secretary Nguyen Van Linh at the Mass in Memory of Council of Ministers Chairman Pham Hung 3

-Directives of the CPV Central Committee Political Bureau on the Work of TAP CHI CONG SAN 1

-K. Marx, F. Engels, V.I. Lenin, and Ho Chi Minh Commenting on Cadres 5-6

-Some Urgent Matters About Party Building To Ensure Implementation of the 6th Party Congress Resolution 7

-Address Delivered by General Secretary Nguyen Van Linh at the 5th Plenum of the CPV Central Committee (6th Term) 7

-Special Communiques of the CPV Central Committee, National Assembly, Council of State, Council of Ministers, and FF Central Committee Presidium on the Death of CPV Central Committee Advisor Truong Chinh 10

-List of Members of the State Funeral Committee 10

-Summarized Biography of Truong Chinh, Advisor of the CPV Central Committee.....10

-Funeral Oration Delivered by General Secretary Nguyen Van Linh at the Mass in Memory of Truong Chinh 10