

LÊ KHẢ PHIÊU

VIETNAM ENTERING THE 21st CENTURY

SELECTED SPEECHES AND WRITINGS
OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY
OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF VIETNAM



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General Secretary of the Central Committee
of the Communist Party of Vietnam
LÊ KHẢ PHIÊU

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

After fifteen years of renovation, especially when it is entering the stage of intensified industrialization and modernization, Vietnam has recorded important successes. The political situation has been kept stable; national security, social order and security have been maintained properly. The economy has shown a fair growth rate despite some difficulties; socio-cultural activities have been maintained with progress made in some respects; the people's living conditions have been ensured; Vietnam's position on the international arena has been enhanced.

However, the path of renovation and door-opening to lead Vietnam to the period of industrialization and modernization is facing both big opportunities and challenges. But in any circumstances, Vietnam must grasp the opportunities and overcome the challenges to integrate itself into the general trend of the epoch.

In his capacity as General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, a Party in power, Mr. Lê Khả Phiêu has expounded viewpoints, assessments, and strategic orientations in the internal and external line of the Party and the State for the remaining years of the 20th century and the first decade of the new millennium.

To provide readers with more information and materials on Vietnam for the sake of a better comprehension of its continuing

renovation process, Thế Giới Publishers offers this selection of the speeches and writings of Mr. Lê Khả Phiêu, which date from his election to the post of General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam, January 4, 1998, to December 2000. Accordingly, in this book they are arranged in the chronological order.

Thế Giới Publishers

**FOR THE PURPOSE OF BUILDING
A WEALTHY PEOPLE, A PROSPEROUS
COUNTRY, A FAIR AND CIVILIZED
SOCIETY, PEACEABLE VILLAGES
AND STREETS AND HAPPY FAMILIES**

*(Answers to the interview by the Nhân Dân, organ
of the Central Committee of the Communist Party
of Vietnam, January 5, 1998)*

Nhân Dân (ND): First and foremost, the staff of the Nhân Dân Daily wish to express you warm congratulations on the occasion of your election to the post of General Secretary by the 8th Central Committee of the Party. Could you please tell us your views of this heavy responsibility?

General Secretary Lê Khả Phiêu (Gen. Sec. LKP): I know that the task entrusted to me by the Party is very heavy. I think that all the work I do is only a small force added to the great aggregate force of the Political Bureau and the Party Central Committee in the endeavour to achieve the target and ideal of our Party and State, namely, a wealthy people, a prosperous country, a fair and civilized society, peaceable villages and streets, happy families, jobs for everybody, conditions for each individual to assert himself or herself, permanent independence, peace and stability for our Motherland.

ND: In your capacity as Party General Secretary, what do you think about the task of continuing renovation?

Gen. Sec. LKP: Socialism is the new which has arisen in the struggle and development of human society. Unceasing renovation is an inevitable law of socialism.

Every nation wants to be wealthy and strong and strives to learn how to get wealthy. We are pursuing the renovation cause and striving to well carry out the 11-point socio-economic programme mentioned in the Resolution of the 8th Party Congress.

ND: And what about the foreign policy?

Gen. Sec. LKP:

As the Vietnamese nation has gone through many wars, it is all the more deeply attached to peace and justice, is full of humanity, and entertains faithfulness to its friends. We will carry on the foreign policy of independence, sovereignty, peace and friendship; we will expand our relations in various directions. Vietnam wants to befriend all countries.

ND: In various reviews of work, it has often been said that implementation is a weak link. So how will the Resolution of the 4th Central Committee Plenum be implemented.

Gen. Sec. LKP:

- This weak link should be overcome from the Central echelon.
- The Political Bureau will soon convene and seriously accept the criticisms made by the Central Committee with regard to its guidance work in 1997.
- A deeper analysis will be made of the situation and the tasks laid down in 1998; the key links will be ascertained; various eventualities will be forecasted and the solutions concretized.

- On this basis, a distribution of tasks will be made and responsibilities ascertained among the Political Bureau members in accordance with the guiding idea: *economy is the central link; Party building a key one; the preservation of political stability is a basic condition for the implementation of our renovation cause.*

- A tight guidance will be ensured for the implementation of the Central Committee Resolution with regard to various branches and agencies at the Central, provincial and municipal echelons. The actual state of the branch or locality concerned must be considered on the basis of the Resolution; self-criticism and criticism must be highlighted; democratic and frank discussions must be carried out to clarify the causes and responsibilities, to ascertain the central task; to find the links for making break-throughs, to create concrete and effective solutions in close touch with practice; in particular, red tape and corruption must be checked in an effective way.

The various agencies and branches of the Party and the State, after well carrying out the work in their respective fields must go down together to the grassroots level in order to effect support, supervision, examination, assessment and evaluation, to make timely commendations and criticisms, to sum up and make known experiences.

The Party building and organizational work must tightly follow the central task; cadres must be selected, considered and appointed in a sound manner.

ND: Thank you, Mr. General Secretary.

SCIENTIFIC AND EDUCATIONAL WORK AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY

*(Speech at the National Conference on Scientific-
Educational Work, January 16, 1998)*

...

The Communist Party of Vietnam always attaches great importance to the role of the scientific and educational work as bedrock in the socio-economic development of the country. Right from its founding and throughout the arduous years of the resistance war to regain national independence and achieve national reunification, our Party, founded and led by the great President Hồ Chí Minh, has been resolved to promote education, develop science and technology and care for people's health.

Prior to the August Revolution, most of our compatriots could not eat their fill and did not have enough clothes to wear to protect themselves against cold; famine and disease were perpetual; over 90% of the population were illiterate.

After nearly 70 years under the Party's leadership, the situation with regard to science and technology in Vietnam has become utterly different from what it was in the past: we already have hundreds of thousands of intellectuals; among them about 10,000 post-graduate degree holders are working

in the fields of education - training, science - technology, economy, culture - arts, health care, sports-gymnastics, protection and care for children, population - family planning, national security and defence. The intelligentsia in our country has rapidly grown in number; they have good political quality, and high professional standards. What's more, they dedicate themselves to the revolutionary cause of the nation. A number of Vietnamese scientists have reached a high standard and are world-wide renowned.

In the field of *education - training*, a nation-wide network of schools has been developed; there are all over the country about 21 million pupils and students. The educational standard of the people has been markedly raised; progress has been recorded in the quality of education and training. The *scientific and technological potential* has been markedly raised; this has effectively helped to bring our country out of the socio-economic crisis and to create the required premises for it to enter the period of intensified industrialization and modernization. Unceasing progress has been made in the field of *health care*: the grassroots health care network has been developed step by step and unceasingly consolidated and upgraded; the number of epidemics has been greatly reduced; the quality of medical examination and treatment has been raised; traditional medicine has been restored and strongly developed. Encouraging advances have been made in the field of *sports and gymnastics*. The *protection, care for, and education of children* has undergone positive changes; our children's physical and intellectual strength has fairly developed. The child's rights have been increasingly understood and taken into consideration by society; the social movement for the protection and education of children has been developed in various localities. Notable achievements have been recorded in *the population and family planning work*.

The first lesson of experience that we can draw here is that our Party and State in all echelons and branches should take special care of scientific and educational work in order to march forward, to create internal forces to preserve national independence, to achieve the target of a wealthy people, a prosperous country, a fair and civilized society in accordance with the socialist orientation. The scientific and educational work is a particularly important field. That is the science on man and care for man. It is most directly related to the training of man resources, the nurture of talents, the bringing into play and utilization of the physical and intellectual potential of the Vietnamese man in order to successfully achieve the ideal that our Party, Uncle Hồ and our people have opted for.

All through the past 30 years, the Central Scientific and Educational Committee has made tremendous efforts to carry out ever more effectively its function of advising the Party Central Committee about education training, science - technology - environment, health care, sports - gymnastics, protection and care for children, population and family planning. It has taken constant care for affording guidance in the organizational building and professional training for the scientific and educational system of Party Committees at all echelons. This practical work has brought about notable results and helped to gradually raise the management capability and effectiveness of the local Party Committees with regard to the various fields of scientific and educational work.

Practical experience also shows that *the more the revolutionary cause develops and the Party's leadership expands, the more important becomes the work of acting as advisers to Party Committees, first and foremost, the Party Central Committee. This is a practical requirement for all aspects of the Party's leadership, including the scientific and educational one. The estab-*

lishment of the Central Scientific and Educational Committee and of the system of advisory bodies in the fields of scientific and educational work at various provincial and municipal echelons is a clear-sighted and sound decision. Closely linked to the functions, role and results of activity of the scientific and educational system, especially at the Central echelon, the intelligence and leading capacity of the Party with regard to the scientific and educational field have been unceasingly raised.

In the new stage – that of stepped-up industrialization and modernization, the position and role of the scientific and educational work become even more important. The bringing into play of the human resources and the creation of internal capacity of the country is a factor determining the success of the socialist-oriented industrialization and modernization. For this reason, *I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to review, together with you, in a more concrete way, the one-year's implementation of the Resolution of the 2nd Plenum of the Party Central Committee (8th tenure) on education - training and science - technology.*

The people, particularly, teachers and scientific workers, support to a very great extent the clear-sighted policy of the Party Central Committee to enhance education and strongly promote scientific and technological advances.

The Resolution has been implemented for only one year, but in both fields of education - training and science - technology, positive changes have been achieved.

In the first place, in the field of education - training, a number of outstanding problems require solutions.

With regard to perception, a number of managers, at both central and local echelons, and teachers fail to correctly understand the relationship between quantity and quality, between the

target of cultivating personality and raising educational standard and that of training human resources and nurturing talents, between training and utilization, between vocational training and training of man, between the scale of development and the quality and effectiveness of the training.

As to the guiding conception, the "socialist target of education" has failed to be grasped and therefore, negative phenomena have arisen, such as manifestation of indiscipline in schools, commercialization of education, uncontrolled extra-mural learning; arbitrary collections and spendings, purchases of diplomas and scores, fraudulence in examinations, loose management. These phenomena are known to the public but fail to be rectified.

Inadequate attention has been paid so far to the social structure of students. The percentage of students of peasant or worker stock (especially those from poor families) has remained low, especially with regard to remote and far-flung localities and ethnic minority areas. The children from families benefiting from the State's preferential policy have been made subject of special care, yet they are encountering many difficulties.

A close coordination is required among various ministries and branches to find appropriate solution to these issues.

Improvements in the ideological, political and ethical education, and party-building work in schools have been recorded but they are insignificant.

On the Government's side, various lines of the Party's Resolution have not been institutionalized expeditiously. There is lack of inter-branch coordination, and the solutions are not concerted. Therefore, the implementation of the Resolution has been limited in many regards.

On science and technology:

So far, there has been no close cooperation among various branches in working out policies and mechanisms to link scientific and technological activities with the targets of socio-economic development. On the other hand, great slowness is noted in the encouragement to enterprises and production establishments to put to use new technologies, specific policies are still lacking in this respect.

On social sciences and humanities: Many branches, echelons, localities and even schools have failed to fully realize their importance. They are even neglected in various places.

To raise the quality and effectiveness of the work of the scientific and educational services, I would like to draw your attention to a number of points as follows:

One, the advisory work in the scientific and educational field, especially with regard to strategic issues, must be done more expeditiously with greater flair and better quality. For instance, an urgent problem now is the assessment of the impacts of the financial-monetary crisis taking place in many countries on our country the search for solutions to limit these impacts and to prevent possible crises in our country.

Two, it is necessary to do away with the obstacles which limit the possibility of agitating, rallying and mobilizing the potentiality of intellectuals in central services, especially great centres and research institutes, localities and grassroots establishments. To do well this important work, it is necessary to step up the elaboration of democratic institutions in various fields of the scientific and educational work. The Political Bureau will soon issue proper directives and the State will promulgate democratic institutions and rules about the people's right of mastership at the grassroots level, including scientific research bodies.

Three, special attention must be paid to the organizational and cadre work of the scientific-educational system in all localities. An early solution must be found to the lack of cadres and to overcome their weaknesses in capability, which has resulted in organizational embarrassment and the low quality of their advisory work. The Party committees in various localities, in the first place, the Party secretaries of provincial and municipal committees need to begin resolving this problem at an early date. Party committees must pay great attention to the consolidation of the Party's scientific and educational committees. Wherever possible, especially in major provinces and cities, specialized scientific and educational committees should be set up.

Four, to raise the quality and effectiveness of the scientific and educational system all over the country from the central down to the local echelon, it is necessary to push up the study of realities and the summing up of experiences to have closer touch with the grassroots echelon. If the leadership lacks information and practical grounds, it is difficult for them to avoid taking wrong decisions. Reality is very lively, scientific and educational cadres should hold to it, detect issues, advise the Party on the solutions to be taken. For instance, how to build the relations of production in rural areas? What attitude should be taken towards the development of farms? How to rearrange and renovate State-owned enterprises? and others.

The various fields of scientific and educational work are playing an ever more important role. They are closely linked to socio-economic development, the spiritual life, the intelligence and the happiness of man, and to the free and comprehensive development of man. And according to our Party's viewpoint, man is precisely the target and the motive force of the revolutionary cause.

I wish that the Central Scientific and Educational Committee and the similar committees in all localities will continue to enhance and affirm their position and role even more clearly by perfecting and expanding their functions, consolidating the contingent of their cadres, strengthening their organization, renovating their mode of operation, strengthening their material facilities, especially acquiring new equipment. Thrift must be practised, but the conditions required for the work must be ensured.

In particular, the Central Scientific and Educational Committee must carry out in an even better way its function as a solid bridge spanning the Party and the numerous and mighty contingent of intellectuals of the country.

As all of us are aware, the Communist Party of Vietnam is the organization of the elite of all social strata. Along with its growth, the revolutionary intelligentsia is acquiring an increasingly important position. From the angle of history and from practice today, it may be said that the relationship between the Party and the intelligentsia is a flesh-and-blood one. The stronger the contingent of intellectuals within the Party is, the more actively they contribute, with their hearts and souls, to the carrying out of the common lofty ideals of the Party and people, the greater the Party's strength and prestige grow. Conversely, the more clear-sighted the Party's leadership, the greater the conditions for the intellectuals, both Party members and non-members, to make contributions with their talent and efforts.

Our Party has – and will do the same for ever – constantly striven for an increasingly better livelihood of the labouring people with the intelligentsia among them. One of the philosophies of development permanently guiding our Party's mode of activity is relying on the people, striving for their happiness, holding in high esteem the human resources and the role of the

intelligentsia, teachers, scientists, medical workers at home and abroad in all fields and trades; considering education, training, science and technology as a prime national policy to create internal capability. It is my belief that the intellectuals in the various fields of scientific and educational work and in other fields throughout the country will always be confident in, and attached to the Party's leadership; the number of intellectuals joining the Party's rank will increase and they will make even greater contributions to achieving of the targets laid down by the 8th Party Congress.

I hope that you will continue to bring into play the valuable traditions of the Vietnamese intelligentsia. I also hope that you will join the entire people and army in successfully achieving the targets of the Resolution of the 2nd Plenum of the Party Central Committee in conjunction with those of the 3rd and 4th plenums. Intellectuals and scientists must join in the summing up of practice, forecasting of the political and socio-economic situation at home and abroad, thereby contributing to the preparation for the 9th Party Congress and to the strategy of socio-economic development of the country in the first years of the 21st century.

...

SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES IN THE RENOVATION CAUSE OF VIETNAM

*(Address to the National Centre for Social Sciences
and Humanities, February 17, 1998)*

...

About three months ago, I made a visit to the College of Social Sciences and Humanities on the occasion of the Vietnam Teachers' Day. That day, I stressed the heavy responsibility of social sciences and humanities in the industrialization and modernization of the country. In this early spring of 1998, I visit your Centre to continue the exchange of views on the position, role and heavy responsibility of social sciences and humanities in the current renovation of our country.

We take great pride in the glorious history of the Vietnamese nation, its thoughts, its feats of arms which are reflected in a vivid and attractive way in the works of social and human scientists. Social sciences and humanities have had a great position and role in this glorious cause since its early date.

The National Centre for Social Sciences and Humanities, whose predecessor was the Board of Literature, History and Geography, has a history of development of about 45 years. Up to now its structure has taken shape with a system of research institutes covering almost all fields of social sciences and humanity. Your Centre is the greatest research body of social

science and humanities in our country. About 1,400 researchers including hundreds of professors, associate professors, doctors and candidate-doctors of sciences are working here. These cadres have grown to maturity with regard to professionalism and political capability; they are capable of meeting the new requirements and new conditions of development of the country. They represent a valuable asset of the Party and the nation. Our Party and State need to rely on it to bring into play the intellectual potentiality of our country.

The achievements recorded by the Centre are worthy of consideration. Many good quality products of social sciences and humanities have been brought forth. In particular, mention must be made of its contribution to the supplementing, interpreting and clarifying our Party's views on socialism and the path to socialism in our country. Many scientific conclusions on social sciences and humanities have been used as a basis for working out policies of the Party and State, which have contributed to the success of the Renovation, to national construction and defence. It is thanks to these achievements that the position and role of social sciences and humanities have been enhanced. I wish to congratulate you on your achievements.

The more the Renovation progresses, the more the Vietnamese Party and State require positive contributions from social and human scientists. So far, many problems arising in the Renovation have not yet been clarified theoretically. Many economic, cultural and social problems lack scientific forecasts. The summing up of practice has become an extremely important and pressing requirement. These issues are confronting all echelons, all branches, all research institutes including the National Centre for Social Sciences and Humanities. You should proceed from the realities of the country, and the lines and policies of the Party to sum up and recommend policies and solutions conformable to the new juncture.

The 8th Party Congress and the plenums of the Central Committee, especially, the 2nd plenum have raised a series of theoretical and practical issues to be studied and given answers. To serve the Party's leadership, the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau has raised a number of research orientations for social sciences and humanities in the 1996-2000 period.

Then the Prime Minister has ratified the State-level programme of scientific research for social sciences and humanities for the 1996-2000 period. I have learned that the National Centre for Social Sciences and Humanities is managing the implementation of three out of the seven State-level programmes of social sciences and humanities for the 1996-2000 period. This shows that the Centre has an important position and is entrusted by the Party and the State with heavy tasks. I hope that you will strive to fulfil them.

Although the seven State-level programmes of social sciences and humanities entrusted by the Party and the State constitute very important and pressing problems, social sciences and humanities also need to unfold the research on a series of other issues: economy, the State, law, philosophy, sociology, history, nation, religion, language, literature, culture, characteristics of the Vietnamese man in various epochs, the inheritance and promotion of the traditional values of national culture, the absorption of the essence of world culture, the formation of the new system of ethical values and norms, the building of an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identifies. Along with the domestic issues, it is necessary to step up the research on international and regional problems.

The study of the above-mentioned problems requires from social and human sciences researchers creative capabilities, solid political stand, efforts to avoid dogmatism and academism, to criticize opportunist rightist deviations, to concentrate

on the fundamental and pressing problems of the country and the epoch, to closely marry theoretical researches with practical surveys, to carry out both fundamental researches and practical application, to combine interbranch with specialized research, to combine immediate with long-term tasks.

The Party and State has entrusted the Centre with the task of working out an overall project of development of the Centre from now to 2010. On the basis of the research orientations, it is necessary to consider the fields to which proper attention is to be attached, the localities where research establishments of social sciences and humanities need to be built. Along with the project on organizational structure, you need greater attention to training and nurturing cadres, especially young ones in order to overcome the lack of replacement cadres at the Centre, the weaknesses in research methods, in the knowledge about specialized and related branches, in the handling of information with modern technical means, etc.

Science in general and social sciences and humanities in particular need to be more closely linked to practice and the grassroots level. As pointed out in the report of Comrade Nguyễn Duy Quý, the Centre's Director, over the past few years, the Centre has carried out many projects on fundamental survey of economic, social and cultural issues. I think that this is a very correct orientation of activity because it makes it possible for the research cadres of various institutes to keep themselves close to the grassroots level, to go into the reality of production and people's life, and to breathe new vitality into the research works of social sciences and humanities. The broader the fundamental survey projects, the tighter the liaison between theory and practice, between science and life. State bodies should accord facilities to the Centre to well fulfil the tasks entrusted to it.

There are many conditions for ensuring good success of social sciences and humanities researches. I think, for the immediate future, it is necessary, as you have proposed, to concentrate on the following links:

- In the first place, a democratic climate must be created in scientific research, making it possible for scientists to bring into play their scientific creation, to make contributions to the nation, the country, the revolutionary cause of the Party and the people, to national science with their talent, intelligence, valuable scientific works. The history of development of science shows that truth arises in scientific discussions and debates and is verified in practice. Our Party supports this way of development of the various disciplines of social sciences and humanities, and creates conditions for scientists to fulfil their lofty tasks in the best way possible.

- Along with the democratic climate in scientific research, the material life of scientists must be ensured. In view of the common difficulties of the country, the financial investment of the State in scientific and technological activities is not yet great. This state of affairs must be overcome step by step. In the first place, the Resolution of the 2nd Plenum of the 8th Central Committee must be implemented. In this Resolution, it is pointed out that there should be a satisfactory pay policy for scientific researchers; there should be a regime of rewards, allowances, and subsidies for valuable scientific and technological works. A mechanism should be worked out for scientific and technological cadres to secure appropriate incomes through their involvement in research contracts.

The percentage of State budget for science and technology should be increased gradually so as to reach 2% of the total spending in 2000.

The above-mentioned solutions and a host of others must be implemented to create a motive force for the development of science and technology, and more particularly, social sciences and humanities.

I think that these are fundamental conditions for ensuring that social and human sciences researchers make greater contributions to the development of the Vietnamese society and the Vietnamese man.

Through its regular activities, the National Centre for Social Sciences and Humanities must help to popularize the knowledge of Marxist-Leninist science, Hồ Chí Minh Thought, social sciences and humanities, to cultivate a civilized way of life and morality, and to build a healthy social environment.

In order to ensure a good performance of the tasks of the Centre in conjunction with the requirements of the new tasks, as laid down in the Resolution of the 2nd Plenum of the 8th Party Central Committee, it is necessary to renovate and strengthen the Party's leadership, the determining factor which turns science and technology into a foundation and a strong motive force for the industrialization and modernization of the country.

I have learned that the Party organization of the Centre is a good one; its internal unity has been ensured and its leading role enhanced. The good relations between the Board for Party Cadres work, the Party Committee, the trade union, the youth organization, the leadership of the Centre are the most important factor which enables the Centre to well perform its tasks. I propose that you should further promote these strong points so that the Centre can always be worthy of the confidence of the Party, the State and the people.

...

PREPARATION OF HUMAN RESOURCES

*(Speech at the Ministry of Education and Training,
February 21, 1998)*

...

Education and training is a broad activity of our society, directly related to about 22 million people, namely teachers, pupils, students and managers at different echelons of education and training. This figure does not include tens of millions of parents, grandparents who are constantly concerned about the education of their descendants. Education and training is related to a job of paramount importance – the *preparation of human resources* for the new period of development of the Vietnamese revolution, that of industrialization and modernization. The Party actually regards the force in the education and training branch as a strategic force in all stages of national development. Precisely for this reason, the 8th Party Central Committee devoted its 2nd plenum to the discussion over education, training, science and technology problems. A resolution was taken on them. The Party and State leaders pay much attention to this very important field.

First of all, it must be asserted that along with the common achievements of the Vietnamese revolution, education and training has recorded great results and made worthy contribu-

tions to the development of the revolution in the new period. These achievements have been recorded in extremely difficult conditions: a fierce devastating war in the past and now limited resources. They are due to the correct line of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the contributions of the whole people, in the first place, the arduous endeavours and sacrifices of hundreds of thousands of teachers and education managers over the past many years.

However, it must also be said that delays are noted in the concretization and institutionalization of the polices mentioned in the Resolution. Interbranch coordination is weak while the solutions are not concerted. This is due in part to a lack of clear stipulations on interbranch coordination in dealing with the hard problems in general. Moreover, education and training issues are fairly complex because they concern almost all citizens and all social strata. Nevertheless, the main cause is attributed to the leading and managing responsibility of various Party committees, administrative bodies and of the education and training branch itself.

To overcome the above-mentioned difficulties, I would like to emphasize the need to strengthen the leadership of the Party and the management of the State along with *a good coordination in the guidance on, and unfolding of education and training activities*. The advisory bodies of the Party (the Central Scientific and Educational Committee), of the National Assembly (the Commission on Culture, Education, Youth, Adolescents and Children), of the ministries and branches directly concerned (especially the Ministry of Planning and Investment, the Ministry of Finance, the Organization Board of the Government) should achieve a good coordination with the Ministry of Education and Training to help deal with the current difficulties and obstacles regarding the management mecha-

nism, the budget and cadres... The organizations such as the Fatherland Front, the Hồ Chí Minh Communist Youth Organization, the Vietnam Confederation of Labour and other mass organizations also should coordinate with the Ministry of Education and Training in a broad mobilization of social forces for developing the educational cause. In this coordination, the Ministry of Education and Training should show greater initiative in its capacity as a nucleus. For the Ministry is a State profession-managing agency and has in its hands a contingent of researchers specializing in this field and a management machinery with functions clearly defined from the central to the grassroots echelon. To make the work unfolded quickly and effectively, the Ministry of Education and Training should *bring into play its dynamism* in dealing with the arising affairs.

We already have the Resolution of the 2nd Plenum of the Party Central Committee on education and training. Here, I would like to stress a number of viewpoints and to draw attention to some issues which require solution for the sake of a good implementation of the Resolution.

In the first place, it is necessary to perceive and resolve properly the relationship between the targets of *people's intellectual standard, human resources and talents* in the development of education and training.

A broad intellectual standard is a necessary condition for the training of appropriate human resources to further socio-economic development and as an immediate step, to further industrialization and modernization. The educational standard is also a basis on which to raise the quality of people's life. This standard can be reached to the extent of the development of economic conditions; it is not possible to wish for a too high standard separated from the economic conditions. However it is not desirable to wait for a high level of economic development

before trying to raise the educational standard. A dialectical relationship exists between the educational standard and the economy.

People's educational standard is a condition for the development of human resources, but it cannot turn automatically into human resources. A plan must be worked out to train and develop *human resources*, especially qualified workers in an integrated structure. Precisely for this reason, the Documents of the 8th Party Congress pointed out that "The general orientation of education and training in the next five years is to develop a source of man-power to meet the requirements of industrialization and modernization, to secure employment for the people, particularly the youth". The training of human resources has a direct effect on industrialization and modernization; great importance is to be attached to it in the work of guidance and planning.

With regard to *talented people*, appropriate ways must be found to discover and foster them; at the same time, it should be emphasized that talents will come to view on the basis of a broad educational standard and well-training human resources because talents are people with sharp intelligence, "golden hands", and special abilities.

Particular attention is to be paid to the fact that the training of human resources and fostering of talents must proceed from practical requirements, closely follow the tasks of socio-economic development, security and national defence. On the other hand, a rational utilization of the human resources already trained, an appropriate use of talented people will result in boosting the training and fostering work.

- In the past few years, we have witnessed a very rapid increase of the *number* of pupils and students at all levels of

education. This is a very rejoicing fact which reflects an increase of the people's living standard and of the need for education. However, there are causes for worry concerning the *quality* of education. There is as yet no good solution for achieving a harmonious relationship between "teaching man, teaching letters and teaching trades"; among them, "teaching man" is the highest objective. How to resolve the relationship between quantity and quality? On the one hand, different resources must be mobilized to create conditions for ensuring the quality of education, in the first place, for raising the standard of teachers, to strengthen material facilities, putting to use new technological advances on education to serve an education which bears an ever-increasing mass character. On the other, special systems of organization and mechanisms must be shaped to control the quality, combat evils and negative manifestations, check immoral acts contrary to education such as purchase of diplomas, of scores, fraudulence in examinations, etc.

- The education and training branch must resolve a very difficult problem, namely, to meet the requirement of quantitative increase, better quality and more effective education and training in conditions of very limited resources for a long period of time. This problem is as difficult as the current common problem of the country: how to bring about a quick growth from a very low starting point; or the problem of the past resistance period when Vietnam, a poor country, had to vanquish a many times stronger enemy. Experience shows that the resolution of this hard problem requires great *creativity* and reliance on the *aggregate strength* of the whole system. In the case of education and training, this is the coordinated fight of different education "formations", different forms of training, different kinds of schools. A harmonious coordination must be achieved among different units in one school, different

schools in an area, different models of schools in the whole educational system. To this end, *an overall viewpoint must be adopted, and any trends towards departmentalism and localism opposed.*

- *Education is the cause of the masses and of the entire society.* The education and training branch should expeditiously take measures to socialize education. For this purpose, efforts should be made to cause all leading echelons of the Party, administration, all branches, localities, production establishments, enterprises, all citizens to be concerned and to cater for the cause of education and training. It should be deeply aware that education is also a political-economic-social cause of vital significance for the country both now and in the long run. It is full of difficulties and hardships; it requires patriotism of all citizens no less than the past resistance wars. At the same time, many new mechanisms should be created to mobilize more resources for the development of education. A good management should be secured for these resources to avoid any losses or wastage, and to prevent fee collections going beyond the stipulated limits.

- A very important requirement is to grasp the viewpoint of *"persevering with the socialist objective of education"*. On this point, I would like to stress three aspects.

One, the negative manifestations in education, which are due to the reverse side of the market mechanism, must be restricted. To this end, a good system of regulations must be established so as, both to observe strict discipline and to preserve the purity of the Vietnamese cultural way of life.

Two, fairness must be achieved in ensuring education opportunities for people belonging to the categories of beneficiaries of favoured policies, the peasantry, poor workers, ethnic minori-

ties, inhabitants of remote and far-flung areas, so as to obtain a rational social structure of pupils and students. We must take appropriate steps to resolve this problem and not stop at slogans and empty words. Obviously, there cannot be utopic, absolute fairness. It is not possible to "level" everything; fairness will be increased along with socio-economic conditions. However, even in the present difficult situation, we must make maximum efforts to raise this fairness, to persevere with the socialist objectives of education, and to show the superiority of our regime. Over the past few years, the education and training branch has carried out a number of activities in this direction: the building of a system of boarding general schools for ethnic minorities in remote mountain areas; building of pilot schools according to the model of community-based high school in localities in order to train manpower on the spot; introduction of the modes of distant education, to afford education opportunities to everybody. The education branch should exercise a tight guidance, timely inspection, and sum up practice with regard to these models and modes of training.

Three, with regard to education content, it is necessary to attach greater importance to the teaching of Marxism-Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh Thought, various disciplines of social sciences and humanities, various forms of civics at all levels of education. The pupils and students should be imbued with national tradition and identity. The more we get into modernity and become integrated into the region and the world, the greater the need to promote national identities and to build the Vietnamese education with Vietnamese national tradition, in the interests of Vietnam, according to Vietnam's socialist orientation. Only in this way can we assert ourselves in the integration and competition among the nations and States of the world. The Ministry of Education and Training should encourage "local" scientific

research works, creating an education conformable to the peculiarities of the Vietnamese socio-political traditions.

In the management work, the education and training branch must broaden democracy and strengthen the rational assignment of tasks to various echelons. The State management bodies should work within their competence and refrain from taking upon themselves the operations of the grassroots level. Mechanisms should be created to raise the *autonomy* of training establishments, especially of universities. This will promote the dynamism of the grassroots establishments especially the intelligence of the intellectuals in colleges and universities in order to contribute to the development of education and training. The greater is the intellectual potentiality of the training establishment, the bigger is their need for higher autonomy; and the higher is the autonomy, the higher is *the necessary for them to bear responsibility*. Mechanisms must be worked out to ensure the autonomy and sense of responsibility of training establishments, especially colleges and universities. In particular there must be a mechanism to ensure the assessment, control and recognition of quality. The establishment of a democratic institution must go along with the perfection of the *education inspection* machinery, making inspection a regular task. It is only in this way that autonomy will not lead to anarchy.

- With the renovation over the last few years, there has appeared in the education and training branch a new model of training establishments or a new process of education and training. There are at present different views about them. This phenomenon in face of newly-revealed things is a matter of course. In dealing with these divergent views, it is necessary to show utmost readiness to take them into consideration, to grasp the Resolution of the Party Central Committee, to stick to vivid reality in order to work out rational solutions and to avoid

copying experiences of foreign countries and imposing solutions from above. Analyzing the different views, we should base ourselves on the general guiding stance, on the overall interests and refrain from localism. The solution of concrete technical problems is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Training, the profession-managing body of the State. The Ministry should grasp the guiding stance, consult the grassroots level and thoroughly consider the issues to propose rational solutions to be submitted to the Government at an early date for conclusion.

- A major problem I would like to raise today is the necessity to make special efforts *to consolidate the system of teachers training schools*. The industrialization and modernization of the country require that labourers in various fields be endowed with modern labour capacity. This is modern qualified labour, not the readily available labour like in the past. When we have integrated with the region and the world and developed joint ventures with foreign countries, if we do not possess a high labour capacity for various branches and echelons, our people will become hired workers in the payroll of foreigners and our country will become dependent on foreign countries. For this reason, it is necessary to consolidate the system of teachers training schools, "the system of mother machines" for the training of modern labour.

Today, 100% of children go to school and 100% of the population must receive education. Consequently, the teaching trade must be given greater importance. Any Vietnamese who can enjoy a good education right from the first grade has the opportunity to succeed in life and thus every family can have opportunities to live in happiness. In this way, society will surely be peaceful, the political situation stable, the economy developed and the country will steadily march forward. To hold teachers in

high esteem means to attach great importance to the training and fostering of teachers, and to the system of teachers training schools. To attach great importance to teachers also means to strive by every means to improve their livelihood, so that today they can attend teachers training schools and tomorrow after graduation, they can live by teaching.

Recently the Government has made a first step in increasing the pay for teachers. This is a great effort to improve their livelihood and to help create a motive force for the teaching profession. However, the Ministry of Education and Training and the other ministries and branches concerned should coordinate to deal with all irrationalities in the salary system of the whole educational branch and to raise step by step the livelihood of teachers so that they can feel at ease with their profession.

The Vietnamese nation has the tradition of honouring teachers and their profession. The Communist Party of Vietnam always holds in high esteem the teaching profession and the teacher. In its propagation work, the education and training branch should join the ideological, and cultural services, and the mass media to foster the image of the representative teacher in the Vietnamese society.

The education and training branch has a heavy responsibility in the organization of activities aimed at achieving one of the important objectives of the Vietnamese revolution, that is, to raise the people's educational standard, to train manpower and foster talents. Education is a national policy of prime importance because it is both a starting point and a target of national development, because, *according to the all-pervading viewpoint of the Communist Party of Vietnam, man is precisely the objective and motive force of all revolutions.* Together with mankind, we are entering the new millennium, the epoch of intellectual civilization. Against this new backdrop, education has all the more

a particular role; it may be said to be an important factor determining the future of the nation. I believe that you all, who are guiding, organizing and acting in this most important field, will strive perseveringly and bring into play all your creativity to spur the education and training branch.

...

FURTHER PUSHING UP THE RENOVATION

*(Address to the National Conference of cadres
to study the Resolution of the 4th Party Central
Committee Plenum, March 19, 1998)*

...

The 4th Plenum of the Central Committee is devoted mainly to the economic problem, which is the central task of our country. As you know, our economy, besides opportunities and advantages, is facing acute challenges. Over the past period, it has shown a fairly good growth rate. The achievements in the fields of economy, politics, society, national defence and external relations are creating a new force and a new standing for our country to develop in the forthcoming period. On the other hand, we need to realize that in many respects, our economic development is not steady; its quality, productivity and effectiveness are low; many enterprises are incurring losses; the macro-management in a number of fields is weak. The Central Committee did not confine itself to an assessment of the domestic economic situation. It also considered the effects of the world economic situation and the repercussions of the financial monetary crisis in Southeast Asia on our country so as to make timely appropriate adjustments. The current 4th Plenum of the

Central Committee looked straight at the facts to reach a correct assessment of what had been done and what had not, of the favourable conditions and opportunities and challenges so as to work out solutions which would ensure a sustainable economic development in the time to come in the complex context of the world economy. The viewpoints and solutions laid down in the Resolution of the 4th Plenum are the continuation of our Party's line and standpoints on economic development. At the same time, new issues have been raised in keeping with the present juncture.

I would like to stress here some points:

One, the Resolution of this Plenum of the Central Committee had defined clearly the resources and motive force for the development of the country. Strongly arousing all the resources is the continuation of the all-round renovation of the country according to the Party's line. Over the last two years, when the inherent weaknesses of the economy have become more visible with the emergence of new difficulties, and the slowing down of the growth rate of a number of economic fields, some people say: the motive force of our economic development over the past 10 years has been exhausted. They advise us to seek a new one by refusing the socialist orientation and the leadership of the Party... Such views are incorrect.

Summing up the practice of the past 12 years and especially of the recent two years, the Plenum asserted that the economy had continued growing at a fair rate; national defence and security had been ensured, political stability had been maintained, foreign relations had been expanded, the standing of our country in the international arena had been enhanced; a new position and new force had been created for our country's continued growth. To assert this is to assert the soundness of our Party's principled renovation line, which has been the motive force for recording

these important achievements. The shortcomings, weaknesses and the slowing down in a number of fields are due to various causes, both subjective and objective. The main one lies in the weakness of the implementation of the Resolution, especially with regard to macro-management.

That is why the Plenum stressed the need to continue stepping up the Renovation which has been initiated by our Party since the 6th Party Congress and which has, for over ten years, been approved and supported by our entire people; it has stood the test of practice. Proceeding from its objective as embodied in the motto: "a wealthy people, a prosperous country, a fair and civilized society"; and from the viewpoint that the revolution is the cause of the masses, that all social potentialities should be aroused, the renovation line, over the past 10 years has been in keeping with both the law and with the people's will. Accordingly, it has rapidly entered into life and involved the active participation of million people in the renovation cause. It has led to great socio-economic achievements. Our Party is always aware that economic renovation is a central task because economic development is a condition to improve the people's living conditions and to make the country more prosperous; these factors, in turn, ensure political stability. However, we do not attach less importance to the political and socio-cultural renovation. If we fail to renovate the leadership of the Party and the management of the State to bring into full play the people's right of mastership, to create a democratic and open atmosphere in society, to take care to preserve the precious assets of national culture and to create good conditions for absorbing the essence of human culture, we will lose the possibility to secure a rapid and sustainable growth. We resolutely and perseveringly pursue the socialist orientation, and maintain the Party's leading role, because this is the very choice of the people and of history. Only

the socialist path and the leadership of the Party are enable to us to record important achievements in the renovation and to march forward to the liberation of the class, to social liberation, to bring a comfortable life, freedom and happiness to all Vietnamese citizens. The Party's leadership in the more-than-half-century history of the revolution has been asserted by the people, its objective is in conformity with the aspiration of the nation. In the renovation process, we always pay the attention to studying the experiences of other countries and nations. But life has taught us that we have to constantly show a high sense of independence, sovereignty, self-reliance, and vigilance to find our own way of acting and of dealing with problems and to rely on the people; only by doing so can we gain successes. The Central Committee once again asserted that we should further step up the renovation according to the socialist orientation and achieve the objective of a wealthy people, a prosperous country a fair and civilized society. That is a very important point to be grasped in the implementation of the Resolution of the Central Committee.

Two, when studying the Resolution, we must grasp the idea of bringing into play our internal strength and raising the effectiveness of cooperation and investment. We have talked much about this problem, which bears in the present context a great significance.

We are realizing more and more clearly the role and great possibility of our internal resources which must be understood in a comprehensive way: man, intelligence, national traditions, revolutionary traditions, land, natural resources, capital, etc. The central role is played by human resources, the trained man. Our resources now have become different from what they were in the past. Our economy is shifting to a commodity one; the domestic and foreign markets are being broadened. The material-technological bases, the scientific-technological standard of our

economy are now much greater. In particular, we have a 76-million population with about 40 million industrious, determined and intelligent labourers.

There remain great potentialities among our people. The problem is how to mobilize and exploit them in the best way. After this Plenum, every echelon and every branch need to work out a programme of action with feasible solutions in order to better utilize the human and natural resources as well as cultural and revolutionary traditions. On the other hand, the overcoming of our past weaknesses will also create a great resource for development. Furthermore, we can effectively deal with waste in production, in administrative expenditure and in consumption, effectively adjust the investment structure, and do away with corruption, another new great resource will be brought about for socio-economic development.

When we lay stress mainly on our internal strength, this does not mean that we close our door or neglect the external ones. The Resolution of the 4th Central Committee Plenum pointed out that we must bring into play the internal strength while carrying out in a consistent way and on a long-term basis the policy to attract external ones and effectively bring them into play. If we close the door, the country will face stagnation and fail to develop. If we strive bring into full play the domestic resources, it is precisely to effect a better and more effective utilization of all external ones. On the other hand, a good policy to attract external resources will bring into play in a better, more effective way the domestic ones, especially at the present time given the rapid development of the world scientific and technological revolution and the ever-changing world market.

Three, the Central Committee Resolution lays particular stress on thrift. Our cadres from the central to the grassroots echelon must deeply grasp the spirit of practising thrift for the

cause of industrialization and modernization and bring about an actual change in society to this effect. Many other rich countries still practise thrift; meanwhile waste is rife in our poor country. This time, the Central Committee stresses three fields of great waste: one, waste of human resources, both in physical and intellectual aspects and in gray matter; two, waste of public funds; three, waste in consumption; an incorrect thinking about consumption prevails in society. These are now the thorny problems of great concern.

If there is corruption and waste in consumption, no more money and resources will be available for industrialization and modernization. If industrialization is to be achieved only through reliance on foreign funds, it will be difficult and even impossible for us to safeguard, economic and political independence and sovereignty. That is why industriousness and thrift are musts. This idea must be thoroughly grasped by each citizen, each household, each establishment, each locality in the whole country, in the first place, leaders and managers. A broad and deep movement must be promoted in each establishment, each locality and throughout the country so that "everybody, every household shows industriousness and practices thrift; industriousness and thrift in production and in consumption; all for the industrialization practices modernization of the country". Only in this way can the Party's resolution be translated into facts of life. In this spirit, the State has promulgated three ordinances on the practice thrift, on the light against waste and corruption; on cadres and civil servants. Subsequently, the Government, relevant ministries and branches will issue documents to give specific guidance on the implementation of these directives and ordinances.

Party organizations, and administrative authorities at all echelons must provide guidance on a strict implementation of

the above issues. All cadres and Party members must seriously comply with these ordinances, the Party Central Committee members, high-ranking officials must set a bright example in the practice of thrift with regard to public funds, consumption, and saving funds for investment in production development.

Four, continued efforts must be made to strongly bring into play the people's right of mastership in the economic, political, cultural and social fields. It is here that the greatest internal force can be brought into play. Here lies the superiority of the socialist society.

Socialist democracy, the working people's right of mastership are the main characteristics of the socialism that our people are building. Socialist democracy in the political field is manifested in two main forms: representative and direct. The people exercise their mastership through the State, mass organizations, the mass media, and through grassroots democratic institutions. Each step in the development of the regime of mastership is closely linked to the development of the economic base and to the educational standard of the people. Socialist democracy must develop harmoniously in the mechanism of Party leadership, State management, and people's mastership.

However, each of us understands that the striving for a truly democratic society is a process of arduous efforts. When the population is still poor, democracy means, in the first place, that everybody must have enough food, clothing and access to education.

When the educational standard of the people is still low, democracy means the need to raise it and to broaden information so as to give the people the possibility to take part in the management of society of the country. In a world, to promote democracy, citizens must be supplied with the required means and conditions to act as masters.

We respect freedom of thought, but we will resolutely fight against any attempt to impose or to misuse freedom of thought for one's own sake as opposed to the national interests. We ensure freedom of thought for a number of persons, but the will of the majority must be respected and followed. Every citizen is to enjoy democratic rights but must comply with law because the latter is a condition to ensure freedom and democracy of everybody. Ours is a State of the people, by the people, and for the people. In the past years, we had talked a lot about the slogan: "Let the people know, discuss, act and supervise". However, generally speaking, the people's right of mastership is still violated, red-tape, commandment, corruption, attempts to create troubles to the people are rife. The above said orientation had not been concretized into law and therefore, had been slow to enter into life. Now is the moment to institutionalize this slogan so that it actually enters into life. The right of mastership of the people at the grassroots level must be guaranteed by the law. It is only when the people are allowed to know, to discuss and to take part consciously in the supervision of production, distribution, financial collection and expenditure, when everything is made public at the grassroots level that it is possible to fight against corruption, negative manifestations and other social evils, and to make our State transparent and solid. It is only by bringing into full play the people's right of mastership that it is possible to bring into play the potentialities of society in terms of labour, capital, intelligence. For this purpose, we must build up institutions to ensure the people's right of mastership through representatives or in a direct way in grassroots establishments: communes, urban districts, enterprises, hospitals, schools. Conditions will be thus created for all citizens in all regions, all economic sectors to actively take part in the process of economic development and social management.

The principle of democracy and the promotion of the people's right of mastership must be carried out under the Party's leadership to avoid disorientation and turbulence. Democracy must comply with the provisions of the Constitution and law. Within the Party, the Party's Statute must be strictly observed, and its fundamental organizational principles must be seriously complied with. Democracy must go along with discipline and be placed under a leadership. We do not accept ultra-democracy and anarchism; we oppose the scheme to take advantage of democracy to propagate erroneous viewpoints, to resolve personal antagonisms, to violate the law, to cause internal disunity, to perturb social order and security.

Five, the Central Committee Plenum strongly asserts the viewpoints about developing the socialist-oriented economy, namely:

- A shift of the economic structure must be pushed up and the investment structure adjusted in order to raise the effectiveness and competitiveness of the economy, to meet the demand of the democratic market and expand the external one, to encourage and create the most favourable conditions for export.

- The development of the production force must be given priority along with the building of relations of production in conformity with the socialist orientation.

- Care is to be taken to achieve a sound implementation of the policy on agriculture, peasants, and rural areas, to find a good solution to the land problem with regard to peasants, to strongly develop crafts and trades, especially the agricultural produce processing industry in rural areas, to expand the consumption market for agricultural products; to give close guidance to the building of agricultural cooperatives and to ensure a good implementation of the statute of democratization in rural areas.

- Economic development must go along with the achievement of social progress and justice.

- To carry on the renovation of the financial-monetary system, making it healthier; to limit the impact of the financial-monetary crisis in Southeast Asia on our country.

- To continue creating in an integrated way market element, at the same time, to renovate and strengthen the economic management of the State, to push up the administrative reform.

The Central Committee met about three months ago. It is rather late to hold now a national conference of cadres to study its Resolution. However, the relevant ministries, branches and localities had to study the Resolution in order to work out policies and match the macro-level plan to the micro-level ones. Now the projects have been basically completed and are being expounded to you; this is notable progress. For subsequent resolutions, preparations should be made simultaneously for the resolutions themselves and for their institutionalization so that a short time after their adoption, the Party's viewpoints, orientations and solutions can be institutionalized into laws, ordinances, decrees, programmes of action.

At present, there are views to the effect that the Central Committee issues too many and too long resolutions. The unfolding of a resolution has not been completed when a new one is to be studied. This problem depends on many factors, both subjective and objective.

Objectively speaking, we are being confronted with an ever-changing world and domestic situation, which requires from our Party a timely and sound leadership and guidance with regard to thought and action. On the other hand, we are building socialism in conditions of acting while drawing experience, many theoretical and practical problems are not yet clarified enough. The

Party's National Congress lays down strategic lines and solutions; the Central Committee has to work out concrete steps to implement the Resolution of the Congress. The Central Committee holds two meetings a year to discuss one or a number of problems, and certainly, to pass resolutions on the issues discussed in order to achieve oneness of mind and to guide the action of the whole Party.

Subjectively speaking, the supervision and summing up of the implementation of the Party's resolutions have not been well carried out. The law has been implemented in an arbitrary way, making trouble to the people and creating many obstacles to enterprises. In many issues, deeds have not gone along with words. As a result, there is impression among cadres, Party members and ordinary people that many resolutions have been passed but they are not effectively implemented. Moreover, in spite of the efforts, the Party's resolutions have been institutionalized rather slowly; some branches and localities have taken only perfunctory actions. Many Party committees have not closely led and supervised the dissemination and study of the resolutions while some cadres and Party members have failed to show a high sense of observance of the resolutions...

We need to study how to improve the issuance of the Party's resolutions and State policies, to organize the study and implementation of the same so as to bring about high effectiveness, to translate them into facts of life, to make them become the content, mode of action of various echelons, branches and to become a movement of the masses. The more the resolutions of the Party are close to life, the greater their practical value and effectiveness. The first orientation of renovation is how to make the bodies and branches concerned be in

a close touch with the realities to sum up practice seriously. Only in this way can the resolutions have a high quality. And when resolutions have been adopted, the solutions should be institutionalized and promulgated along with a series of policies, projects to the lower echelons must be changed; dialogues are to be broadened and answers be given to the issues posed by practice. Depending on the resolutions, there will be specific ways of approaching each specific subject. Some subjects require deep study, others require only that major policies and viewpoints be grasped. At the same time, we must carry out a good supervision over the organization of the study and the implementation of the resolutions at various echelons, in various branches, we must also sum up practice on a regular basis and draw experiences to renovate our work.

After this conference, various echelons and branches must continue to study and grasp the viewpoints of the Resolution and the ordinances of the Standing Committee of the National Assembly, the Government's programmes of action with closer reference to their respective localities and branches so as to concentrate on guidance over the implementation.

There are two issues, which require a positive change:

One: Various echelons and branches, especially the advisory bodies, must strengthen supervision over the implementation of resolutions, to avoid a situation wherein one talks without doing, or the action is at variance with the resolution. We must get in close touch with the grassroots level, sum up practice in time, propose to the competent bodies amendments to what is deemed inappropriate.

Two: It is necessary to sum up the actions in order to really renovate the emulation movement. If we thoroughly grasp the

resolution and effectively carry out the programme of action, a powerful emulation movement is sure to be created. Various echelons and branches need to get in close touch with the practice of the movement of action of the masses in order to detect typical examples to encourage and multiply them in order to secure a strong and broad development of the patriotic emulation movement all over the country.

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FOR PEACE, STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION

*(Answers to the interview by the
Quốc Tế Weekly, April 1998)*

Question: Mr. General Secretary. Recently, you paid an official visit to the People's Democratic Republic of Laos. For what reason did you choose Laos as the first country to be visited since your assumption of office as Party General Secretary?

Answer: Laos and Vietnam have special traditional relations based on the common struggle against foreign invasion for national liberation and in defence of their independence and sovereignty. Right from the start of the revolutionary movement in the two countries and in the process of its development, President Hồ Chí Minh and President Kaysone Phomvihan gave their concern to the building of the special friendship between the two nations. The two Presidents as well as other revolutionary predecessors and the peoples of the two countries underwent many sacrifices and made great efforts; they left to us and to the future generations an invaluable property, namely the exemplary, faithful, pure and rare relationship between the two nations. It is our responsibility, sentiments and conscience to inherit, preserve and develop this friendship.

Vietnam and Laos are two countries which share common mountains and rivers, are close to each other, and going together

along the path of renovation. Therefore, the fact that I chose the People's Democratic Republic of Laos for the first visit in my capacity as Party General Secretary reflects the consistency in Vietnam's foreign policy to give priority to developing relations with the neighboring countries, particularly the special relations of solidarity and all-round cooperation with Laos; this is also aimed at making contribution to peace, stability and development in the region.

Question: Last year, the two countries celebrated the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Vietnam - Lao Friendship and Cooperation Treaty. Could you please point out the peculiar features of the Vietnam - Laos relationship and its prospects in the next 20 years?

Answer: The first peculiar feature of the Vietnam-Lao relationship is that it is a rare special friendship. The two countries have extended to each other whole-hearted assistance to achieve together national liberation. Mutual material and economic assistance is already very valuable, but readiness to make sacrifices for each other in the fight against the common enemy as Vietnam and Laos did is a rare, very rare occurrence. The second feature is *faithfulness*. The historical facts over the past half century show that no matter how the situation changed, the Vietnam - Lao relationship has remained constant. The third feature is *continuous development*. When we say that the relationship has remained constant, this does not mean that it has remained undeveloped. The relations between patriotic forces at the start of the struggle against the colonial yoke have developed into relations between the two revolutionary parties and the two armed forces, and now we have an all-round relationship, including relations between the two Parties, the two States, the two peoples, various branches and echelons, central and local, mass organizations and in all fields from the political to the

economic, cultural, scientific, technological and training. In short, the relationship between the two countries has unceasingly developed, without interruption, on the basis of the valuable heritage: the friendship between the two nations.

If the special Vietnam - Lao friendship has recorded achievements so far, this is because the two nations have common objectives, similar historical circumstances, nurture mutual respect and comprehension, know how to take account of each other's legitimate interest, how to appreciate each other; the two peoples hold in high esteem the valuable heritage of the friendship created in the course of history. I believe that on this basis, the two countries will be able to adapt themselves to the new circumstances so that the Vietnam - Lao relationship will continue to develop in a stable way and attain new heights.

Question: The exemplary Vietnam - Lao friendship has been established and maintained in the conditions of wartime and of a subsidy-based economy. Today both countries have shifted to the market mechanism and to regional and international integration. However, they are still poor; "market" and "integration" are new notions to both. Against such a backdrop, what have the two countries to do, in your views, to bring their friendship to a new height and does it not this new height lie in that regard, first and foremost?

Answer: It is true that Vietnam and Laos have as yet little experience with regard to the market and integration. But what is important is to have an unwavering resolve to step up cooperation. In the new stage, the Vietnamese people, and surely the Lao people, too, attach much importance to study to overcome their weaknesses; in our bilateral relations, the economic content and the effectiveness of cooperation are becoming more and more important. We should help each other to get richer together, and not cooperate so that one side gets richer while the

other becomes poorer. To afford mutual assistance to get rich together must become the guiding thought for many future generations of the two countries.

One of the natural characteristics of the two countries is that Laos has no sea, while Vietnam has wide seas. Recently, the two sides have agreed that Vietnam will help Laos gain access to the sea and use Vietnamese harbours. This will not only create conditions for pushing up bilateral cooperation, but will also make it possible for Lao goods to transit to third countries for integration into the world market. Laos possesses lands and abundant forest resources with many kinds of precious timber; Vietnam possesses oil and gas and qualified labour. The cooperation between the two countries in exploiting and processing export products creates conditions both for the development of the internal economy and for the integration. As regard social resources, besides the common strong points mentioned above, the two countries possess no small advantages for cooperation, especially in the field of training.

In other fields such as communications, electricity, agriculture, exploration and exploitation of mineral resources, the preservation and development of national culture, etc., the two countries possess great potentialities and possibilities for effective cooperation. As for capital funds, both countries actually need it, but we can diversify the sources of funds, such as local funds, funds of bilateral or multilateral joint ventures and so on.

With regard to technology, Vietnam will cooperate with Laos on the principle that Vietnam creates conditions for Laos to take technology in its hands, then to operate on its own. Only in this way can our cooperation be equal.

It is true that both "market" and "integration" are new things and a challenge for both countries. This is a common feature of

developing and transitional economies. We must work and study at the same time and share our experiences. The two countries have a tradition of disinterested mutual assistance. While shifting to the market mechanism, we must consider the necessity to accord to each other priorities and facilities. It must be so with Vietnam's socialist-oriented market economy. I think that Vietnam and Laos can continue to share experience, to defend national independence, sovereignty and the path which they have opted for in the context of a market economy and of "integration"...

The Vietnam – Laos friendship has been tested; is now undergoing a new test, and certainly in long-term future, it will have to face new tests because life is moving.

Yet it is my confidence that Vietnam and Laos know how to inherit and promote the valuable asset of the relations built over the past half-century; they are always in agreement and appreciate each other. So they are fully capable of overcoming all tests to develop an exemplary friendship from generation to generation.

Question: The current visit is your first official external activity in your capacity as the top leader of the Party. On this occasion, we would like to ask you some more questions about Vietnam's foreign policy. Last December, the 4th Plenum of the Party Central Committee issued the Resolution on "continuing to step up the Renovation, bringing into play the internal forces, raising the effectiveness of international cooperation, practicing thrift to achieve industrialization and modernization..." Some foreign commentators saw in this the signs of Vietnam's closing its door and turning inwards. Is this true?

Answer: It is absolutely not so! The great success of the Renovation has changed the face of our country and created

premises to bring it into a higher stage of development, that of industrialization and modernization. That is why we are duty-bound to arouse all sources, to seize all favourable opportunities to carry out this great cause.

In the present time, it is not realistic or is illusory to close the door for the sake of industrialization and modernization because scientific and technological achievements and know-how are changing daily in the world, especially in developed countries. When commodity production develops and the need for trade and exchanges increases, naturally, there must be markets. No place can close its door. If the door is closed, it will flung open by itself. It is the same with Vietnam nowadays.

Since its 6th Congress (1986), the Communist Party of Vietnam has carried out a consistent policy, that is, Vietnam wants to befriend all countries... step by step open its door and integrate into the region and the world. We have become member of ASEAN; we will join APEC by the end of this year, and will eventually join the WTO. We have established diplomatic relations with more than 100 states, with all powers, including almost all political-economic centres of the world; our trade representatives are present in over 40 countries. When we say that Vietnam wants to befriend all other countries, that means we have made preparations to enter the world market, and actually we have entered the world market. We are taking and will gradually take full part in all markets, near and far, underdeveloped and highly developed ones. Yet we open our **door and** strive for integration not for the sake of door-opening and integration themselves, but for the development of the country. If we rely only on foreign capital to achieve industrialization, it will be difficult for us to succeed and it will be impossible for us to maintain independence and sovereignty in both the economic and political fields.

Life has taught us that we must constantly show a high sense of national independence, sovereignty, self-reliance, and we must be wide awake in order to find our own way of acting and to deal with all matters according to our own method.

The 4th Resolution of the Party Central Committee lays stress on internal forces as our mainstay. This is very sound, very necessary, but this does not mean that external resources are to be neglected. And internal forces must also be understood in a comprehensive way. They are not only investment capital or technology; but more importantly, they mean human resources trained in intelligence, national tradition, and revolutionary tradition, as well as land, natural resources... The central point is manpower, trained people. For without a contingent of trained labourers, without the necessary domestic conditions, it would be difficult to turn out high quality products even if billions of dollars are brought in from the outside, not to mention failure to achieve sustainable development. Only a highly effective international cooperation will encourage foreign countries to make investment in and to increase their cooperation with Vietnam.

In a word, industrialization and modernization represent a policy of century-significance of the Party. Looking back on the 75-year history of the Party we can see that, this is a second long march - the long march to national thriving - following the long march to national liberation that our Party has led to success. Today, the Party should mobilize the whole nation, arouse all resources, bring into play internal strength along with raising the effectiveness of international economic cooperation so as to carry out at all costs this great long march to national thriving.

Question: A number of foreign investors and businessmen hold that the business environment in Vietnam has now become less attractive. There is even the view that the State economic sector is hindering the renovation process and the

business activities of foreign companies in Vietnam. What is your opinion on this subject?

Answer: That is the view of very few people. Right at the beginning of this year, the Vietnamese Prime Minister held two direct dialogues with domestic and foreign businessmen. The Government is resolved to improve the investment and business environment, to create a levelled-playing ground for all kinds of enterprises to compete.

In 1997, the National Assembly promulgated a series of laws: namely the Trade Law, the Law on Companies' Incomes, the Law on Value-Added Tax, the Law on Banking Tax, the Law on Credit Organizations... The legal system is being improved with every passing day. Private enterprises are now permitted to carry out direct export, including food export. The 4th Central Committee Plenum agreed to provide encouragement and the most favorable conditions to export. Recently we have set up a Stock Exchange Commission; we have joined the Internet, etc.

The President of the United States has decided to cancel the application of the Jackson Vanick Amendment to Vietnam, paving the way for the signing of the trade agreement between the two countries and making it possible for hundreds of US companies to enter and do business in Vietnam. This shows that the business environment in Vietnam is no less attractive. However, we still have to continue the renovation of all aspects to make the investment and business environment in Vietnam even more favourable and more attractive.

With regard to the views on the State economic sector, it is necessary to consider what is the purpose of the holders of such views. If the design is to do away with State enterprises as with socialist ownership in our country, this is an out-of-tune trumpet sound. The theories about a "pure economy" or a "completely

free market" are merely fancy. It can be said that in the world there are virtually no countries which have no state enterprises, even in the capitalist world. In a number of developed countries, this sector holds even a high percentage in the GDP.

In Vietnam, given the socialist-oriented market economy under State management, the State economic sector plays an even more important role. As a matter of fact, State enterprises represent the main force of our economy, because they contribute over half of the budget receipts, are the main suppliers of consumer goods for domestic consumption and for export; they are in the lead with regard to the growth rate. The State enterprises in the fields of electricity, oil, coal, steel, cement, paper, garments, etc., have continuously high rate of growth; they create hundreds of thousands of jobs. However, a fairly high number of enterprises suffer losses and in most State enterprises, the effectiveness of production and business is still low; their products have not high quality and competitiveness. This state of affairs has two fundamental causes. The enterprise has got not yet an appropriate management mechanism; there are even cases of stagnation and corruption. On the part of the State, there are cases of deeds failing to keep pace with words; the laws are not adequately observed, which bring about difficulties and obstacles to many enterprises.

The Party advocates a reform of State enterprises; among other things, a number of State enterprises are to be equitized. Since 1990, we have begun a reform of this economic sector. The number of State enterprises was reduced from 12,300 in 1990 to 5,790 in early 1998 and the percentage of loss-making enterprises was brought down from 35% to 10% in the corresponding period. At the end of last February, we held a useful symposium on how to raise the capacity of State enterprises. In the forthcoming period, we will contemplate a reform of State enterprises

from two angles: the management mechanism of the State and the business administration mechanism of the enterprise. With regard to the equitization of State enterprises, last year we equitized on a trial basis 10 enterprises; this year we plan to do so with 150 enterprises. The State stipulates that only five economic types will not be equitized namely forestry, weapons, explosives, protection and exploitation of water conservancy resources, monopoly technology. The State will retain monopoly only on 10 types of enterprises. We will step up the equitization of State enterprises, and the first actions to be taken will be the reform of policies and administrative procedures.

However, it must be understood that the equitization of State enterprises does not represent the whole problem of the Vietnamese economy; it is not privatization nor is its purpose privatization. For this reason, it will be achieved step by step; experience is to be drawn in the process. The lesson of a number of countries which have carried out privatization in a massive way is that the operation has brought about conditions for corruption to develop and for foreign capitalists to coin money; as a result, hundreds of thousands of workers have been driven into the street.

We carry out reform and strive for development; but at the same time, we achieve social justice. We do not seek growth at any cost, nor do we seek growth for the sake of growth, but for man. This is just the superiority of the socialist orientation in the market economy. We advocate reform while maintaining social stability. In other words, we seek development in stability and stability for the sake of development.

Question: According to a general assessment, globalization will be the main trend in world politics in the 21st century and integration is becoming one of State policies of many countries. As far as Vietnam is concerned, while taking part in interna-

tional labour division on a large scale and on a long-term basis, what should we do in order not to be turned into an "international market", a branch of transnational companies or a debtor of banks and the international financial system, as a number of countries have been?

Answer: It is very sound to raise this question.

One of the factors which have created prodigious changes in the 20th century is the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution. Information technology, the international system of trade and account settlement, and the Internet have brought the internationalization of the world economy in the previous centuries to the level of globalization. This is economic inevitability which reflects the high development of the production forces; it is to be regretted that this has happened in the conditions of the dominance of the world modern capitalism. The trend of globalization will become more visible when we enter the 21st century. At the same time, it will create tremendous opportunities and challenges for development. Today, through integration into the world economy with global institutions, almost all countries including ours hope to attain new advances in growth. However, if integration goes without the good exploitation of the opportunities and the adequate dealing with the challenges arising from globalization, the benefits we gain will not compensate for the losses. Besides, the fact that a number of countries relying on their superiority in capital and technology makes use of globalization to push up their extortings other countries' resources has created a mechanism of unequal interdependence.

Consequently, if we are not to be turned into "a market" for foreign countries to sell their goods, a company branch or a debtor of theirs, we must be masters of our own economy and be self-reliant. Here once again there arises the problem of internal strength. Without internal strength, one will have to

accept “a bitter medicine”... Such is the lesson of the current financial-monetary crisis in a number of ASEAN and Eastern Asian countries.

The 4th Central Committee Resolution has indicated the motive force and resources for industrialization and modernization. Let the entire Vietnamese people and overseas Vietnamese give rise to a new patriotic emulation movement. Let all households, all persons, all branches emulate one another, show a high spirit and capacity of national self-reliance in the process of international integration so that in the forthcoming century the descendants of the Hùng Kings¹ may march on an equal footing with the powers of the five continents as Uncle Hồ wished.

1. According to legend and the vestiges of the Bronze Age with the Đông Sơn culture, the Hùng Kings reigned over the Văn Lang State, the first State of Vietnam, about 2000 years BC. This was only a state in embryo but it could already unite the people.

THE PROTECTION, CARE FOR, AND EDUCATION OF CHILDREN ARE THE WORK OF THE ENTIRE PEOPLE

*(Address to the National Conference on the
protection, care for, and education of children,
June 30, 1998)*

...

In the spirit of the “Month of action for children”, I hope that our conference will make practical contributions to bring the protection, care for, and education of children to the level of the requirements of the new period, meeting the demand for the promotion of future generations of the nation and effectively furthering the industrialization and modernization of the country.

We are happy to note that in recent years, especially since the issuance of Directive No 38 – CT/TW of the Party Secretariat¹, along with the general socio-economic achievements, the protection, care for, and education of children have recorded marked progress.

Positive and diversified measures of various echelons, branches and mass organizations have been taken in order to improve step by step the situation regarding the health, learning, cultural activities and entertainment of children.

1. Of the 7th Party Central Committee.

Many movements and voluntary, humane activities for children have been developed in various localities, involving a massive participation of various social strata and have become fine cultural features in the life of the community.

This progress cannot be dissociated from the leadership and guidance afforded by various Party committee and administrations, and the active participation of the local populations.

I would like also to express thanks to other nations and international organizations, especially UNICEF, for their good feeling and effective assistance for the Vietnamese children.

However we cannot be satisfied with the results recorded.

In spite of the progress, our children's health, especially their state of malnutrition, is now a major cause of concern for the development of the race. The number of children who have no schooling or who have to abandon schooling is still high, particularly in rural and mountainous areas. Disquieting manifestations have been recorded in the morality and way of life of a number of children. The number of children who have their families to earn a living in towns and cities is increasing. Particularly serious are the ill-treatment of children, the exploitation of their labour, sexual abuses, kidnappings, trafficking in children, law-breaking children, children's involvement in social evils. Such cases, which are not yet checked, are showing complicated developments. This is a matter of the greatest concern of our society.

The above situation is becoming a burning social problem, an acute challenge to the protection, care for, and education of children.

Today on the occasion of the Conference to review four years of implementation of Directive No 38- CT/TW of the Party

Secretariat on the strengthening of the protection, care for, and education of children, I propose that we devote more time to a deep assessment of the situation of children a review of the activities and the coordination of the relevant branches and organizations in the implementation of the objectives of the National Programme for Children towards 2000. The Party Committees and the administration at all echelons should review the implementation of the Party's lines and policies and their responsibility in this field.

The Conference should sum up the lessons of experience and propose to the Party and State more effective policies and measures with regard to this broad social work of a deeply humane character and special importance.

One of the fundamental viewpoints governing the line of the Communist Party of Vietnam is to regard *man both as an objective and a motive force in the socialist-oriented development of the country*. Children are young shoots, a source of happiness for the family, and the future of the nation. They will be the continuators of the construction and defence of the motherland. However when not yet fully developed, physically and mentally, they are vulnerable to harm. The protection care and education for them are always a special concern of paramount importance of the Vietnamese Party and State. This does not only represent the sentiment and the morality of our nation; this is also the political responsibility of the Party, administration, mass organizations, a task of each citizen, each family and the whole society.

On the occasion of this Conference, I would like to express some views on a number of problems so that we better ensure the protection, care for, and education of children in the forthcoming period.

1. Each family, community and the whole society need to clearly understand the characteristics of the rights and obligations of children, and truly give them priority.

- Children are future citizens of the country. They have the right to be cared for in their material and spiritual life, to be protected and to express their views.

However, depending on the needs, and the characteristics of the age of children, the specific circumstances of each country, each locality, each family, each community, there are different ways of fulfilling this task. There are national and international laws regarding children.

Accordingly we should understand children, respect them, make it possible for them to grow up in a safe and healthy environment, and to develop harmoniously.

- To give priority to children means to regard them as the subjects to be given attention first in each family, each community, in the policy of the State and in Party building work; to seek in every way to meet the requirements for their healthy and all-round development. In any circumstance, even when there are difficulties, we always give priority to them, reserve for them the maximum of what is available. To this end, there must be correct perception and an actual will to act for children, for the future of the country; there must be also a correct method and a sound way to organize activities.

Concerning the family, there must be love for children, a sense of responsibility with regard to them; they must be duly vaccinated; they must be given enough food, enough clothing, the possibility to go to school and to enjoy entertainment; they must be protected against social evils and physical abuse.

In various communes, urban districts, villages, conditions must be created to meet in a better way the material and spiritual needs of children. In cases of special difficulty, it is necessary to mobilize the aid of the community and of the whole State.

At national level, priority for children means that the protection, care and the development for children must become an important, indispensable part of the strategy for socio-economic stability and development. The Party and the State must carry out a policy of increasing investment so that all children may enjoy on an equal footing health care, cultural, sports services. In the urban and rural development planning, appropriate places must be set apart for the construction of schools, health care stations, cultural houses, stadiums and projects designed for children.

2. To step up the movement of the whole society to protect, care for, and educate children

The State should increase investment in children through socio-economic development programmes; the programme of action for children both at national and local levels, through the programmes to eliminate hunger, reduce poverty, afford loans, create jobs, provide social relief, build up cultural villages, improve the living conditions... But that is not enough. The protection, care for, and education of children must be carried out, first and foremost, in each family, each school and each community.

The family is the foundation of society, the natural environment for the development and happiness of all members, especially children. For this reason, we must highlight even more the role of the family, cause each family to realize that the family is the first body to be responsible for the bringing up of children into good citizens; the parents must care for, guide, help, educate children, especially protect them against abuse. Attention must be paid to the setting of good examples for children.

The education by the family cannot be dissociated from that by the school and society. The school is not only a place where letters are taught; it must together with the family and the community create a healthy social environment for an all-round development of children, preserve and promote the fine traditions of our national culture.

It is necessary to sum up and widely popularize the experiences, models, movements and forms of good coordinated actions for children in various localities. This is not only a basic and sustainable solution to the protection, care for, and education of children, but also a manifestation of the superior nature of the Vietnamese socialist regime.

The movements of voluntary activities of mass organizations and of the people have a great socio-political significance for the protection, care for, and education of children; they are manifestations of the nation's fine cultural traditions. Special attention must be paid to guidance over the forms of collective life, social activities, the "small plans" of children. We must have confidence in children, respect their views and independent activities; cultivate in them knowledge, confidence and pride in their native land and the traditions of the forefathers; give shape to their sense of being masters of the country with great aspirations and lofty ideals.

In this field, the activities of the Vanguard Pioneers' Organization and the Children's Star, and others under the leadership of the Hồ Chí Minh Communist Youth Organization play a particularly important role.

3. The protection, care for, and education of children must be approached in a scientific way

The implementation of the International Convention on the Rights of Child, the Law on the Protection, Care for, and Education of Children, and the National Programme of Action

for Children that our State approved in 1991, requires that we have scientific approaches and comprehensive knowledge about law, administration, and socio-economic problems; we must have both theoretical and practical knowledge about the various areas and ethnic groups of Vietnam; understand both the general policies and the particular features of the child's development... For this reason, I propose that scientists in all fields take an active part in researches, contribute to the Party and State scientific works with a view to elaborating short and long-term strategies, lines, policies, measures on the work with children. We must build up for this work a force, which is to have political consciousness, high standards of scientific and art knowledge and philanthropy. I stress that we need to accept the world's achievements, but we must proceed from reality and the particular features of Vietnamese children.

Various forms of popularizing the knowledge and scientific methods of bringing up children, educating them, organizing entertainment for them according to their age should be encouraged.

It is necessary to broaden the forms of consultation on the organization of family life, protecting children, especially young girls. The cultural houses and children's places of provinces and cities are duty-bound to work out entertainment programmes of high educational character, consistent with each age group and ethnic features, in order to provide guidance for the network of children's entertainment centers at grass roots levels. It is necessary to consider amendments and better implementation guidance to the State legal documents related to children. To promote in each citizen the sense of law observance with regard to the protection of children in all places and at all moments. At the same time, it is necessary to condemn and deal appropriately with violations of children's rights. In the forthcoming period, it

is necessary to elaborate a strategy for the protection and education of children in order to promote a young generation capable of meeting the requirements of the industrialization and modernization of the country.

4. *To strengthen the Party's leadership with regard to the protection, care for, and education of children; to concentrate leadership and guidance in order to achieve the targets of the National Programme of Action for Children in the year 2000.*

In his *Testament*, President Hồ Chí Minh gave the following advice: "To nurture a revolutionary generation for the future is a very important and necessary work." In his article "*To Raise the Sense of Responsibility in Caring for and Educating Adolescents and Children*," he wrote: "Adolescents and children are the future masters of the country. That is why taking good care of them and giving them a good education is the duty of the entire Party and people. This work must be done in a persevering way..." Uncle Hồ's teaching takes an even greater significance in the current stage of our revolution.

Accordingly, Party Committees and administrative authorities at all echelons from the Centre to the grassroots level must bear an even greater responsibility in this respect, Grassroots Party committees should firmly grasp the situation and the most pressing issues related to children in their respective localities. Each Party member must set an example in educating his/her children and take an active part in the protection, care for, and education of children.

Concentrated efforts must be made on the solution of selected and key problems; particular attention should be paid to newborn mortality, child malnutrition; children dropping out of the school or being illiterate. It is necessary to detect, prevent and take timely action with regard to ill-treatment or abuse of

children. Special attention should be paid to children in remote and far-flung areas, ethnic minority regions, children born into families benefiting from State preferential policies, poor households and children in difficult circumstances. In particular, the localities where many children quit their families to lead a wandering life, children having to earn their living at an early age, must coordinate with urban authorities to find all concerted measures possible for the gradual and active solution to this problem.

We must create favourable conditions, build up organizations and material facilities for the work of protecting, caring for and educating children. In the first place, we must build up at grass-roots level a force qualified and eager for the work with attending to children; attention should be paid to consolidating; the Hồ Chí Minh Communist Youth Organization, to bringing into play the role of the Association of Youths and Students and the Vanguard Pioneers' Association both in schools and in residential areas; to developing the contingent of collaborators, volunteers; to exercising regular supervision over the work of various echelons, branches, associations in the fulfillment of the tasks related to the work with children.

Party Committees must take a direct part in the work with children, carry out dialogues with children and those people involved therein so as to increase the sentiment and comprehension about children. A good Party member must be a good educator for his or her children, and has no children quitting school, to earn their living as vagabonds or breaking the law. A good Party organization must be one which gives priority to the work with children and ensures good.

The protection, care for, and education of children has become a matter of concern for the entire mankind: We can be proud of the fact that since the August Revolution, the

Vietnamese Party, State and people have constantly attended to the development of children of the various ethnic groups in Vietnam. Directive No 38-CT/TW of the Party Secretariat on the strengthening of the protection, care for, and education of children has created a good change in this period. In face of the new requirements of the industrialization and modernization of the country, this work must become actually one of the prioritized policies of the Vietnamese Party and State. For children are the very source of happiness of the family, the future of the nation, the continuators of the cause of national construction and defence.

I hope that the experiences and the suggestions drawn from the current Conference will be a basis for the various echelons of the Party, administration, mass organizations, social organizations and for each of us to take positive and more effective actions to bring the glorious cause of "growing men" to a new stage of development, and to achieve what we have pledged to the nation and the world in the year 2000.

TO BUILD AND DEVELOP AN ADVANCED VIETNAMESE CULTURE DEEPLY IMBUED WITH NATIONAL IDENTITIES

*(Closing speech at the 5th Plenum of the 8th Party
Central Committee, July 16, 1998)*

...

At this Plenum of the Central Committee, we have discussed and adopted a resolution on the promotion of culture; and expressed views on economic and other important problems. In the spirit of "looking straight at the facts," we have correctly assessed the situation, both achievements and opportunities, and shortcomings, and dangers; both objective and subjective causes; we have pointed out actual possibilities and resources along with possible solutions with a view to successfully fulfilling the tasks in these important fields.

For a successful implementation of the Resolution of the 5th Plenum of the Party Central Committee, we need to clearly realize the position of culture and the economy and their dialectical relationship.

After more than ten years of renovation, the important achievements recorded in the fields of economy, national defence, security and foreign relations have allowed the Party's

8th Congress to decide to bring the country into a new period of development, that of intensified industrialization and modernization in the socialist orientation. This is the period when the renovation is comprehensively unfolded in depth and in width.

Along with the pushing up comprehensively economic development, the perfecting of the market mechanism and extension of international integration, there must be solution to the cultural issues, in a broad sense, both on a fundamental, long-term and strategic basis and the burning issues.

The successful resolution of the cultural issue will create a motive force for us to spur industrialization and modernization and to achieve step by step our objective of a wealthy people, a prosperous country, a fair and civilized society.

In the present context, culture is even more closely linked to social stability, to national security, to the nation, with a view to developing the material and cultural life of society.

Culture and the economy have an organic relationship; they are objectives and motive forces of each other. Building an developing a healthy culture is in the interests of vigorous and steady economic development. Conversely, the 4th Plenum of the 8th Party Central Committee on socio-economic problems must be well carried out to bring into play our internal strength and raise economic effectiveness. We should strive to maintain a sustainable economic growth in order to secure conditions to develop the new culture. The economy and culture must be closely linked to each other so that our country can steadily step into the 21st century.

Vietnamese culture is an integral part, the spiritual foundation of the Vietnamese motherland and of our socialist regime. It has taken shape for several thousand years now. It was born along with the Vietnamese nation. Right from the start of nation

building, through labour and sacrifices, creativeness and indescribable perseverance, the Vietnamese nation brought forth and built up a brilliant culture crystallizing its strength, imprinted with its national identities, and assimilating the essence of human culture, which has ensured its existence and unceasing development up to now. The victories recorded over the course of the nation's history and its ability to stand in face of the severe turbulence of the present-day world are precisely the victory of the Vietnamese man, of Vietnamese culture.

We are about to enter the 21st century. Along with the prodigious inventions of men, science, technology and productive forces are developing rapidly; the world economy will make great advances.

Progressive mankind aspires to a lasting peace. Various States and nations in the world are readjusting their strategies and tactics, seeking advantageous conditions for tapping their aggregate potential. Underdeveloped and developed countries alike are seeking to make use of the favorable opportunities for national construction.

In the last years of the 20th century and at the threshold of the 21st century, mankind is standing before new opportunities and new sources of joy from its own creations, struggling indefatigably for peace, stability and development. At the same time, it is being confronted with extremely acute trials, concerns, threats and sufferings due to competition, crises, local armed conflicts, exploitation, oppression, the intrusion of the amoral, uncultured ways of life, poverty and diseases.

In this international context, history poses for the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Vietnamese people a task of paramount importance: to step up their national industrialization and modernization, to build and defend their country, to advance steadily to socialism.

This historic task requires that the Vietnamese man should inherit and develop his personality, thought, intelligence, morality; and that with his aggregate capability and advanced labour technology, he should bring our nation to a new height of civilization and should be in a position to be the master of his destiny and to ensure success for the revolutionary cause.

In this cause, the Vietnamese family and mothers have an extremely important role as transmitters of knowledge and personality to new Vietnamese generations.

The elderly are lofty examples of the Vietnamese ethics and will; which will be engraved forever in the minds of their descendants.

Workers, peasants, manual and intellectual labourers are creating with their mind and their golden hands new products, symbols of the developing Vietnamese culture.

The youth and the soldiers of the armed forces are, as Uncle Hồ said, representatives of the self-respect and self-reliance of the nation. This self-respect has been transmitted to them through Lady Trưng¹, Lady Triệu², Lý Thường Kiệt³, Trần Hưng Đạo⁴, Lê Lợi⁵, Quang Trung⁶. They are duty-bound to transmit it to the future generation.

Children, adolescents, pupils, students are learning with application, and eagerly absorbing new knowledge; they are learning to become as men, to assert themselves in life, to get a career, to defend the country, to firmly master the culture of the future.

Cultural workers, intellectuals in all fields of education, science, public health, construction, architecture, artistic creation etc., have a very important position in the lofty task of sowing and creating new cultural values of the nation.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Vietnamese national heroes in the struggle against Northern feudal aggressors.

In a word, the cultural work is not carried out separately, but is closely linked to the economic, social, military, diplomatic and security work. It deeply pervades all daily activities of each person, each generation, each family, each establishment, in all social and natural environments.

On the economic tasks, as has been pointed out by the Resolution of the 4th Plenum of the 8th. Central Committee, we must properly realize the achievements and all the weaknesses, shortcomings, the new acute challenges and overcome all manifestations of both pessimism and subjectivism.

We must grasp and carry out at any cost the guiding thought: *To promote to the highest extent the endogenous strength of the nation, to expand international cooperation and raise its effectiveness.* Through various integrated lines and policies, we should arouse all resources including human resources land, forests, sea in order to maintain and develop production to the maximum of effectiveness, to meet the demand of the people, of the domestic market and of export, in the first place, with regard to agriculture, forestry and fishery in order to ensure food security.

It is necessary to build appropriate socialist-oriented relations of production, to consolidate the State and the cooperative economy, to attach much importance to the distribution of material of production and production results, to encourage the development of other economic sectors, to liberate all potentialities of society.

To practice strict thrift; to oppose waste and corruption; to carry out an effective reform of administrative procedures in accordance with the ordinances of the Standing Committee of the National Assembly; to remove at once all obstacles in order to bring into play the élan in doing business and the possibilities to invest in production. To ensure a good management of the national reserves and a rational disposition of material reserves to cope in

time with bad eventualities due to natural calamities and major fluctuation on the market.

To concentrate investment in the most effective projects, the projects about to be completed and likely to exert a great influence. At the same time, to suspend at once a number of projects and works whose effectiveness is not certain and which fail to meet the required conditions for implementation, even though the works have been started or preparations are being made to start them.

To resolve pressing problems in the life of the people, especially in remote and far-flung areas, ethnic minority regions, former revolutionary bases; to carry out strictly the directive of the Party and the decree of the Government on the grass-roots democratic institution.

It must be deeply understood that the resolution of the above-mentioned issues takes place in a context presenting some opportunities and full of possibilities of turbulence and trials with many unpredictable situations. For this reason, increased efforts must be made to grasp and forecast situations and work out in time steps to deal with them.

The invaluable experience that we have summed up in the long history of the Vietnamese nation is: *the most valuable resource which plays the most decisive role is the Vietnamese human resource, the endogenous strength of the Vietnamese national itself.*

The Vietnamese man is the most valuable asset of our motherland and our socialist regime. Accordingly the importance of this Central Committee Plenum lies in the fact that we are pursuing the implementation of the human strategy, the strategy to build and bring into play the Vietnamese human resource as laid down by the 2nd Plenum of the 8th Central Committee. The building of the moral foundation and the cultural potential of our Motherland and socialist regime is a great motive force which guarantees the achieving of the targets laid down by the 8th

Party Congress for the period until the year 2020.

Since its founding by Uncle Hồ who had left the country to seek a path for national salvation, the Communist Party of Vietnam has consciously taken up the responsibility assigned by history to lead the Vietnamese people in the carrying out of the revolution to achieve national liberation and reunification, to defend the Motherland and to steadily advance to socialism.

With its boundless loyalty to the country, the Party places its interests above everything else, struggling dauntlessly in flesh-and-blood connection with the people and ready to make sacrifices for their happiness, showing a spirit of unity, discipline, attachment and faithfulness to its friends: this Party has enjoyed the people's love and protection in favourable or difficult circumstances as well as when it committed mistakes.

However, with serious consideration, we note that besides many exemplary cadres and Party members, a no small number of others, even high-ranking officials, have become degenerate in ideology, morality, way of life; they have misused their official powers to indulge in corruption, or smuggling for ill-gotten wealth, have wasted public property, become bureaucrats, detached from the people, indulged in acts of constraint against the people, jealous of positions, and shown indiscipline and caused internal disunity.

Consequently, if the Resolution of the 5th Central Committee Plenum is to be effectively implemented, a *drive of serious self-criticism and criticism must be carried out in the whole Party from the Central Committee to grassroots level* to bring about an actual change in ideology, ethics, way of life among cadres and Party members. This is because in the final analysis, to promote Vietnamese culture in the new stage, Party organizations, the State apparatus, the entire political system, the officials and Party members must really be representatives of the cultural and ethical

values, patriotism, love for the people, faithfulness, solidarity, discipline and a high sense of responsibility in public affairs.

For the Resolution to be translated into practice, the decisive factor lies in the organization of the implementation. In the first place, we must enhance our consciousness and level of leadership in the cultural field, along with the political and socio-economic fields as taught by Uncle Hồ. The ideological work must be renovated to increase its quality and effectiveness. Each cadre and Party member, especially each key official must deeply grasp its fundamental contents. State bodies must rapidly institutionalize the Resolution into laws, ordinances, decrees and policies. All echelons and branches must diligently work out programmes, plans and specific measures for the implementation. A buoyant emulation movement must be created. *The whole people must be united in promoting the cultural life* in the patriotic emulation movement to build up and defend the Motherland for the objective a wealthy people, a prosperous country, a fair and civilized society.

To successfully implement the Resolution of the 5th Central Committee Plenum, all cadres and Party members, in the first place, all Central Committee members must show an example in ideology, morality, the way of life, and take a direct part in organizing and guiding the implementation of the Resolution in their respective branches and localities; they must act in close touch with grassroots organizations, carry out examinations and inspections, find out and multiply typical elements, and rectify deviations. Each Central Committee member must take in hand the responsibility of checking and fighting against the degeneration in ideology, morality and the way of life in the field under his or her responsibility, especially they must work out strong and effective steps to overcome corruption.

ATTENDING TO "THE CULTIVATION OF MAN"

*(Speech at the Teachers Training College under
Hanoi National University, August 31, 1998)*

...

The 8th National Congress of the Party decided to step up industrialization and modernization for the sake of making the people wealthy, the country prosperous, society fair and civilized. This is the objective of the Vietnamese revolution. To achieve industrialization and modernization successfully, it is necessary to strongly develop education and training, to bring into play the human resource, the basic factor for a rapid and sustainable growth. President Hồ Chí Minh asserted that: "For ten years' sake, we must grow trees; for one hundred years' sake, we must cultivate man." In this sense, special care must be taken to consolidate the system of teacher training schools, and the teaching profession must be held in high esteem.

The Resolution of the 2nd Plenum of the 8th Central Committee on the strategic orientation to develop education and training in the period of industrialization and modernization and the task towards the year 2000 made clear that: "Along with science and technology, education and training constitute a national policy of prime importance." Deeply conscious of the fact that "education and training, along with science and technology, constitute a decisive factor for economic growth and

social development” and “to invest in education is to invest in development, our Party and State are striving to implement these fundamental decisions.

Attending to the “cultivation of man” to raise the people’s educational standard, to train human resources, and to nurture talents is a responsibility of the Party, the State, of the entire people and society. The education and training branch plays the main role in this work.

The Resolution of the 2nd Plenum of the 8th Central Committee of the Party pointed out that “teachers are a factor determining the quality of education.” This means that the contingent of teachers is the core force to turn the objectives of education into reality. This refers to the role and position of the teacher in the “cultivation of man”; although the whole society is involved in this work, the role of the teacher is decisive. It is not enough for society to hold the teacher in high esteem. Society must also attend to training and fostering teachers, create all facilities for them to perform this glorious historical mission. Attention should be truly paid to the formation of a contingent of teachers to bring about qualitative changes in education to meet the new requirements of the country in the period of industrialization and modernization. To hold the teacher in high esteem also means to set great store by training and fostering teachers, to hold in high esteem the system of the teachers training schools. The quantitative and qualitative development of the contingent of teachers depends mainly on the scale and level of training of the system of teachers training schools. This is because in Vietnam, the teachers training schools have played and will play the role of a nucleus in training and fostering teachers. Vietnam possesses a system of 90 teachers training schools including 10 universities, 45 colleges and 35 secondary and technological high schools.

The Teachers Training College under Hanoi National University which is the leading school in this system, has made great contribution to training and fostering teachers at all echelons.

The Vietnamese Party and State always pay attention to the teachers training schools system in order to build up the contingent of teachers and to create a motive force for teachers and learners. Deeply aware of the position of this issue, the Second Plenum of the Central Committee asserted in its Resolution: "To consolidate the teachers training schools and concentrate investment to upgrade them. To build a number of key ones to train good teachers and to carry out research on advanced pedagogical science."

Special care should be given to consolidating the system of teachers training schools and to build a key teachers training schools is the main issue I would like to deal with today. In order to carry out the cause of the industrialization and modernization of the country, it is necessary to exploit and utilize various resources, among which the human resource is the most precious one, which plays a decisive role, particularly for our country as the financial and material resources are still limited. This resource is the laborer who has a high level of intellectual and vocational qualification, good personal qualities, and who has been trained and fostered in an advanced education closely linked to modern science and technology. This modern labour is trained chiefly in schools at various echelons. Consequently the system of teachers training schools must be consolidated.

To renovate the system of teachers training schools, it is necessary in the first place to determine the position of the teachers training branch in the system of national education. Pedagogical educational attends to training teachers; therefore, it is considered a branch besides the branch which cares for the

education of learners. In the past, at present, and in the future as well, the students and teachers in the teachers training schools have always accounted and will account for a great percentage (25 to 40%) in the field of specialized education. This shows that we need to pay special attention, and afford direct, unified and tight guidance to the teachers training schools system.

The system of teachers training schools must be consolidated and upgraded to fulfil the task of pedagogical orientation, primary training and further upgrading teachers; training and fostering high-standard teachers to be the core of the teaching staff which is to be unceasingly upgraded with regard to professional qualification and teaching methods.

The system of teachers training schools is also responsible for training teachers for the disabled and all types of teachers for all the aspects of education to meet the requirements of the development of science and technology, and the training and fostering teachers in pedagogy for other specialized schools (high schools, colleges, universities).

The system of teachers training schools is also the most effective instrument of the education – training branch to do research and conduct experiment, and to work out new policies and solutions related to general education, to the training and utilization of teachers.

In a word, the teachers training school system must be organized as a structured and functional entity of the education branch. It can be placed under a tight management, given proper investment and utilized effectively only when the State regards teachers training as a special branch, or a branch necessary for all branches in view of the fact that it directly and indirectly determines the quality of general education – the input of all schools and branches of training in the national economy.

The educational branch has made important contributions to the new progress of our society and of the schools. But in face of the requirements of national development, all obstacles must be resolved so as to make it possible on this basis, for the educational services, including teachers training schools, to carry out their function and duty to the revolution, the country and the nation. The Party and the State are to work out policies and regimes to ensure that teachers work in all easiness of mind and devote their lives to the educational cause.

“Learning is a requirement of society. A progressive society can only be a collective of knowledgeable men with a high standard of education and high level of intellect. It is a cultural nation.”

To this end, society and the State must make investment, first and foremost in the system of teachers training schools. If we fail to do so it would be very difficult to bring into play the role of pedagogy-education. The system of teachers training schools must be given proper investment, tightly managed and effectively utilized, if it is to be a structure and functional entity of the educational branch.

Consequently big and long-term investment for 10 to 15, 20 years to come must be made in education and training of which the State must contribute a major part and play a key role. Education and training may be compared to a “furnace which forges the intellect of the nation”. Only the State can determine its quality, create a strong source of manpower for the country, ensure the quantity and especially the quality of the talents trained for the country.

To consolidate, renovate and develop the system of teachers training schools, a number of key ones must be built. There are now 90 teachers training schools in the whole country. The

Ministry of Education and Training cannot afford to the teachers training branch a highly effective guidance in the endeavour to raise the quality of training teachers if it scatters its attention to separate schools. When there is a key teachers training University on it, and to raise the quality of training and fostering teachers in the whole country through the "resonant strength" of solutions and policies. To carry out this function, the key teachers training university needs to be given priority in all fields of investment; in particular, it must have an appropriate management mechanism ensuring the unified, direct guidance of the Ministry of Education and Training. Here I wish to lay stress on the endeavour to build a model of management of teachers training universities so that they can bring into full play their internal forces on the basis of the priorities investment of the State. The same quantity of investment will bring about different effects, if the internal strength is subject to various ways of tapping. For this reason, we should not over-stress the quantitative aspect of the investment factors. The overstressing of this factor may tie down our hands or cause us to build a management model, which concerns itself with a mechanical quantitative increase. A key teachers training university which has an initial potentiality along with a higher prioritized investment and operates in a mechanism of higher autonomy will have a very great internal strength. As an example, we can cite the mechanism of contracts "100" and "10" in agriculture.

Hanoi Teachers Training College, which is now Teachers Training College under Hanoi National University, has had a tradition and experience in building and developing itself in nearly half a century. During this period, it developed and made great contributions to the educational branch, and more particularly to the pedagogical branch. Our Party and State highly

appreciate its glorious achievements; nearly 40,000 teachers have been trained for all echelons and branches of education from the infant school, primary and junior secondary school to the senior secondary school and teachers training college and university and a number of other specialized ones. Many people among them have become scientists working in various universities and research institutes, managers in the education-training branch. Many of them have become scientists of national or international significance or famous writers and artists. Hanoi Teachers Training College is the biggest centre for training post-graduates, and the cradle of the post-graduation training of the country (Seven doctors defended their theses in the country from 1970 to 1975). The College has built 44 specialties for post-graduation training. On this basis, over 2,000 masters degree holders, 316 doctors and doctors of science have graduated from the college. At present, the College can enroll each year 400 post-graduate students, 50 to 100 candidates for the Ph.D degree, and 2,000 students. For this reason, it is the establishment which makes the biggest contribution to the raising of the standard of teachers and the teaching staff of the teachers training schools in the whole country. It is also a fairly strong centre of research on fundamental sciences and especially on pedagogy. It has a great record in carrying out international duty: it has trained for Laos and Cambodia over 400 teachers with the bachelor's degree, 40 M.A. and doctors.

I have been informed that this training record is due to the College staff strong both in quantity and in quality. It includes 852 cadres and civil servants, including 688 teaching staff, 33 professors, 115 associate professors, 12 doctors of science, 237 doctors, and many M.A. degree holders. This is a valuable contingent of experienced teachers.

The college has a glorious tradition of nearly 50 years of construction and development. It has made great contribution to the national construction and defence. This tradition must be promoted and perpetuated.

Given this glorious tradition, with the potentialities in terms of cares and material facilities, I am confident that Hanoi Teachers Training College will strive to maintain its leading position in the system of teacher training schools all over the country. Our Party and State will pay greater attention to the building of this college in a key training establishment in the field.

I am also very glad to note that the education and training branch and the teacher training schools, including Hanoi Teachers Training College have made notable progress over the recent years. The Party's concern, the changes in the awareness of the leading echelons and of the whole society and the newly promulgated policies have created a new motive force for the teachers and learners. The salary of teachers is the highest in the system of administrative salaries: in addition, there are allowances according to the character and area of work; talented people are well-thought of; everybody, especially young people, are encouraged to study; the students of teachers training schools are exempted from tuition fees and enjoy a favourable regime of scholarship; policies are put into practice to draw good school-leavers to the pedagogical branch.

I have got information that over recent years, the number of pupils who enrol into teachers training schools are on the increase. In particular, if in the past few years, most students who enrolled into teachers training schools were of medium standard, the percentage of good and excellent ones was very low. This year this percentage has shown a notable increase despite the fact that the standard number of scores of the entrance tests for admission into the College is very high.

Moreover, many laureates of national or international contests registered for admission into this to become teachers.

Thus the teaching profession and the teacher are being increasingly held in high esteem. However the Party, the State and the Ministry of Education and Training need to study and put forward policies that can ensure better living conditions for teachers and the managers of the educational branch.

The Vietnamese nation has a tradition of holding the teacher and his profession in high esteem. It is a policy of the Communist Party of Vietnam to hold in high esteem the teaching profession and the teacher also. The education and training branch needs to promote widely the image of the teacher endowed with moral quality and vocational talent.

On behalf of the Party Central Committee and the Political Bureau, I would like to highly laud the achievements and contributions of the University. I wish that the Teachers Training College under Hanoi National University will be worthy to be the leading establishment of the pedagogical branch and that it will properly follow the advice given by our beloved Uncle Hồ when he visited the College:

“We must do so that this College is not only a teachers training school, but also a model in this field for the whole country.”

...

WRITERS, ARTISTS AND JOURNALISTS IN THE RENOVATION CAUSE

(Address to the cadres of the Press, publishing houses, literary and artistic fields, who attended the course of studying the Resolution of the 5th Plenum of the Central Committee, October 8, 1998)

....

In my speeches at the opening and closing sessions of the 5th Plenum of the Central Committee, I pointed out the importance and orientation of the fundamental and pressing tasks in the cultural field, which you have studied.

In order to have an advanced Vietnamese imbued with national identity, we have much to do.

This time, the Party Central Committee concentrated on six fields of culture, in essence, six basic fields of the spiritual life of society, namely ideology, ethics, ways of life; education, science, literature, art; mass media; cultural exchanges with foreign countries; and cultural institutions. In these six fields, you are cultural fighters operating directly in the fields of literature-art and mass media.

Therefore, I would like to expound to you some more points on these two fields of profound importance.

Man is the creator and the beneficiary of culture. In all times, the intelligentsia plays a very important role in the creation of man's spiritual values.

The contingent of Vietnamese intellectuals including writers and journalists was born of the working people, grew up under the roof of the revolutionary schools and were tested in the war to defend the country and in national construction. They are the essence of Vietnamese intelligence. They are ideologically conscious, constantly faithful to the nation, the country and the revolutionary cause of the Party and the people. They always have at heart the just cause; they hate evil-doing and selfishness. They always place their "self" in that of the community. They constantly link themselves to the people's destiny; all of their created values are oriented to the service of the Motherland and the people. Based on this lofty quality, they have constantly followed the path opted for by Uncle Hồ.

At the time when the Party was not in power, many generations of journalists and artists valiantly laid down their lives; they acted now openly now clandestinely to bring to the masses the voice of the Party; artistic works and newspapers *pervaded with a Party character*. During our 30-year war, journalists, writers and artists were present anywhere the Motherland needed so as to write, create literary works, to give artistic performances to inspire their compatriots and combatants in the fight against the enemy. In the Renovation time, they respond enthusiastically to the Party's line, march in the van in encouraging the new elements; they oppose negative manifestations and corruption; they oppose erroneous assertions in order to defend the objectives and ideals of the revolution; strive actively to detect and laud the new, the good in all aspects of life, they defend the traditions and create good cultural values for the nation.

Literature and art are an indispensable spiritual need of man. Lofty literature and art need to have profound humane values for the sake of life and man. Such art and literature will have irreplaceable educational, perceptual and aesthetic effects; they will help in the formation of personality and a way of life worthy of man. Literature and art are also the theatre of an arduous struggle in defence of the traditional cultural values. Nowhere do the national identities appear more clearly than in literature and art. If the literature and art of a nation do not bear its national identities, they will fail to fulfil their responsibility before the nation. Furthermore, such literary and art works will bring about no value for mankind. The national identities of an art work are manifested mainly in the fact that it is able to reflect the soul, way of life and aspirations of the Vietnamese in the Vietnamese reality. In other words, it must reflect the lasting spiritual values forged in the course of history of the nation. This is ardent patriotism, national self-reliance, solidarity, community, spirit closely linking individuals-families-villages-the Motherland; humanity, tolerance, high esteem for sentimental links and morality, industriousness and creativeness in labour, delicacy in behaviour, plainness in the life style. In wartime, the national identity means the ability to vividly and eloquently reflect the patriotic resistance of the whole nation before a multiply stronger enemy for the sake of the ideal "*Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom*". At present, it means the ability to reflect the cause of the whole Party and people in the construction and defence of the socialist Vietnamese Motherland. There lies the mainstream of real life. The reserve side of the market mechanism, the influence of the "pragmatic" way of life, the removal of subsidies in artistic activities are creating many difficulties to writers and artists. The guidance and management work with regard to literature and art must be renovated and adapted to reality and the peculiar

features of artistic creation. Our Party always shows esteem for and confidence in writers and artists; the Party always wishes that they will create and more better works pervaded with a humane and democratic character and capable of exerting a profound effect on the cultivation of man in order to be worthy of the nation and of the Hồ Chí Minh epoch in which they are living.

In the epoch of "information boom", the press and publishing branch all the more have an increasingly important position which dominates the spiritual life of society. The Party regards the press as a shock-troop on the ideological and cultural front. In all revolutionary periods, it has firmly held to the principle of direct leadership over the press. Many Party leaders regularly read and wrote newspaper articles to guide the revolution. President Hồ Chí Minh was a typical example in this respect. Over the past ten years, the press has made great contributions to our renovation. It has been in the lead in reflecting the realities and asserting the inevitability of the Renovation. It has contributed to the summing up of the theoretical aspect and the leadership of the Party and the State.

In the education on ideology, ethics and way of life, the press has had a great merit in the struggle against corruption, red-tape, violations of democracy and freedom, and other manifestations of degradation among a number of cadres and Party members. It has also made a very important contribution to the dissemination of the viewpoints and line of the Party and the laws of the State among the people. It may be said that in the past period, the press has been not only a means of information, but also a reliable cultural address of the Vietnamese people.

Although the achievements constitutes the fundamental aspect, we need note the weaknesses of the press, namely, the trend to commercialization, which has not been held in check

but is on the increase, with regard to books, newspapers, periodicals, even books for adolescents and children. There have been manifestations of departure from the objectives, and attempts to avoid the political issues which require the display of the Vietnamese mettle and of the fighting spirit on the ideological and cultural front. The lowering of the cultural character and striving to meet the taste of a small number of readers for the sake of achieving big sales and making profits have brought about no small harm to the tradition of the national culture.

The weaknesses and shortcomings are due to various causes. A very important one is the awareness of the workers in this field of the role and position of literature, art, the press and publishing field in our revolutionary cause. A no less important cause is the standard of the worker in this field who fails to keep pace with the advancement of the people's educational standard. Recently, the practice of "going into life" has been somewhat less frequent. One must love one's country, one's nation and one's ideal if one wishes to create good works. But if one loves without understanding the people, or sharing their joy and sadness, one cannot create good works either. If one wants to understand the people and share their joy and sadness, one must keep close to them and be present in the places where the realities of life are the most typical and lively. I know that you are encountering difficulties, but we already have examples such as Nguyễn Du¹, Nguyễn Đình Chiểu² and many artists and journalists of the preceding generations, who worked in the most dangerous situations during the resistance war and who did not care for honours and benefits, but who wrote out of their sense of responsibility to the people and the imperative of their conscience as artists and journalists – fighters on the cultural front.

1, 2. Two Vietnamese poets in feudal times. Nguyễn Du is recognized by the UNESCO as a cultural celebrity of the world.

In the immediate future, our artists and journalists have a very heavy task. The domestic and international situation does not present opportunities only; it also poses acute challenges to our nation. Yet, like in so many moments in the history of our nation and of the revolution led by the Party, every challenge is an opportunity for the Vietnamese strength and Vietnamese heroism to be brought into play more strongly than ever for the sake of victory.

THE RENOVATION ACHIEVEMENTS ARE ONLY THE START

*(Closing speech at the 6th Plenum (1st session) of
the 8th Party Central Committee, October 17, 1998)*

...

The Central Committee assessed the implementation of the 1998 socio-economic plan, laid down objectives, orientations and major solutions to carry out the 1999 socio-economic plan, and policies and solutions to step up the development of agriculture and rural areas.

In face of the acute difficulties and challenges caused by the effects of the financial-monetary turmoil which led to an economic crisis in many countries in the region and some others in the world, and those caused by natural calamities, our people, Party and State at various echelons and branches made creative efforts to gain success in 1998. Our economy continued to develop in a comprehensive way and recorded a fair growth rate. The Renovation was pushed up more strongly; new models and elements emerged in production and business; culture, education, and health care developed; the people's livelihood was ensured properly; socio-political stability was maintained. Accordingly, the economic potential of our country increased; its standing in the region and in the world was consolidated and enhanced.

A relatively appropriate economic structure has taken shape. Agriculture showed an all-round development. The system of industrial establishments manufacturing capital goods and consumer goods and the system of socio-economic infrastructure which had been built over the past years met an important part of the domestic and export demands. Our potential with regard to labour force and intellect is great. Fairly big capital sources were accumulated among the people; many resources and lands remained unexploited. Rich experience was gained in the Party's leadership and guidance. That is a great source of internal strength, a fundamental, favourable condition, an advantage and a decisive factor for the sustainable development of the country.

The achievements gained represent a significant and inspiring success which strongly encourages and galvanizes our people, Party and State. They affirm the correctness of the lines and policies advocated by the 8th Party Congress, and of the resolutions of the Central Committee; whose effect is being brought into play in practice. They are also the outcome of the 12-year implementation of the Party's renovation line.

The main limitations and shortcomings in the leadership and the conduct of affairs in the various branches and echelons are as follows: they have not yet got a good grasp of the necessity to liberate production forces to bring into play the internal strength and of the importance of agriculture and rural areas in the industrialization and modernization of the country. A high consensus about this field therefore has failed to be achieved within the Party. Besides those policies, which have brought into play their effects, there are some others not consistent and favorable enough, which have created hesitation in society. The leadership and conduct of affairs in many branches and at various echelons are affected with red-tape; close touch with the grassroots and close supervision are lacking; new models have failed to be

summed up and popularized; the sense of discipline is not very high; corruption, waste and negative phenomena are serious in the machinery of various echelons. These subjective weaknesses coupled with the impact from objective factors have limited to a no small extent the results recorded in 1998.

In 1999, the economic situation in the region and in the world may develop in different directions: the financial-monetary crisis turning into an economic-political crisis may become more acute and spread to various countries; or it may remain as it is now and then gradually stabilize. In the same way it is impossible to forecast the weather conditions. If the economic situation in the region and in the world worsens while the inherent weaknesses of our economy are not overcome, we will be confronted with even more acute and complex difficulties and challenges. But whatever the circumstances, we must remain calm, self-confident, determined, active and make creative efforts to advance forward.

The lesson of history shows that we have been able to overcome all difficulties and win success in cases of difficulties and challenges, even in very dangerous situations, with a correct line, the iron-will of self-reliance, the ability to mobilize the patriotism of the people, to bring into play their resources, intellect and initiatives, and to take appropriate and timely steps.

In any circumstance, our guiding thought is: To carry on the Renovation; to step up the industrialization and modernization of the country, in the first place those of agriculture and rural areas; to assert the spirit of offensive actions; to bring into full play the efforts of the entire Party and people; to show new resolve and new creativity; to overcome all difficulties and challenges; to stop the decline in the growth tempo; to maintain socio-economic stability; at the same time to muster forces to develop the branches and fields which can be developed; to

create the required premises for a stronger development when possible; to work out really open mechanisms and policies; to do away expeditiously with obstacles in order to liberate production forces; to bring into full play internal strength, while attracting and utilizing effectively foreign investments.

A deeper comprehension must be reached of the important position of agriculture and rural areas which are inhabited by the majority of the population and which possess the major part of social manpower and lands, and are in a position to develop; these areas constitute a great source of internal strength and an advantage of our country. More concentrated efforts must be made with practical projects in order to rapidly industrialize and modernize agriculture and rural areas, to develop them, to gradually change the face of the rural economy, to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty, to improve peasants' livelihood, to create conditions for the stability and the sustainable development of the country, to achieve the target of a wealthy people, a prosperous country, a fair and civilized society. An important proportion of the mobilized funds must be set aside for investment in developing agriculture and rural areas; to establish industrial-agricultural – service complexes wherever possible to process food and foodstuffs, to turn out agricultural implements, to develop services for the sake of agriculture and industry, scientific-technological services to supply materials, seeds, breeds, animals and to market agricultural, forest and fishery produce. To renovate the policies and remove the existing obstacles in order to liberate the production forces in rural areas, to attract resources for comprehensive and sustainable development; to strongly encourage the exploitation and utilization of waste lands, bare hills; to push up intensive farming to increase productivity; to increase the purchasing power, to achieve a stable growth of the rural market.

To bring into play domestic resources for development investment is a prerequisite for a healthy reception of foreign investment, to preserve national sovereignty. The mechanisms and policies must be open and consistent, to encourage direct investment in production and business, to bring into full play the internal resources, to mobilize to the highest extent the efforts and creativity of the Vietnamese at home and abroad, of all households, all economic sectors, to convince them that this is a good opportunity for them to bring into play all their strength, talent and wealth to invest in production and business, to get rich and to enrich society. The State investment must be concentrated on key projects to meet the requirements of various economic and technological branches. To afford stronger encouragement to foreign investment, to receive it actively, to distribute it in a way consistent with the structure of the economy and of industries. The continued efforts to perfect the relations of production must be closely linked to the liberation of the production forces and designed to promote them, to bring into full play the internal strength in order to create more jobs, to develop production and business along with achieving progress and social justice in an increasingly better way.

Stern measures need to be taken to ensure strict practice of thrift and avoid waste both in production and consumption in the State sectors, enterprises and population with a view to increasing accumulation for development investment. Strict thrift is required in the investment in capital construction. To limit to the maximum mistakes in investment decisions and negative manifestations in the appraisal, the bidding and the implementation of projects. Strict thrift is also required in the standing expenditure from the budget in order to increase funds for development investment.

Practical steps are to be taken to overcome at all costs the inherent weakness in the implementation of the resolutions and

policies of the Party and the State; to supervise and push up the implementation of the policies and decisions taken; to clearly ascertain individual responsibilities, to avoid the state of affairs wherein good performers receive no encouragement while those who fail to carry out these decisions are not sanctioned. It is necessary to get close to the realities of life, to overcome in time without hesitation what is inappropriate and creates hindrances. New elements have appeared in increasing numbers in production and business; they are initiatives of the people's intellect which must be grasped and multiplied to turn them into a widespread movement.

Concentrated efforts are required to resolve the most pressing issues; to avoid perfunctory actions in the administrative reform; to overcome manifestations of red-tape and detachment from production and the people's life; to strengthen discipline, to raise the effectiveness in the conduct of business of the Government and the administrative system at all echelons; to do away with manifestations of overlapping actions, particularism which create difficulties to production and business...

Our nation has gone through extremely hard ordeals and dangerous periods. But each time, new vitality and new resolve arose, making even clearer the quality and value of the Vietnamese nation and man. All social strata in the community were even more united; the people showed greater patriotism and determination to forge ahead. And they have recorded glorious victories.

Let the whole Party, people and army arouse an upsurge in the emulation movement to bring their intelligence, energy and resources into developing production, to enrich themselves in a legitimate way and help the country overcome the difficulties and steadily advance forward.

THE VIETNAMESE WORKING CLASS IN THE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND MODERNIZATION OF THE COUNTRY

*(Address to the 8th Congress of the Vietnamese
Trade Union, November 5, 1998)*

....

I warmly welcome the distinguished foreign guests, and representatives of international organizations and of the trade unions of fraternal countries who attend this Congress and to bring to the Vietnamese working class and people lofty friendship and solidarity.

I hope that the friend trade unions in the world will strengthen cooperation and assistance and share experience with the Vietnamese Trade Union. I am confident that the international trade union movement will play a role of paramount importance in the struggle for sustainable peace, equality among nations, interests of the labourer and social progress.

The 8th Congress of the Vietnamese Trade Union is held in the context of profound changes taking place in our country. Looking back on at the 10-odd years of renovation, we are happy and proud to note that the standing and strength of our country have been markedly increased. Overcoming multiple

challenges and difficulties, our economy has continued to develop and has recorded a relatively marked growth. We have ensured an agriculture which is able to meet the basic requirements of the people's livelihood and to turn out some surplus for export. The industrial and service branches have been able to meet a major part of the consumption demand and an important part of the domestic demand for production materials; many items have reached the world market. A socialist-oriented market mechanism under State management is taking shape and is pushing up the dynamism and activeness of society. The people's living conditions have been improved. The political situation has been stable; social order and security have been firmly maintained. Cultural and social activities have been maintained and made new advances. The relations of international cooperation have been expanded. The position and prestige of our country in the world have been enhanced.

This success asserts the soundness of the policies worked out at the 8th Party Congress and of the resolutions of the Party Central Committee; it asserts the efforts of the people and army, of various echelons and branches; the steady, active and creative guidance of the Party Central Committee and of the Government, the efforts of various localities all over the country. To this success, a worthy contribution of the Vietnamese working class and Trade Union has been made.

The varied and enthusiastic activities of the workers' movement and of the trade unions at all echelons have made practical contributions to the pushing up of production, the perfecting of the management mechanism, the catering for spiritual and material life of labourers and the protection of their legitimate interests. Trade union organizations are being expanded in various economic components and increasingly growing.

The Vietnamese Trade Union Congress is held at a special moment of history. In only two years the 20th century will come to its end. At the threshold of the 21st century, our country is facing new opportunities and challenges. We cannot be content with what has been achieved; instead, we must realize our weaknesses along with the unfavourable developments, which are hindering the socio-economic growth of our country. The growth rate of our economy is slowing down. Development investment, production and business are being narrowed in a number of fields; economic effectiveness and the competitiveness of our goods are low; there are many pending burning issues in the socio-cultural field; employment is becoming an acute question especially in those enterprises which are narrowing their scope of production and restructuring and even in agricultural labour. Red-tape, corruption, waste, smuggling, commercial fraud are common occurrences. The internal weaknesses of the economy have not been overcome while the financial-monetary crisis in the region exert negative effects on our economy. In addition, natural calamities are showing complex developments; it is as yet impossible to forecast other upheavals in the world. These are obstacles that all echelons and all branches must seriously realize in order to seek measures to overcome them. We are confident that we are able to march forward because we have great favourable conditions, namely socio-political stability, economic achievements, living conditions guaranteed for the people, policies and mechanisms newly promulgated by the Party Central Committee and Government, experience in State management, comparable potentialities and advantages of the country, Vietnam's role and prestige in the international arena. These factors taken together will create a new motive force for the development of our country.

The Report of the 7th Executive Committee of the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour has deeply summed up the workers' movement and the activities of the Vietnamese trade unions in the years of renovation. It has pointed out the role of the working class – the leading one who is representative of the rights of workers and labourers, and the interests of the nation. It has made clear both the general tasks and the specific ones for each field of activity and the tasks of the Vietnamese trade union organization from 1998 to 2003. It is the outcome of a process of promoting democratic rights from the grassroots level; it manifests the sense of mastership of the working class; it shows clearly the oneness of mind of the masses of workers, civil servants, and labourers with the Vietnamese trade union organization. I am in agreement with the overall objective of the Congress: "For the sake of the industrialization and modernization of the country; for employment, livelihood, democracy, and social justice; to make the working class and trade union organization powerful".

Hereunder I would like to present some more points:

In the first place, it is necessary to stress that *the Vietnamese working class* has the historic mission of leading the Vietnamese revolution through its vanguard, the Communist Party of Vietnam. In the protracted and arduous struggle for national independence and unification and in the construction and defence of the Motherland, at every stage of the revolution, the Vietnamese working class with its vanguard has always held firmly the leadership banner; acted as spearhead of all movements. The contribution of the working class is very great in the revolutionary course of our nation. Our Party highly appreciates the revolutionary tradition of the Vietnamese working class and is proud of it.

The Communist Party of Vietnam is loyal and sticks to Marxism-Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh Thought; it asserts the

historic mission of the Vietnamese working class in the construction and defence of the Motherland. This point must be reasserted because, in face of the temporary difficulties of socialism and of the world revolutionary movement, no few people, for different reasons, show vacillation or doubt, and even want to negate the historic mission of the working class and the leading role of the Communist Party.

In the new period of the revolution in our country – that of stepped-up industrialization and modernization with the development of industry, of the scientific and technological revolution, the working class is developing both in number and quality. It is the class which represents the most advanced production force in society. It is present in industry, agriculture, forestry, fishery, communications and transport, in factories. The contingent of engineers, senior technicians, technological cadres, and those who directly manage labour in industrial production are playing the vanguard role in the modern economic and technological branches, in the economic components, in all fields and areas across the country.

In its documents, the Communist Party of Vietnam has emphasized the necessity to attend to developing the working class unceasingly stronger both in number and quality, with diversified trades, who are adapted to the market mechanism and who can access and master modern technology. However, when we enter the market economy, the inherent weaknesses among workers become obvious: a great number lack vocational training, and have a limited class consciousness; negative manifestations are noticed such as laziness, low sense of responsibility, low collective spirit, low sense of organization, of discipline; lack of an expeditious and proper working style. These weaknesses constitute hindrances in face of the new requirements. Industrialization and modernization represent a process

of radical comprehensive change of socio-economic activities from the essential utilization of manual labour to the widespread utilization of labour along with advanced technology, means and methods of management in order to create high productivity. This requires from workers a prodigious growth to maturity, incredible efforts to rapidly overcome the weaknesses and meet the objective requirements of the industrialization and modernization process in order to live up to their historic mission in the current revolutionary stage.

The Vietnamese working class has kinship relationship with the peasantry; the alliance between the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia constitute the foundation of the great national unity. This is a strategic problem, a vital principle of the Party, one of the decisive factors, which ensures the consolidation and strengthening of the historic mission of the Vietnamese working class. This is a valuable experience and tradition of the Communist Party of Vietnam, of the Vietnamese working class, a boundless source of strength to ensure the victory of the Vietnamese revolution.

In the national-democratic revolution, this relationship was very good; nowadays, in the industrialization and modernization process, it is still all the more needed to be consolidated and strengthened with even richer, more comprehensive contents.

The alliance between workers, peasants and the intelligentsia is based on both political and economic unity. The sound policies of economic renovation of the Party and the State manifest the stand and views of the working class, harmoniously combine the interests of the peasantry, of the intelligentsia and of the whole nation. As a matter of fact, many problems regarding the economic interests have been resolved. At present, the Vietnamese working class and scientists are placing their focus of attention on the industrialization of agriculture and rural

areas; they have made many contributions of great significance to agriculture concerning communications, irrigation, engineering, electricity, seeds, breeds, fertilizers, etc., thereby contributing significantly to pushing the production of agricultural commodities, the construction of the new countryside and the improvement of peasants' living conditions. It may be asserted that each farm product turned out is pervaded with the sweat and efforts of the peasantry, the working class and the intelligentsia. Conversely, each fruit of the labour of workers, intellectuals, and scientists exerts a direct influence on the daily life of the whole society, including peasants.

In order to fulfil their tasks in the period of intensified industrialization and modernization, the Trade Union must renovate the contents, forms and mode of its operation and its organization and cadres. In the multi-sectoral economy operating according to the market mechanism and in the international integration, the living and working conditions, needs, aspirations and interests of workers and labourers have become different from what they were in the past; likewise, those of workers and labourers in various economic sectors are not similar. If the organization and activities of Trade Unions are not conformable to each form of organization and specific circumstances, the effectiveness will be very limited.

It is necessary to attend to the building of strong grassroots trade unions because they are the foundation of the organization, the rally place of their members, where all policies and decisions of the Trade Union are carried out. Trade union membership must be expanded and trade unions set up in enterprises of various economic sectors, no establishment is to be left without a trade union organization. Trade union cadres must be trained and provided with knowledge about politics, culture, economics, techniques, law and working methods...They must be well-

versed in the matters relevant to production and business. They must be at the same time political workers and social activists, capable of the work of propagation, mobilization and organization in production and business, having the mettle to take part in the struggle to defend the legitimate and lawful interests of labourers. Those activists who grow to maturity from the workers' movement and trade union activities will be an important source of cadres for the Party and the State.

The promotion of democracy and of the patriotic emulation movement in order to put to the most effective use the internal resources and to raise the effectiveness of international cooperation is the responsibility and obligation not only of enterprises and State offices, but also of all economic components. The Party and the State will welcome and reward the establishments which work well, make contributions to the country and cater appropriately to the livelihood of labourers. Inversely, any violations of the democratic rights and the legitimate, lawful interests of labourers will be criticized and dealt with according to the law.

In this connection, I would like to make clear that in the conditions of the development of a multi-sectoral economy, the ownership and labour relations, although different in various areas, are placed under the unified management of the State and develop according to a socialist orientation. In this economy, all sectors are equal before the law, and afforded equal facilities for development. However, the State economic sector must play the leading role, and, along with the cooperative economic sector, gradually become the foundation of the national economy. Consequently, the workers of these economic sectors must realize their important position in the working class as a whole. The equitization of part of State enterprises is a major policy of the Party and the State designed to enlarge the capital of the

enterprises, exploit the potential capital of the workers and labourers to invest in development, thereby strengthening the State economy (not weakening it) and creating more conditions for workers to exercise their right of mastership through their ownership in the form of shares. Therefore, the Trade Union should carry out an active propagation campaign among workers and labourers to mobilize them to take an active part in the equitization for the sake of their interests and for the country's benefit. They must take part in all the stages in the process. The organization and activities of grassroots trade unions must be consistent with each form of enterprise. They cannot be the same in different economic sectors.

It is also necessary to stress that the fostering of a strong working class and a strong trade union organization is the responsibility of the Party, the State and of the whole political system. As Uncle Hồ taught, the working class without the vanguard – the Communist Party – to lead it is like a ship without the helmsman, which may easily get lost and cannot achieve its historical mission. Inversely, without maintaining close ties with the working class and preserving the nature of the working class, the Party is no longer a revolutionary vanguard party. Therefore, the working class must be faithful to the objective and ideal of the Party, take part in building and defending it, and supply to its ranks excellent members. Various Party committees must attend to fortifying the working class, the Trade Union in political, ideological or organizational aspects and in the method of operation; they must renovate the mode of leadership, create an atmosphere of democracy and confidence in the Party among workers, labourers and civil servants, do away with the manifestations of leaving all affairs unattended to, or acting as Poo-bah thus causing the Trade Union organization to lose all initiative and creativeness.

According to the Constitution and law, the Trade Union is duty-bound to protect the legitimate and lawful interests of the worker and labourer and to carry out an educational function; besides it also has the function of taking part in the management of the State and of the economy. For this reason, various administrative echelons and management bodies must take the initiative in coordinating with and affording facilities to the Trade Union so that it can operate effectively. The Government and the General Confederation of Labour have recently worked out a statute for coordinated activity; many trade unions in various branches, localities and at the grassroots level have worked out good statutes for coordination with the administrative bodies of the same echelon. However, in some places this coordination is not yet good and has perfunctory character. The enforcement of the Trade Union Law and the Labour Code is not yet strict. Some enterprises do not yet create conditions for the activities of the trade unions; they even create hindrances to the setting up of trade unions and the expansion of their membership. Such improper actions must be rapidly overcome.

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THE VIETNAMESE PEASANTRY WITH A COMPREHENSIVE, MODERN AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

*(Address to the 3rd Congress of the Vietnam
Peasants' Association, November 19, 1998).*

....

Distinguished delegates,

Through all the stages of our revolution, since its founding, our Party has always asserted the strategic importance of the peasantry, agriculture and rural areas. Over the past ten years, the Party has carried out a sound renovation line in agriculture, in the first place, the policy to afford the peasants the right to use lands on a long-term basis, to promote the autonomy of the household economy, to allow a free circulation of commercialized agricultural produce, to develop trades and services in agriculture and in rural areas, etc. This has created a strong motive force for making an important step towards the liberation of the production forces in rural areas, the effective exploitation and utilization of such potentialities as labour, land, forest, sea, agricultural resources, investments, the assistance of the State and the cooperation with foreign countries. As a result, agricultural production has developed comprehensively, continuously at a

high tempo. Many models and elements of well doing business have appeared. Even if we consider food production only, we can see how significant the following achievement is: from not producing enough and having to import food, we are now not only able to turn out enough food for society but also to constitute reserves and to export part of it. Along with the development of food crops, the economic structure in rural areas has begun to change in the direction towards a growing percentage of industry and services. The volume of agricultural, forest and aquatic exports has rapidly increased. Some items have a great value as exports. The agricultural and rural infrastructure, especially irrigation network, have been renovated and strengthened. The face of the countryside has changed. The peasants' material and spiritual living conditions have been improved...

Entering the period of stepped-up industrialization and modernization, we have recorded great achievements. However, besides them, there are some incorrect conceptions in the organization of the implementation and some manifestations of thinking little of the position and role of agriculture and the socio-economic life of rural areas. The 6th Plenum of the Party Central Committee stressed: it is necessary to attach great importance to industrialization and modernization in the development of agriculture and in rural construction; the elevating of agriculture and the rural economy to the extent of large-scale production is a task of paramount importance both in the immediate and long-term future, a basis for stabilizing the economic-political-social situation, consolidating the worker-peasant-intellectual alliance, and to step up the industrialization and modernization of the country.

To industrialize and modernize agriculture and rural areas is to build a comprehensive, modern and sustainable agriculture with production forces increasingly developed, which is mani-

fested in an ever more modernized industrial-agricultural-service structure closely linked to relations of production built step by step in keeping with the development of the production forces in a multi-sectoral economy in which the State economy plays the leading role and, with the cooperative economy, gradually becomes the foundation.

To this end, it is necessary, in the first place, to renovate the structure of the economy, of investment, of raised plants and animals, the structure of branches and trades in agriculture and rural areas; to build infrastructure such as roads, electricity, irrigation networks, schools, hospitals, etc., to pay much attention to mountain and remote areas; to carry out the electrification of rural areas, to mechanize the various links of cultivation and animal husbandry with different standards of technology: modern, comparatively modern and manual; to apply scientific-technological achievements, in particular biological technology; to make in-depth investment in order to increase the productivity and quality of products. To develop the industry processing agricultural, forest and marine products to turn out diversified commodity products competitive enough on the domestic and international market, to form zones of concentrated, specialized cultivation and animal husbandry; to give special attention to the production of food; to set up reserves and to serve export; to check deforestation, the practice of slash-and-burn farming; to mobilize various forces and economic sectors to undertake forest-regeneration and orientated protection, and grow new forests. To raise the capacity to catch sea products; to step up intensive cultivation of aquatic and sea products. To develop industrial and handicraft establishments, craft and services villages on an appropriate scale in rural areas in order to achieve a redistribution of labour, to create more jobs, and increase the incomes of the rural population.

The above-mentioned processes are closely linked to education, raising people's intellectual standard, developing trained manpower. In this way, the industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas will bring about profound changes in the peasantry and the face of the countryside.

The peasantry will gradually become workers and intellectuals, new motive forces to build up the countryside, to build and defend the country. As a matter of fact, the contingent of workers and intellectuals is supplemented by those coming from the peasantry. In a peasant family, some of the children of the peasant parents may become workers, engineers, medical doctors and scientists; this phenomenon represents a complex of workers, peasants and intellectuals in a family, even in a village and a commune. It will develop and lead to a new conception about the peasantry; it will require the Party and the State to have appropriate policies to strongly promote this important resource, and require the peasant's association at all echelons to clearly understand it, for better fulfillment of the assigned tasks.

Rural areas will be gradually urbanized; there will emerge towns, townlets, and urban agglomerations even in the highland and remote regions. At that moment, the urban economy will play a great role in the growth of the economy, but it must rely on the rural economy, remain closely linked to agriculture and rural areas. Agriculture, rural areas and peasants will become different from what they were in the past. This will be a truly historic change of the Vietnamese peasantry, agriculture and rural areas on the path to socialism. The Vietnamese peasantry will step by step get rid of poverty and backwardness.

The intensified industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas must be manifested in various policies of the Party and the State concerning investment, credit, market,

land, science-technology, education-training, culture-society, and various economic sectors.

As mentioned before, the industrialization of agriculture and rural areas is closely linked to the development of a multi-sectoral economy. Each sector has its position and role; all are encouraged to develop sustainably. The State economy represents the whole nation, but it does not constitute the whole national economy; the latter is made up of many sectors of all social strata, which form an economic ensemble with closely linked and interactive relations. It is erroneous not to make active efforts to build the State and the cooperative economy as a foundation. It is incorrect to discriminate against, or to think little of the other economic sectors. The building of appropriate relations of production in agriculture and rural areas must aim at strongly developing production forces and rural areas along the socialist path. The State economy in agriculture and rural areas must be strong enough and operate effectively in the orientation towards services; to make investment in key fields such as water conservancy, engineering, electricity, infrastructural construction, science, technology, processing industries, export and import. To give a good solution to the marketing problem. To consolidate and rearrange State enterprises. To reorganize State agricultural farms and forest farms; to renovate the management of land and labour in these places. In particular, to consolidate and increase the effectiveness of the State economic units in remote areas and important places, to combine economic development with the consolidation of national security and defence in those places.

The peasant household is an autonomous economic unit, which is to develop for a long time. The State encourages and helps the peasant household economy to strongly develop to turn out increasingly better commodity products, to increase the income of each family, to supply the urban areas, industry and

export; to realize economic restructuring right from the household economy.

In rural areas, there have already emerged models of farm economy; the common form is the household farm, which is in essence, the commodity producing household on a larger scale. The State encourages peasant households and family farms to associate with each other to form cooperatives to enlarge the scale of production and business.

The cooperative economy and cooperatives need to be developed under many forms consistent with the level of development of production forces and the process of industrialization of agriculture and rural areas. To encourage agricultural cooperatives to change the structure of trades; to develop them into agriculture-business-service cooperatives. To attach attention to coordination of the State economy with the cooperative economy in agriculture, to help strengthen the worker-peasant alliance in the economic field. Party committees, administrative authorities, mass organizations should be involved in propagating the new Law on Cooperatives to help peasants to grasp it, push the cooperative economy and cooperatives to develop in the direction towards diversification on the basis of the peasants' voluntary acceptance and the State's assistance; to follow the principle of democratic management, and to make socio-economic effectiveness the target.

The private economy is encouraged to make individual investment or to get involved in association or joint venture in all forms among themselves and with the State economy to develop crafts, services, the processing industry in rural areas; to exploit and utilize waste-land to develop cultivation and animal husbandry; to encourage the people who have capital and management capability to make investment in animal husbandry, the processing industry, infrastructural construction, and labour-intensive indus-

tries in rural areas according to the law; to exploit and bring into play all potentialities in agriculture and rural areas.

At present, hunger eradication and poverty reduction, the struggle against social evils and the building of a new life in rural areas constitute a major, important and pressing issue which requires various Party committees, administrative authorities, and mass organizations to take practical steps to help the poverty-stricken households and communes, for instance: to accrue funds to develop breeds of plants and animals, trades; to provide loans for the poor through the banks or funds serving poor people; to promote agricultural, forestry and fishery popularization and different forms of services, etc. The important thing is to help poverty-stricken households and communes to know how to organize, to use funds, science and technology, along with the assistance of the State to ensure effective production. Only by so doing will it be possible to well carry out the motto "The State and the people do together", to speed up the pace of hunger eradication and poverty reduction, and step by step to translate the principle of social justice into practice.

Social evils are on the increase, both in urban and rural areas, eroding the cultural traditions and good customs and practices of our nation. The 5th Plenum of the Party Central Committee has pointed out that, along with the improvement of the material conditions, it is necessary to develop the cultural and spiritual life of peasants, to resolve social problems in rural areas and in the whole country, to promote an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity. The Vietnam Fatherland Front, the Vietnamese Peasants' Association along with all other mass organizations should well carry out the move "Let the whole people unite in the building of a cultural life". It is necessary to build cultural households, cultural villages, and village conventions on the basis of the law of the State; to organize various

forms of entertainment clubs, to promote the cultural traditions of the nation and the good customs and practices of localities, to promote a new style of life; to eliminate bad customs and superstitions; to organize cultural, artistic, literary, and sport movements to draw peasants' participation; to make rural areas increasingly richer and more civilized.

It is necessary to respect and promote peasants' right of mastership in socio-economic activities; to build the new countryside. The Communist Party of Vietnam has repeatedly stressed that democracy is the nature of our regime, and that respect for, and the promotion of the people's right of mastership are both the objective and the motive force of the industrialization and modernization cause. To this end, various Party committees, administrative authorities and mass organizations are required to fulfil the following tasks:

To carry out diffusion and education work to help peasants grasp the line and policies of the Party and the law of the State for the purpose of conscious implementation. To be in close touch with practice; to comprehend the mind and aspirations of peasants to recommend to the Party and the State appropriate policies to remove obstacles in production and in peasants' life.

To continue perfecting and to well implement the statutes on democracy in rural areas; to work out a mechanism for controlling and supervising its implementation; to promote democracy along with discipline.

The Vietnam Peasants' Association is a broad socio-political organization of the Vietnamese peasantry. It is to be consolidated politically, ideologically and organizationally on the basis of economic development and the resolution of social problems to meet the requirements of peasants with regard to production and livelihood. It must actually be a core force of the peasants'

movement to build up the new countryside, an active member of the people's great unity bloc, an important element of the worker-peasant-intellectual alliance, a solid political foundation of our regime. It must operate in a more dynamic and practical way, be in close touch with the grassroots level, have a firm grasp of the situation in agriculture and rural areas, of the minds and aspirations of peasants, suggest to Party committees and administrative authorities policies and measures to meet the legitimate demands of peasants, to overcome the manifestation of red-tape, formalism, bureaucratism, detachment from the masses. It must be an active member of the national socio-economic programmes for rural areas, take part in the elaboration of plans for rural development, organize services to support peasants in developing production.

All along the past 70 years, the Vietnamese peasantry, with its patriotism and revolutionary spirit, has consistently followed the Party and recorded unprecedentedly glorious achievements. The Vietnam Peasants' Association founded and led by the Communist Party and President Hồ Chí Minh, played an important role and made great contributions to the protracted struggle for national liberation in the past, it is doing so in the present cause of national construction and defence.

...

HUNGER ELIMINATION AND POVERTY REDUCTION IN VIETNAM

(Address to the Conference to initiate the National Programme on hunger elimination and poverty reduction and the Programme for socio-economic development in the communes which encounter extreme difficulties in mountainous and remote areas, January 7, 1999).

...

Up to one quarter of the world population is living in poverty. Obviously poverty has become a global problem. How to enable the poor to have opportunities to get out of poverty and how to afford them favourable conditions to enter an equitable society? For us, this is not only a problem of morality, but the objective and politico-economic task of our Party and our State. Right after the victory of the Revolution, at the meeting of the Council of Government on 3rd September 1945, President Hồ Chí Minh laid down six pressing tasks, and the struggle against famine was one of them. This manifested the nature of the revolutionary power.

Subsequently, during the two resistance wars, we carried out the land reform, materialized the slogan "land to the tiller", and step-by-step brought the peasantry onto the cooperative path

while State enterprises were developed. That was an important step made in the resolution of the employment and poverty problem. During the Renovation, our people recorded great achievements. However, the differentiation between the rich and the poor has become an acute problem. Many pressing issues were posed to our Party, State and people, especially populations in remote and ethnic minority areas. In such circumstances, models of "hunger elimination and poverty reduction" came into being in some localities after the issuance of a number of resolutions and directives of the Government. The first success was reported from the hunger elimination and poverty reduction movement in Hồ Chí Minh City at the beginning of 1992. From 1993 onwards, it spread to Sông Bé, Đồng Nai, Hải Phòng, Hà Tây provinces, Kỳ Anh district (Hà Tĩnh province). Initial encouraging results were recorded. At the Mid-Term Party Conference (7th tenure) our Party worked out a policy "to encourage enrichment through lawful means along with hunger elimination and poverty reduction"; the early enrichment of a section of the population should be regarded as necessary for development at the same time, a rational preferential policy on credit, taxation, vocational training should be put into practice to enable the poor to provide for themselves and then, to enrich themselves with their own efforts.

In implementation of the Party's policy, the movement to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty has become a major campaign over the last 6 years, which have involved various social strata, branches, and socio-political organizations. The number of poor persons has been reduced by 7.5 million. The households, which are still poor, have encountered less difficulties in their livelihood. The living conditions of the majority of people have been improved. In 1998, the financial-monetary crisis in the region had a great impact on production and

employment. In addition, flood and drought affected broad areas especially in Central Vietnam, the Tây Nguyên Plateaus and in South Vietnam, causing widespread loss of life, property and crops. Yet with the efforts of various echelons and branches and the will of the poor themselves to rise above their difficulty, the number of poor households was reduced by 250,000 with about 1.25 million persons. The people's livelihood was basically maintained stable. Proceeding from this reality, international organizations highly appreciated the results achieved by Vietnam in hunger elimination and poverty reduction. The decisive factor for the success of this campaign was the efforts of the community, the promotion of the tradition of "mutual affection and mutual aid", the initiative and creativity of the grassroots echelon, in addition to the State's support. This is a peculiar feature of the social policy of Vietnam, a major policy that exerts a strong impact on the development of society in the Renovation.

However, there remain in the whole country about 12.5 million poverty-stricken people accounting for about 16 percent of the total of households. Among the 1,715 poor communes, 1,000 are in extreme difficulties. Ninety percent of the poor live in the countryside; they are concentrated in northern mountain areas, the northern part of Central Vietnam, coastal areas of Central Vietnam and the Highlands. The differentiation between the rich and poor has been on the increase among the different social strata and areas. This is a major challenge to the Vietnamese Communist Party and people. To win over poverty and limit the differentiation between the rich and the poor has become an important content of the perseverance of the socialist orientation and the integration into the regional and world development trend. For this reason, hunger elimination and poverty reduction are a major line and policy of the Party and the State.

It is necessary to achieve the target of bringing the percentage of poverty down to about 10% in 2000; i.e. on average, a reduction of 300,000 households per year. During the first two or three years, efforts must be mustered on eradicating in the main the households with chronic poverty and supporting the socio-economic development of 1,000 communes in extreme difficulties. I propose that you concentrate on the guidance and organization for implementation of the following major tasks.

1. To resolve a number of policy issues

The problem of land and employment for the poor. The State's promulgation of laws to consolidate the right to land ownership, to protect landless peasants is of paramount importance in the effort to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty. The transfer of the land-use right, the concentration and accumulation of lands are phenomena, which will take place in the development of agriculture to a larger-scale commodity production. The concentration and accumulation of lands must be tightly controlled and managed by the State in keeping with the economic restructuring, the gradual shift of manpower from agriculture to industry, trades, services and various forms of economic cooperative in agriculture. This process must not be left to occur spontaneously, causing peasants to lose land, to have no job and to be pauperized. Landless peasants should be given opportunities to get lands or to move to new economic zones, or to obtain credits to shift, wherever possible, from agricultural production to handicrafts and services. The assignment of lands for growing, protecting and developing forests must ensure that the population can earn a living from forest occupations. Investments in forestation must be handed to the population in full and be effectively used.

2. Under the guidance of Party committees, the administrative authorities and Fatherland front organizations in localities

will sum up the work to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty. The main point is to assert the good experiences through the models on this subject in the given locality. It is also necessary to learn the experiences of other localities.

On the basis of the summing up of the work, each commune must elaborate plans to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty with the assistance of the branches concerned. I have just made a working visit to Cao Bằng and Bắc Cạn provinces. I have found that the poor communes are very different from one another with regard to the extents and causes of poverty. Therefore, guidance must be given to assess the state and common causes of their poverty and such an assessment should be made for each poor household. With regard to the communes having a high percentage of poverty, there will be two phases in planning: first, hunger elimination and then poverty reduction. Depending on communes, it is necessary to select for construction during this year one or two among the six following infrastructural projects: electricity, road, school, health station, safe water for daily use, and market. A mechanism must be established to mobilize all resources for the target of eliminating hunger and reducing poverty. Special attention must be paid to the practice of thrift: thrift in construction, thrift in consumption, and in administrative expenditure, in order to help poor communes. To combine the resources of the State with those of the people; to strive to secure international assistance. But the main point is to rely on local internal resources, in other words, on the people's strength and direct involvement, with the support of the State. At the same time, to mobilize other provinces, various ministries, branches, general corporations to assist poor provinces, districts and communes in keeping with real conditions.

We should well implement the existing policies while studying at an early date the amendments to a number of poli-

cies such as exemption from, or reduction of medical fees for the poor, gradual broadening of the issuance of gratis medical insurance cards for the poor; To encourage socio-economic bodies to buy medical insurance cards for the poor; medical establishments and cadres to give free medical treatment to the poor. To apply the policy of exemption from, or reduction of school fees for the children of poor households, especially those of ethnic minority groups and to afford to them scholarships.

3. About the organization for implementation

To concentrate on the good implementation of the National Target Programme for hunger elimination and poverty reduction, which is one of the important national programme in 1999. To muster efforts on 1,000 communes in extreme difficulties. To this end, resources must be distributed in keeping with the target laid down. The available resources, though limited, must be utilized effectively and soundly, targeted at the right object. It is necessary to well integrate the existing programs and projects in localities in order to concentrate resources on hunger elimination and poverty reduction and to limit the overlapping or dispersal of resources. It is necessary to detach provincial and district cadres to poor communes to support the endeavour to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty. An appropriate policy of remuneration should be worked out for this category of cadres. While carrying out the programme for the 1999-2000 period, we should consider the possibility to work out a strategy to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty in subsequent years, especially in the 2001-2005 period.

...

BUILDING A STRONG PARTY IS A KEY AND LONG-TERM TASK

*(Closing speech at the 6th Plenum (2nd session) of
the 8th Party Central Committee, February 2, 1999)*

The 6th Plenum (2nd session) of the Central Committee has the task to review the implementation of the 8th Party Congress Resolution on party building, to lay down policies and solutions to ensure the effective fulfillment of the fundamental and urgent tasks of party building in the political, ideological and organizational-personnel fields which were laid down by the 8th Party Congress and the Resolutions of the Party Central Committee.

The Communist Party of Vietnam is a ruling party. Its Statute asserts that the Central Committee is the highest leading body between two Congresses. Therefore, it must discuss and decide on all problems related to the country, the Party, the happiness, aspirations and livelihood of the people.

This task requires that the plenums of the Central Committee are held in keeping with the Party's organizational and operational principles. They must be really democratic. Discussions and debates must be frank, straight and open, with a transparent motivation and for the sake of the people and the country, with the sense of lofty communist responsibility and comradeship, with mutual affection, respect and readiness to listen to each other.

Through democratic discussions, clear and correct conclusions and resolutions must be reached in keeping with the realities of the Vietnamese revolution. On the basis of these decisions, the political system is to be mobilized for their implementation and the people are to be agitated in a concerted way.

The current Central Committee Plenum has manifested these principles and this determination.

True to their responsibility, the Central Committee members have carried out democratic, open discussions, listened to one another's views, and criticized straight the Political Bureau. There have been questions, answers, self-criticism and struggle for revealing the faults, analysis of the situation and proposed solutions. Thanks to this, the situation and causes could be assessed more correctly, the policies and solutions were more contracted, practical and feasible.

To carry out the Resolution of the 8th Congress on party building, the Central Committee has laid down, through its plenums, a strategy on education and training, on the fostering of human resources, the raising of the people's intellectual standard and the fostering of talents. It has also worked out a cadre strategy in the new stage, a part of paramount importance of the work of party building; a cultural strategy to further build an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identities; it has analysed the international and domestic situation, has mapped out policies and measures to promote sustainable development of the economy, to limit, by every means, the negative impact of the current financial-monetary crisis. It has continued to perfect the standpoints and policies to build the law-governed Vietnamese socialist State. It has led the elaboration of a specific statute to promote the people's right of mastership; it has made concentrated efforts to resolve the complex and lasting problems which have arisen in the relationship between the people and the

cadres and Party members in a number of Party organizations, thus further consolidating the great national unity; it has led the endeavour to promote the control and inspection work; it has carried on the struggle to defend the ideological foundations of the Party, its organizational principle, Platform, Statutes and line.

It has redressed vague and wrong conceptions, and reactionary and opposing theses of political opportunists and hostile forces.

Thanks to this, the Renovation has continued to record important achievements; the strength and standing of our country have been increased.

On the other hand, many shortcomings exist in the implementation of the Resolution of the 8th Party Congress on party building.

They are as follows:

- The Central Committee and the Political Bureau have not effectively carried out the fundamental and pressing requirements and tasks on party building laid down in the Platform and Statute by the 8th Congress and in resolutions of the Central Committee.

We cannot invoke the need to concentrate on dealing with the economic, cultural, social, military, security and foreign affairs as a ground for the failure to attend appropriately to party building.

- We have allowed the persistence of the failure to reach a high consensus on a number of issues related to the Party's specific standpoints and lines. Although aware of the existence of divergent views in translating the lines into practice, the Central Committee and the Political Bureau have not devoted enough time to frank discussions to reach consensus; what has been done is not enough to meet the requirements of life.

To sum up practice is, after all, to raise the problems on which there are still divergent views in order to clarify, to concretize and develop the line, to give answers to the hot questions of life. This is the work of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee.

- There have been manifestations of bureaucratism, failure to keep a close touch with reality and to ensure proper supervision, promotion, and examination. Many affairs have not been resolutely dealt with expeditiously. There have been manifestations of formal democracy and compromise in many localities; the spirit of internal struggle has been weak. Criticism and self-criticism within the Party have not been serious and regular.

The Political Bureau wishes to take on the responsibility for these shortcomings and to sternly criticize itself before the Central Committee and the whole Party.

- Various Party committees, grassroots Party organizations have failed to strictly carry out the resolutions on party building.

- Party members have failed to make continuous efforts to steel, perfect themselves, and to study, to take an active part in party work and agitation among the masses, to show an exemplary behaviour and a fighting spirit; their self-imposed subjection to the management of Party organizations has been weak; they have allowed individualism to develop.

As a consequence of the above shortcomings, the struggle against corruption, bureaucratism, and for the practice of thrift has failed to come up to the expectations of the people and the nature of our regime; the organizational apparatus of the Party, the State and other organizations has failed to be consolidated and renovated quickly. Policies on implementation are carried out improperly. A number of policies to further production and livelihood have been belatedly studied and promulgated. The ideological work and ideological and political struggle lack sharpness

and profundity; the education, fostering, training, examination and supervision work with regard to cadres is not very effective. As a result, some negative phenomena have been overcome belatedly such as fading away of the ideals, vacillations in face of complex situations, vague conception of the working class nature of the Party, degradation in moral and life-style; misusing power and positions for corruption, smuggling, unlawful enrichment, opportunism, harassing and bullying the people, paternalism, authoritarianism, unclean personnel ambitions, envy at positions, indiscipline, lack of the sense of responsibility, uncontrolled speaking and working; causing internal disunity. These phenomena were criticized in the Resolutions of the 8th Party Congress, the Central Committee and the Political Bureau.

These phenomena are even further developing, bringing about grave consequences, undermining the people's confidence in the Party and State, creating conditions for hostile forces to sabotage, to realize the scheme "peaceful evolution" with regard to our Party and regime.

Therefore, we cannot make light of those serious shortcomings. At this Plenum, the collective discussion with heart-felt contributions of revolutionary veterans, intellectual celebrities, the intelligentsia and the Youth's Union was held. Based on it and in accordance with the desire of the people and Party members, the first and most important decision of this plenum is that the Party Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the entire Party must overcome the exposed shortcomings, and carry out the fundamental and pressing requirements and tasks laid down by the 8th Congress and various resolutions of the Central Committee on party building:

One, to observe persistently the principles of the Party and the revolution as mentioned in the Party's Platform and Statute and the Resolution of the 8th Congress. All Party members must

speak and act in accordance with the Party Resolution; they cannot diffuse personal views.

Two, on the mandate of the Central Committee, the Political Bureau is to make diligent preparations to submit to the Central Committee for discussion the issues which have stirred up divergent opinions in the implementation of the Party line with regard to the organization of the machinery of the Party, the State, mass organizations, and in the realization of other important regulations. In this spirit, the Political Bureau will undertake direct guidance and more invest in the theoretical work, the summing of practice and the resolution of the problems on which there have been divergent opinions for a long time in order to prepare for the 9th Party Congress.

In the implementation of the lines and policies of the Party and State, when Party organizations have detected the problems from which experience should be drawn on a trial basis, the executive committees of the organizations should discuss and propose projects to be submitted to the Central Committee for consideration. I suggest that the Political Bureau and central agencies are duty-bound to have replies, generally not later than one month. If after one month, there is no reply, the project-submitting body has the right to initiate the pilot projects.

Three, to improve the style and mode of work of the Central Committee, the Political Bureau, various Party committees, grassroots Party organizations; to arrange direct meetings with the people, to listen attentively to their opinions in order to do away with hindrances. The meetings of Party executive committees must stick to Party resolutions and the realities of life; raise the right problems for collective consideration and decision;

The Party General Secretary, each Politburo member who is in charge of a specific field, and leaders at all echelons and of all branches must strengthen the work of examination.

Four, to actively renovate the mode of organizing conferences and meetings, the mode of issuing Party resolutions and implementing them, to ensure strict observation of the principle of democratic centralism. This Plenum will issue short, easy-to-understand, easy-to-grasp, and easy-to-implement resolutions accompanied by concrete regulations and plans. This spirit must pervade all Party committees and organizations.

Five, to launch a drive for Party building and rectification, self-criticism and criticism from May 19, 1999 to May 19, 2001. The purpose is to build ours into a pure and strong party, to raise its fighting capacity, leading role, prestige and reputation; to achieve a flesh-and-blood relationship between the people and the Party; the Party and the people must be of one will.

...

Since the 8th Congress, we have persisted in the renovation line and entered the period of intensified national industrialization and modernization; we have managed to maintain and develop the successes recorded, to limit the negative impact of the current financial-monetary crisis. Not only in the previous revolutionary stage but also in the period after the victory on 30th April 1975 did we manage to overcome difficult and complicated situations such as the surmounting of war aftermaths, economic restoration and the renovation of the economic management mechanism.

...

The current Central Committee Plenum has decided to muster efforts in the forthcoming period to carry out the drive for Party building and rectification, self-criticism and criticism, from the Political Bureau, the Central Committee down to the grassroots level. This is a link for a breakthrough and a key step to ensure success for other solutions.

The people and soldiers have the right to demand from cadres the proper fulfillment of these tasks; they have the right to criticize those cadres who fail to fulfil their tasks. "Democracy means reliance on the forces of the masses, observance of the line on the masses. The movement against corruption, waste and bureaucratism must rely *on the forces of the masses, if it is to achieve success.*"

...

To raise the quality and effectiveness of the self-criticism and criticism drive, it is necessary to attach importance to self-criticism from above and criticism from below.

That is a requirement of our people with regard to our Party which is entrusted by the people and the nation with the mission to be in power, to attend to all the affairs of the country and the welfare of the people. Uncle HỒ once taught us: "You and all Party members must understand that our people are very staunch, very confident in the Party, and that they have entrusted the Party their life and property."

In our hard and protracted fight against a cruel enemy, many of our compatriots laid down their lives and property to protect, shelter and support Party members, administrative and armed forces cadres. With their sweat, intelligence and creativity, the people have valiantly and persistently created the cause of Renovation.

Without the sacrifices, the persistent fight, the tears, the sweat, the blood, the intellectual qualities and the organizational capabilities of our working class and people, our Party could not exist and develop; there could not be the victory of the past resistance war and the current Renovation. The services rendered by the working class and the people to our Party are as great as those of parents to their children.

To build and rectify the Party, to carry out serious self-criticism and criticism, resolutely to correct mistakes and overcome shortcomings are precisely the way to pay our debt of gratitude to the people and the nation.

Sixty-nine years ago, our immense Motherland was under the yoke of imperialists and feudalists. In the darkness of slavery, our Party was born and it has led the people to the current glorious victories.

It is the happiness of our generation to inherit the great cause left by the people and our predecessors.

It is the heavy duty of our generation to do the current difficult, new and great work in a complex international context full of unforeseeable changes.

Conscious of this deep significance, we will resolutely carry out the Resolution of the 8th Congress on party building and the Resolution of the 6th Plenum (2nd session).

The strength of the Party, of each Party organization and each Party member lies not only in their good qualities but also in their ability to realize and resolutely deal with pending issues and mistakes, and to surpass their own self.

The current drive for Party building and rectification, self-criticism and criticism meets the expectation of the whole Party and people. The whole people, all revolutionary veterans, intellectuals, youths, workers, civil servants, and the armed forces will surely support and contribute enthusiastically to building our Party and our State to make them transparent and strong.

Like in the past, any work that meets the aspirations of the people and of all Party members and enjoys their wholehearted support will be successful...

THE ROLE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE PERIOD OF INDUSTRIALIZATION AND MODERNIZATION

*(Speech at the Ministry of Science-Technology and
Environment, April 10, 1999)*

....

The Communist Party of Vietnam has issued several resolutions and directives on the building and development of an advanced science and technology of the country. In particular, the 2nd Plenum of the Central Committee has adopted the Resolution on "The strategic orientation for development of science and technology in the period of industrialization and modernization and the tasks towards the year 2000." The important role of science and technology has been gradually concretized and institutionalized by the Government, ministries, branches and localities through various mechanisms, policies and regulations aimed at creating favourable conditions so that science and technology can make maximum contributions to socio-economic development. In the past period, great efforts have been made in science and technology and many recorded achievements have pushed up production. Although not yet strong enough, the scientific and technological potentiality of our country has basically been built. The Party and the

State highly appreciate these results. In the context of acute challenges that science and technology have to overcome to record common socio-economic achievements, the results gained as mentioned in the report of the Minister are worthy of consideration.

However, in face of the new requirements for the building and development of the country, the role of science and technology must be further highlighted, and the conception of various branches and echelons regarding the importance of the relationship between science and technology and socio-economic development must be further enhanced.

In this spirit, I suggest that you should carry out a deeper study and exchange of views on the following issues:

1. Science and technology have the role to perceive and transform society

With this role, science and technology must take their source from the will and aspirations of the people and the realities of the country. They must serve as an adviser to the various echelons of the Party and administration in order to ensure the Party's unified leadership for the sake of the target of a wealthy people, a prosperous country, a fair and civilized society. This means that science and technology must be able to resolve the problems posed by life. The scientific and technological advances in the forthcoming decades will create a strong motive force for pushing up the development of production forces and to change the face of the world and international relations. The impact of the scientific and technological revolution will help us speed up the industrialization and modernization of the country. The function of adviser and role of transforming society of science and technology are manifested in the following regards:

- To create reliable grounds for the elaboration of lines and policies for socio-economic development. Each branch and each locality can and should find spearhead technological fields to step up economic development, to turn out competitive products consistent with the standard of the trained manpower. For this reason, in order to transform society, science and technology must be closely linked to the targets of socio-economic development in each period. In the guidance over all fields of activity, Party committees and administrative authorities should pay particular attention to the scientific and technological contents, and to carry out regularly the examination of the scientific grounds and the socio-economic effectiveness of the policies which have been promulgated. The Resolution of the 2nd Plenum of the 8th Party Central Committee has made clear our Party's standpoints on scientific and technological development, considering science and technology a key content of all branches and all echelons. The economy now must be developed mainly with science and technology and based on them.

- Science and technology constitute the factor which ensures the development of production forces and which creates economic growth. Their progress and the results of the modern scientific and technological revolution have a decisive effect in ensuring greater labour productivity, higher quality of products and overall effectiveness of production.

In entering the 21st century, the successful application of the achievements of modern science and technology in our country will be one of the factors determining the growth and creating the competitiveness of the economy.

2. Fundamental tasks of science and technology

At the mid-term Party National Conference (7th tenure) and at the 8th Congress, the Communist Party of Vietnam pointed

out that economically lagging behind is one of the four dangers confronting the country. Developed industrial countries and new industrial countries are of the view that the economic lagging of a country is due to its lagging behind in scientific and technological development as industrialization must be based on science and technology. The application of scientific and technological achievements ensures productivity, quality and effectiveness. It ensures a shift of the economic structure towards rapidly increasing the production branches which have a high scientific and technological content.

Today, there is a globalization trend in the world economy. This process is pushed up by many factors as follows: the development of production forces which has gone beyond the boundaries of a country and becomes a factor of internationalization; the development of the market economy; the formation of free trade areas; the rise of multi-national corporations; the leaps of the information technology, etc. We are being confronted with a requirement of equal integration with the other countries. We have made first fundamental steps in this process. In July 1995 we became a member of ASEAN; in October 1998, we joined APEC and we will soon join AFTA and WTO. This requires that science and technology must prepare forces and our country must have a scientific and technological potentiality and a solid endogenous capacity strong enough for us to take part on an equal footing in this integration process so as not to be dependent on any foreign country.

We are carrying industrialization and modernization in conditions different from those of many countries in the region and in the world. We have a low GDP per capita; 80 percent of the population are living in rural areas; natural resources reserves and cheap labour are no longer a notable comparative advantage; the intellectual potential of the country is not abundant and there are

many limitations. Meanwhile, if we are to become basically an industrial country in 2020, the growth must be maintained at a high tempo during many years; together with economic growth, sustainable development and social justice must also be ensured. These are indeed major challenges, if the socialist orientation is to be maintained in the development process.

For this reason, the whole Party and people must bring into play all material, moral, intellectual resources and all endogenous strengths and potentialities of various economic components to release and develop production forces, to gradually achieve economic growth linked to social progress and justice; at the same time, we must strive to put to the maximum use of the favourable international environment to overcome the current difficulties. A wise way of proceeding must be found to avoid to the maximum the negative effects experienced by countries, which have preceded us. The Resolution of the 7th plenum of the 7th Central Committee made clear that from now to the year 2000, we take the import of technology as the main point and we will step directly into modern technology. These are advanced technologies and high technologies based on the latest achievements of modern science such as the information technology, the biological technology, the technology on materials, the precision, engineering, automatization technology. These technologies have the effect of shifting the economic structure in the direction towards the creation of new technological branches with high scientific and technological contents and added values. They are put to use to build the most important infrastructural structures and to turn out spearheaded export products with great competitiveness on the international market, thereby creating a quick economic growth, new trades and crafts proceeding from science and technology, helping to raise the

living standard of the people and step-by-step creating the technological capacity of the nation.

The achievements recorded over the past years in a number of economic branches, especially in post and telecommunications, petrol and gas, construction, communications, etc., show the total soundness of the policy to take the import of technology as the main point. However, while giving priority to the development of high technology branches, we should develop appropriate and traditional technologies in a harmonious way to create technological diversity and resolve the employment problem. Consequently, it is necessary to combine the import and adaptation of technologies with stepped-up research in the country to create internal capabilities, and eventually to master technologies and to create our own ones.

In the forthcoming period, an important task of science and technology is to achieve a good implementation of the 6th Plenum Resolution (1st session) of the 8th Central Committee on the industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas. The Political Bureau has issued directives for the Party organizations of central ministries and branches and localities to set up programmes of action to implement the Resolution. Accordingly, an important area for scientists to show their talent in the immediate future is the countryside and through broad application of scientific and technological achievements to production and life.

Therefore, the Ministry of Science-Technology and Environment should have plans to mobilize the contingent of scientists from research institutes, universities and enterprises, and well carry out the set up action program. Proper attention should be attached - according to the Government's assignment - to 1,000 out of the 1,715 poor communes in various provinces across the country.

3. To build scientific and technological potential to create a motive force for the development of science and technology

To fulfil the above-mentioned tasks, the Party's line must be institutionalized into specific policies and solutions to build a solid infrastructure for science and technology.

Our Party always attaches importance to the contingent of scientific-technological cadres. In the context of a market economy, international integration, national industrialization and modernization, the role and position of this contingent is asserted more strongly; they are the nation's resources and valuable property.

We have at present about one million university graduate scientific and technological cadres and about 10,000 post-graduate cadres working in hundreds of research institutes, higher educational establishments and in various enterprises. In addition, there are over 200,000 overseas Vietnamese intellectuals. This contingent made great contributions to the past two resistances and they continue to do so in the current cause of national construction and defence.

Over the past years, the lack of clear policies on utilization of grey matter has caused some waste within the contingent of scientists who are subject to natural mobility in keeping with the market mechanism. This is a fact that brings about some "tumult", which can be dealt with if we have a appropriate policy on utilization, especially with regard to the army of young scientific-technological cadres trained in accordance with the requirements of the country.

In the near future, the Political Bureau will discuss a number of major policies in the building and development of our scien-

tific and technological potentiality: to allow the use of ODA funds for building key national laboratories or for training scientific and technological cadres for prioritized fields; to train and utilize scientific-technological cadres at home; to absorb and utilize overseas Vietnamese intellectuals. The Government will also promulgate specific policies to enable science and technology to make the greatest contributions possible to the socio-economic development of the country, for instance, the policies to ensure incomes of the cadres in this field corresponding to their grey matter; to provide scientific and technological cadres with necessary equipment and working conditions; to promulgate statutes on promoting democracy, the initiative, the spirit of solidarity, the sense of social responsibility of the scientist, etc.; to work out the modes of acclaiming and honouring meritorious scientists; to create motivation among the scientific and technological circle.

To this end, we should achieve consensus on the following motto: domestic investment is prime while the investment from outside is important. It is the responsibility of the State bodies concerned to define clearly the fields and objects for investment to ensure effectiveness thereof.

4. To perfect the system of organization and management and to create a juridical environment for scientific and technological activities

The Ministry of Science-Technology and Environment should perfect the system of organization and management of scientific and technological activities in the context of a market economy and international integration. This work should be directed towards the following goal: the State will exercise its unified management of such activities with a clear division of

responsibility between the central and the local echelons; it will be responsible for strategic and public utility tasks such as community healthcare, environmental protection, security and national defence, effective planning for the development of each specific branch including the building and development of a scientific-technological potentiality for active acceptance and development of new technologies which have a decisive significance for economic growth.

The bodies in charge of scientific and technological management in ministries, branches and localities are allowed to take greater initiative in bettering the advisory work and to become capable of gradually resolving specific scientific and technological issues pertaining to the concerned ministry, branch or locality.

It is also necessary to study to create a firm juridical environment for scientific and technological activities, and, as an immediate step, to work out and approve a strategy for scientific and technological development, a law on science and technology, a plan for the development of the branch, mechanisms and policies to create resources for science and technology in the conditions of the market economy.

5. Following are my views on the proposals of the Ministry:

The implementation of the Central Committee 6th Resolution (1st session) and the 6th Resolution of the 8th Political Bureau on some issues of the development of agriculture and rural areas is a problem of strategic character. Thanks to timely orientation and solutions of these Resolutions, we have recorded achievements in an extremely difficult and complicated circumstance. I am pleased to note that the Ministry of Science-Technology and

Environment has concentrated its managerial activities on agriculture and rural areas. This is not only because it is more effective to direct science-technology towards agriculture and rural areas, given the present standard of our science and technology and the competition of the market mechanism. This is also because agriculture and rural areas are indeed the foundations ensuring for us a sustainable development. Over the past years, billions of Vietnamese *đồng* from your limited budget have been earmarked for science and technology in the service of agriculture and rural areas with hundreds of projects. This is a great effort, a sound option. Furthermore, we have now a Party resolution on this field and we should concentrate more on this direction. The Ministry has set up a scientific-technological program in service of development of rural and mountain areas. This is a good deed. It is necessary to strengthen the content of the program and investment in it.

Another urgent problem is to promote human resources to help accelerate the industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas. The Ministry should, together with the concerned Party and Government agencies consider and issue appropriate policies and organizational measures to supply enough qualified cadres to agriculture and rural areas.

Scientists should disseminate scientific-technological knowledge to each locality, each production establishment, each household and each labourer to be applied to production and life to turn out more products and wealth for society. To this end, it is necessary to keep close touch with reality and the life at the grassroots level, to go to all the regions across the country to transform nature, to turn deltas, highlands and mountain regions into wealthy economic centers. On the other hand, scientists

should find answers to the raised questions, effective production plans to remove the hindrances confronted by production establishments. The Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment should work out suitable modes of management to accord to scientists necessary conditions so that they can fulfil their "inherit mission." I think that the complexes of the projects set out in the Action Program for realizing the 2nd Plenum Resolution should be pushed up strongly; the concerned ministries, branches should closely coordinate with the Ministry of Science-Technology and Environment to fulfil the tasks set in the Program.

PARTY BUILDING AND RECTIFICATION IN THE PRESENT CAUSE OF RENOVATION

(Speech at the celebration of the 109th birthday anniversary of President Hồ Chí Minh and the celebration of the 30th year of the implementation of his Testament, May 18th, 1999)

...

At the beginning of this century, in the dark night of slavery, Nguyễn Ái Quốc, with his bare hands and deep and fervent patriotism set out in search of a path to national salvation. He came to Marxism-Leninism as to a historic “rendezvous” between genuine patriotism and the revolutionary and scientific doctrine of the epoch.

Along with the elaboration of the revolutionary line, strategy and tactics, he concentrated his efforts on the founding of the Communist Party of Vietnam. He ascertained that “in the first place, the Vietnamese revolution must have a revolutionary Party”, and “the solidity of the Party is the condition for the victory of the revolution.”

The Party led the people of the whole country to arouse the 1930-1931 revolutionary surge whose climax was the Nghệ Tĩnh Soviet movement, the 1936-1939 surge of political struggle, the

heroic insurrections of Nam Kỳ (Cochinchine) Bảo Sơn and Ba Tơ, and the patriotic surge against Japanese invasion for national salvation, the August 1945 general insurrection. We joined the world people in a resolute fight against fascism; we extended all-out assistance to the revolutions in the fraternal countries of Laos and Cambodia.

When 15 years old, with 5,000 members, the Party led the Vietnamese people to achieve victory in the August Revolution and to build the first worker-peasant state in Southeast Asia.

Through a protracted resistance of thirty years, the Party led our nation to achieve two exploits of epochal significance: the nine-year-long resistance against French colonialists, which ended with the earth-shaking Điện Biên Phủ victory, materializing the slogan "Land to the tiller" and completely liberating the North; the 20-year-long resistance against US aggressors which ended with the historic Hồ Chí Minh campaign, the complete liberation of the South, national reunification, and the advance of the whole country to socialism.

Following Uncle Hồ's path and creatively carrying out his thought, over the last 12 years of renovation, our people have overcome the heavy aftermath of the past aggressive wars, coped with the difficulties resulting from the turmoils in the East-European socialist countries and the Soviet Union, the economic blockade and embargo and the attempts to stir up unrest of the hostile forces, brought our economy out of a protracted serious crisis, preserved political stability, recorded very important achievements in the socio-economic, cultural, security, national defence and foreign relations fields. These achievements have created a new position and strength of the Vietnamese revolution, created conditions and premises for our country ushering in a new period of development – the period of stepped-up industrialization and modernization, for the sake of a wealthy people,

a prosperous country, a fair and civilized society and a firm defence of the Motherland.

Hồ Chí Minh set the brilliant example of a communist fighter who devoted all his life to the country and the people, a symbol of heroism, the iron will for independence, self-reliance, sticking to the adopted ideals, creativity and determination to win indomitability before all enemies.

Following his example, countless cadres, Party members, youths and compatriots have laid down their lives for the Motherland, taken the common cause as their *raison d'être*, showed oneness, mutual affection and assistance, thereby creating forces to overcome all ordeals and dangers, at times seemingly insurmountable.

The glorious path covered by our Party and people over the past seven decades asserts that the leadership of the Party is the factor which determines all victories of the Vietnamese revolution. With its leadership, our people have recorded wonderful achievements:

- An independent and unified motherland steadily advancing to socialism.

- A staunch Communist Party having a working class nature, which represents the interests of the working class, labourers and the whole nation and takes Marxism-Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh Thought as the ideological foundation.

- A State of the people, by the people and for the people with socialist democracy increasingly brought into play in social life.

- A revolutionary armed force faithful to the Party and dutiful to the people, ready to fight and to make sacrifices for the independence and freedom of the Motherland, for socialism, and able to accomplish any task, to overcome any difficulty, to defeat any enemy.

- A national united front representative of the great national unity, founded on the worker-peasant-intellectual alliance, and unceasingly consolidated and broadened.

- A pure international solidarity spirit for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress. In the minds of the oppressed labouring people and progressive mankind, "Vietnam – Hồ Chí Minh" has become a symbol of confidence, will, conscience and dignity.

- A new epoch in the nation's history – the *Hồ Chí Minh epoch*.

As the founder of the Communist Party of Vietnam, President Hồ Chí Minh constantly attached particular attention to Party building and rectification. The Party must be the vanguard of the class and the nation, it must perfect itself to lead the country.

Hồ Chí Minh asserted: "Ours is a ruling Party. Each Party member and cadre must be really imbued with *revolutionary virtue*, show real industriousness, thrift, integrity, righteousness, absolute dedication to public interests and selflessness. Our Party must be kept truly pure, worthy to be the faithful leader and servant of the people"; "Because, if a ruler or the leader is not a servant of the people, he can only be a mandarin or a boss of the people. It must be understood that entrusted with a post and powers, a civil servant is only a representative of the people."

The Vietnamese State is a State of the people, by the people and for the people; it operates under the leadership of the Party. Party leadership ensures that the State is an instrument serving the interests of the people and realizing the people's mastership. Uncle Hồ regarded democracy as the nature of the socialist regime, of the Vietnamese State. To strengthen the

Party's leadership and to attach great importance to the building of the people's foundation are two inseparable aspects of one and the same problem. To build the people's foundation, there must be the correct leadership of the Party; to maintain the leadership of the Party, the people's foundation must be consolidated properly.

Uncle Hồ did not regard Party rectification as an ad-hoc measure, but an inevitable and standing task to fulfil and ensure the leading role of the Party, a motion of the Party itself in the course of development of the revolution. When the revolution is in difficulty, Party rectification is designed to promote a calm, clear-sighted attitude, to assert a steady stand, to avoid falling into vacillation and pessimism; when the revolution is gaining its victorious momentum, Party rectification is designed to avoid arrogance, subjectivism, conceit, undue optimism; when the Party is in power, its member can easily lose their selves; even when they were great yesterday, it is not certain that today they will be still loved by everybody, if they do not remain pure and are plunged into individualism. For this reason, due importance need to be attached to Party rectification.

Particularly now, in face of the need to build the Party to make it equal to the new historic tasks and in view of the Party's actual state, Party building and rectification are both a fundamental, standing and very pressing task.

Over the past years, along with the important achievements recorded by our people, the Party has made a new step to maturity in the political, ideological and organizational regards; most cadres and Party members have preserved their revolutionary qualities. But we must seriously realize that a part of cadres and Party members have shown some degradation in the ideological, political, moral aspects and in their life-style.

While the revolution requires persistent efforts to achieve the target and ideal, a part of cadres and Party members have shown some reduction in their will, some fading in their ideal and vacillations over the path to socialism. It is noteworthy that some senior cadres and Party members have acted at variance with the Party's Platform and Statutes, violated the laws of the State, and shown a low sense of responsibility in dealing with the problems of the country, of their respective localities, branches and units.

While the building of the country requires absolute dedication to the common cause, they work without zeal and comradeship, they look only after their selfish interests, indulge in corruption, bribery, privileges, particularism, localism, opportunism, intrigues; they show regard only for material interests and make light of spiritual values; take into consideration immediate pragmatic gains while making light of basic, long-term ones.

The revolution requires Party members and leading cadres to maintain close contact with the people and the grassroots level, to go into realities, to comprehend people's aspirations, to listen to the opinions of the masses and to learn their experience in order to give timely solutions to the burning problems posed by life. However, some of these officials are bureaucratic, arrogant, imperious, and careless; they do not respect the people; do not take their attending to the latter's life as a measure for assessing their leadership and qualities.

Vietnam is still poor; the people are still in need. Industrialization and modernization require to bring maximally into play our internal resources and promote industriousness, thrift, honesty and righteousness. However, a part of cadres and Party members indulge themselves in luxury; they waste money; let public property be lost, damaged or destroyed.

The principle of democratic centralism is violated; discipline and management of Party members are loosened; the regime of self-criticism and criticism is not strictly observed. Serious disunity is rife for a long period in a number of Party organizations and areas.

There are Party Committees and Party members that have not yet realized the seriousness of the situation; they are subjective, simple-minded or uninvolved, not aware of the urgent demand for Party building and rectification.

Proceeding from the crucial position of the Party-building work, the requirements of the new period and the actual state of our Party, the 6th Central Committee Plenum (2nd session) took an important decision: to launch a drive for Party building and rectification, self-criticism and criticism on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the implementation of the sacred *Testament* of President Hồ Chí Minh and of the 70th anniversary of the Party founding. This drive is to be carried out in two years, from May 19th, 1999 to May 19, 2001. Afterwards, it will take place in a regular pattern.

Following are the requirements of this drive:

- To raise the unity in the ideological and political conceptions, in the will and action of the whole Party to persevere with the revolutionary stand, fundamental standpoints of a principle character; to consolidate and strengthen the Party in all respects; to make it truly pure, strong, capable of meeting the demand for leadership in the new period.

- To imbue the whole Party, army and people with Hồ Chí Minh thought and ethics; to prevent and check the degradation in morals and the life-style; to strengthen the flesh-and-blood ties between the Party and the people to make the Party and the

people oneness in will; to carry out Uncle Hồ's teaching: "The Communist Party of Vietnam represents morality and civilization."

- To make a new step forward in the implementation of the principle of democratic centralism, self-criticism and criticism, exemplary observance of the Platform, Statutes, and Resolutions of the Party, the laws of the State; to couple deeds with words.

- To rectify and rearrange the organizations in the political system in close liaison with the administrative reform so as to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative machinery to serve the people.

This Party building and rectification drive must link the grasping of the 6th Plenum Resolution (2nd session) to the further study of the Party Platform and Statutes and State laws.

To educate and train cadres and Party members with regard to ethics and way of life in close liaison managing them both in their work places and in their residential areas. To exercise serious control and supervision through Party organizations, law enforcing bodies, people-elected bodies, populations and the mass media.

To effectively carry out a self-criticism and criticism drive within the whole Party, especially in Party committees, among key cadres at the central, provincial and municipal echelons.

Self-criticism and criticism must be aimed at enabling every cadre, every Party member and organization to realize their good points to be promoted, and their shortcomings to be overcome.

First and foremost, every Party member must be honest and self-imposed, examine and assess properly themselves with the measure of the Communist qualities and title while making good

use of the criticisms of other comrades. It is necessary to overcome such manifestations as negligence, complaisance aimed at winning one's heart, refusal to protect the right and to fight the bad, even attempts to screen one another or to take advantage of criticism to denounce unconstructively other people. To achieve good criticism, it is necessary to give opportunities to the lower ranks and people to criticize cadres and Party members, and such critic remarks must be accepted seriously.

We should concentrate efforts on guidance for the struggle against corruption, waste and bureaucratism. Party committees and leaders of localities, branches, agencies, units must be held directly responsible for the cases of corruption and waste in the localities and units under their authority. Inspectorates and control bodies should well deal with letters denouncing corrupt cadres at all echelons. The struggle against corruption, waste, bureaucracy should be closely guided in the process of fulfillment of socio-economic, cultural, scientific, educational, national defence, security and foreign relations tasks. To overcome loopholes in the mechanism of management with regard to the economy, finance, property, and culture, which is to be closely linked to the realization of the Statutes on grass-roots democracy and the regulations of the Party and State, and the reforms in the salary system.

Another matter of prime importance is the need to consolidate grass-roots Party organizations, particularly in communes, wards, State agencies, enterprises and the armed forces. To put all Party activities in an orderly routine such as study, self-criticism, and criticism, it is necessary to properly assign tasks to Party members and to ensure examination thereof in order to enhance the fighting capacity and leadership calibre of grass-roots Party organizations.

...

The 20th century is drawing to the end. One of its prominent features is the fact that under President Hồ Chí Minh's banner of national independence and socialism, Vietnam has been assessed by progressive mankind as a vanguard fighter of the national liberation movement.

President Hồ Chí Minh was a great patriot, a valiant international fighter. His heart was always turned to the suffering peoples and social strata. He aspired to peace for the world, freedom and equality for nations and a happy life for men.

On behalf of the Vietnamese Party and State, I take this opportunity to express sincere gratitude to the Communist and Workers' Parties, the national independence movements, the movements for peace and democracy, fraternal friends all over the five continents, governments and international organizations that have supported the just struggle of the Vietnamese people. This great support has made an important contribution to the victory of the Vietnamese revolution.

PEOPLE ARE THE SOURCE OF ALL POWERS

(Closing speech at the 7th Plenum of the 8th Party Central Committee, August 16, 1999)

... The 7th Plenum of the Central Committee considered the achievements and shortcomings in the consolidation and perfection of the organization and machinery of the political system, the reform of the salary policy along with other social policies. It commended the efforts made, and frankly pointed out the weaknesses in the preparation of the projects.

After discussion, the Central Committee reached the unanimous assessment that there are many irrationalities in the organization and the machinery of the political system. However, the most urgent problem is not to streamline and merge a number of Party committees or administrative agencies, to detach or to merge a number of ministries or to change the name of one or another ministry; the most important and urgent problem now in the arrangement and perfecting of the organization and machinery of the political system is related to their all-round quality, especially political quality.

For this reason, from now to the 9th Congress, we must concentrate on raising the quality and effectiveness of the organizations and the contingent of cadres and Party members, workers and civil servants in the apparatus of the Party, State,

Fatherland Front, mass organizations with a focus on political quality. On the basis of the stable organizational system, we will concentrate on the internal consolidation and rectification of each organization and the various links in the whole political system. Any organization which has completed its tasks or which is no longer appropriate is to be dissolved or streamlined.

This is a very sound decision.

What we have to do after this Plenum in the organizational field is reflected in the Resolution. I would like to add only some more points.

One, the perfecting of the organization and machinery of the political system must achieve the following objectives: strengthening the working class nature of the Party; strengthening its role of sustainable leadership in any eventuality and in all fields of social life, making the machinery of the State and mass organizations really pure and solid and become forever that of the people, by the people and for the people; achieving effective management of the State, promoting the people's right of mastership; restoring order and discipline; developing the economy; raising the people's material and spiritual living standards; preserving political stability; checking social evils; successfully carrying out industrialization and modernization; making the people wealthy, the country prosperous, society just and civilized; safeguarding the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Motherland; steadily advancing to socialism.

The requirement in this work is to create a greater force in political, organizational, economic, scientific-technological, socio-cultural, security-national defence and foreign relations fields, to complete the tasks laid down for the last months of 1999, 2000 and 2001 in the whole country, in each locality, each unit and in all fields.

People are the source of all powers. The right of the labouring people to national independence and mastership is organized into political power, that is the State.

To strengthen the working class nature of the Party and the leadership of the Party with regard to the State is to ensure that the State will remain forever that of the people, by the people and for the people, to ensure that all powers belong to the people.

The Party's leadership is unified and comprehensive. That means, it extends to political, ideological and organizational fields, which includes the organization of the machinery and contingent of cadres. History, the epoch and our people do not allow the political power to be shared with any other force. All claims about "absolute democracy", or human rights being higher than sovereignty, pluralism, plurality of parties, etc. are lies and deceptive allegations.

State power is also unified and indivisible. But there is assignment of tasks and coordination among the legislative, executive and judicial branches.

The Government is an executive body. It is a collective of members headed and led by the Prime Minister. This model came into being in 1946 with the first Vietnamese Constitution (despite the four arrangements, the base of the executive system has remained unchanged).

The Prime Minister leads the work of the Government and its members. Ministers are the members of the Cabinet, who are presented by the Prime Minister and ratified by the National Assembly. The Ministers exercise State management of their respective fields and branches on the nationwide scale, and are responsible to the Prime Minister and the National Assembly. This highlights the role of the Ministers in their fields and branches of which they are in charge. Vice-Ministers

are assistants to Ministers to whose guidance they are subject and to whom they are responsible.

The State and Government must have enough power and exercise it and must manage effectively the country. In order to exercise the power, it is necessary to act in accordance with the set functions and competence in a full and clear manner; it is necessary to clearly define the responsibility of the leader and that of every individual in the machinery; to clearly define the principles of working, the mechanism of operation and the rules on coordination. When something happens, it is necessary to have grounds to define clearly whether the occurrence is righteous or wrongful, and determine who is to be held responsible for it. If the apparatus does not have enough power or fails to exercise its power, or its capability is weak while it is not transparent, we can hardly speak of its efficiency or effectiveness, not to say it may be paralyzed.

Cadres must have capability, moral quality and must be pure. The head must bear all-round responsibility for the machinery of which he is in charge.

Only by doing so can we push up socio-economic development, really attending to the people. The biggest wish of the people is that we must raise the quality of the operation of the machinery and combat corruption, bureaucracy, cumbersome administrative formalities, harassment and trouble-making.

Cases of corruption, theft, waste, loss of public property, loss of life and property of the people, deliberate violation of the law must be clarified by judiciary bodies and publicly reported to the Party, the people and the army.

In some localities, the people say: our administrative cadres are imperious and show loose observance of discipline. For the sake of the people's interests, we must deal properly, in accor-

dance with the law, with those who cause loss for the property of the country and the people.

The country must have discipline. Order and discipline must be very strictly observed in the first place, in the State machinery, and then in the entire society.

Two, the consolidation and perfection of the organization and machinery of the political system is a task in the whole Party building and rectification drive. Only when the drive is closely linked to this task will there be good results.

The Political Bureau will instruct the recapitulation of the consolidation of the organization and machinery of the political system.

In the self-criticism and criticism drive, it is necessary to clearly point out the good points and shortcomings along with the latter's causes, and to map out steps for overcoming them. Shortcomings pertaining to the organization concerned must be eliminated by the organization itself. If the matter belongs to the competence of a higher instance, specific recommendations may be made and the higher instance must clearly indicate a time-limit for the reply.

Through self-criticism, criticism and experience summing up, the organization must be perfected. It is necessary to enhance the sense of responsibility, the fighting and leadership capability of Party committees, Party personnel committees and associated Party groups; to raise the political standpoint, resolve, qualities, exemplary behavior and leading capacity of Party members.

As you are aware, in some places, cadres have appropriated part of the State aids to the people through various projects. What, then, is the attitude of cadres and Party members towards the people, the labourer and the class?

Consequently, it is truly necessary to perfect and enhance the quality of various Party committees and organizations in administrative bodies, the National Assembly, the judiciary apparatus, mass organizations so as to be able to coordinate their actions and effectively serve the Party's unified leadership. The Party members assigned to work in such organizations must be exemplary and capable communists.

The Political Bureau will discuss with each committee of the Central Committee, various Party personnel committees and Group Party Committees to determine their functions and tasks to avoid overlapping, to raise the fighting and leadership capacity of Party organizations and Party members.

Three, in the reform of the salary policy, the following viewpoints must be grasped: salaries are closely linked to the socio-economic development of the country; to pay due salaries to labourers is to make investment for development, to help make the contingent of cadres wholesome, transparent and to raise the efficiency of their labour. The actual value of salaries must be guaranteed and the living conditions must be improved step by step in accordance with socio-economic development.

The implementation of the salary policy from 1993 until now must be summed up, and it is necessary to ascertain the policy to further improve it in the 2001-2005 period.

Between now and the year 2001, to concentrate efforts to make full compensation to salaries in accordance with price increase; to restore order and discipline in salary management; to resolve a number of irrational points with regard to the cadres and civil servants who had retired prior to September 1985 and a number of other policies.

The fundamental determination and spirit of this Plenum are that it is necessary to restore order and discipline, to raise the

quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the organization and machinery of the political system to make our apparatus transparent, our cadres and Party members industrious, thrifty, honest, righteous, always attend to the people and the country, and be capable of fulfilling the set tasks during the period from now to the 9th Party Congress.

This determination also coincides with the people's aspirations. The Party Central Committee proposes that the entire people should continue to participate in building, supervising Party and State bodies, mass organizations, and to contribute to constructively criticizing them. They also should require cadres, Party members, workers and civil servants to actively work, steel themselves, carry out study, rectify their shortcomings and seriously implement the Resolution of the current Central Committee Plenum.

...

BUILDING THE BLOC OF ALL-PEOPLE GREAT UNITY

*(Address to the 5th Congress of the Vietnam
Fatherland Front, August 27, 1999)*

...

Thanks to the unity and resolute efforts of the entire people, army, various branches and echelons, the Vietnamese economy has overcome difficulties and challenges, and shown a continuing growth for many years. Vietnam has got out of the socio-economic crisis, recorded very important achievements after nearly 15 years of Renovation, and is entering the period of industrialization and modernization. We have built an agriculture capable of supplying enough food to the people and providing a surplus for export. Production and services have developed, meeting a major part of the consumption requirements and an important part of the need for production materials. Many export items have earned the world market's trust. The living conditions of the great majority of the people have been improved. Social stability and political security have been maintained. Cultural activities have recorded new progress. International cooperation relations have been broadened; the position and prestige of our country have been enhanced in the world. The potential and strength of our country have markedly

increased. Along with the whole country, Vietnamese, from the generations of death-sentenced detainees in Sơn La¹, Pulo Condore², who crossed streams and forests with cooked rice balls and salted sesame to record prodigious exploits of the century significance, to the youths, students, conscripted soldiers, adolescents and children are living better and happier lives. The overseas Vietnamese who turn their minds to the Motherland or who often come back on visits, share the Vietnamese joy and pride which have been solidly built up over the course of history.

Our foreign friends who once said lofty words about our nation: *Vietnam is the symbol of conscience, dignity and confidence*, have maintained their respect for and confidence in the Vietnamese man, the Vietnamese nation of the Hồ Chí Minh epoch and are expecting new achievements from them.

The victories recorded by our people prove this fact: the Renovation, national construction and defence for the sake of a wealthy people, a prosperous country, a fair and civilized society steadily advancing to socialism are sound and, in keeping with the people's hearts, and are being resolutely and perseveringly carried out by the people.

These achievements are attributed to the response made by the Front to the Party's line aimed at the people and the country, and its endeavour to promote the patriotic and self-reliant strength of the great bloc of national unity, to achieve the unity of will and action of all classes, social strata, generations, talents and national celebrities. This is the great merit of the Front and its members at all echelons.

1. A mountain province in Northwest Vietnam.

2. A southern island of Vietnam to where formerly the French colonialists and the Saigon puppet administration transported political detainees.

The Vietnamese communists take this opportunity to express their profound gratitude to the people and the Motherland which have born, fostered and supported the Party with all their hearts and minds, helping it fulfil the lofty mission entrusted by history and the nation.

The Communist Party of Vietnam expresses heartfelt thanks to the Vietnamese National United Front which entertained tight relations with it both in the times of difficulties and after victory, and together with it, rallied the whole people under the banner of great justice cause of President Hồ Chí Minh.

Since the first victories over the “enemy of flooding” to win the fertile alluvial lands along river banks and build up the country, which are related in the Sơn Tinh-Thủy Tinh (mountain genie and water genie) tale – the epic full of legendary colours – our nation has traversed several millennia.

These millennia of history are millennia of the unity of our nation having an extremely strong vitality, an incredible undauntedness before any aggressor, a will not to step back before any difficulty, not to be deceived by any machiavellian schemes, a resolve to use its strength to be master of its mountains and rivers, master of its own destiny.

This vehement vitality and incredible strength have the following foundations: ardent patriotism, profound love for the people, deep affection for the fellow countrymen, compassion for others as for oneself, hatred for enemies and traitors, faithfulness towards friends, taking benevolence as one’s morality, observance of integrity and righteousness, diligence and thirst for education, using intelligence and gallantry to overcome tempests, no conceit in victory, no dispiritedness in failures; no refusal to renounce the path selected, the path to independence and sovereignty, to the nation’s eternal existence and the people’s lasting happiness.

The ardent patriotism and profound love for the people, which were born together with the birth of the nation, have united the people into an indivisible bloc. As President Hồ Chí Minh put it: *“All compatriots, the Kinh or Tày, Mường or Dao, Gia Rai or Ê-đê, Sê Đăng or Bana and all other ethnic minorities are descendants of Vietnam, kith-and-kin brothers. We are resolved to live and die together in wealth and woe and to help one another”*.

This tradition is steeling our will, creativeness and resolve to win success in the Renovation.

Hồ Chí Minh Thought is pervaded with love for the country and the people; it is the harmonious combination of creative application of Marxism-Leninism and it has carried aloft the banner of national independence and socialism, which is the symbol of the epoch in which we are living, studying, working and fighting.

Love for the country and the people is the source of the personality and mettle of the Vietnamese man. It is an invincible weapon to preserve this identity for a vital reason: to lose the national identity is to lose everything.

We are about to enter a new century and a new millennium.

After the victories over floods to raise the banner of national construction, our nation opened the history of the first millennium with the glorious uprising of the Trưng sisters, which was responded by the broad masses. At the time, our nation numbered only one million people. The glorious victories of Ngô Quyền¹, Đinh Tiên Hoàng², which had led to the unity of our lands at the threshold of the second millennium, commenced a long period of independence and sovereignty.

1. A Vietnamese king of the 939-944 period, who defeated the northern Nam Hán aggressors.

2. A king of the 968-980 period, who unified the country.

At the end of this millennium, our nation defeated both old and new colonialism. This exploit went beyond the borders of our Motherland; its lofty value is its great contribution to the peace movement, the movement for the liberation of the oppressed nations and mankind's struggle for social progress.

On the solid foundation made up of tens of thousands of exploits in national construction and defence, achieved with sweat and blood, intelligence and the spirit of great unity of our nation, we are entering the new century and millennium with endeavour to industrialize and modernize the country.

This great work, which inherits and develops the multi-millenary achievements is designed to translate into reality the dream and aspiration for a wealthy people, a prosperous country, a fair and civilized society, the preservation of our national identity, the promotion for ever of our long-standing civilization, employment for labourers, possibility for children to go to school, peaceful villages and streets, happy families. All Vietnamese at home and abroad are happy and proud to carry in their bodies the Vietnamese blood of the Hồng-Lạc descendants.

This work, born out of the people's hearts, conformable to the people's minds and to the epoch, is a continuation of the nation's traditional love for the country and the people, the essence and modern intelligence of the Vietnamese man. Through a persevering endeavour to do this work, the country's law will be strictly enforced, its position will be steady as wished by our forefathers.

Once again, I would like to report to you as follows: To fulfil its responsibility to this cause, the Communist Party of Vietnam is carrying out a drive for Party building and rectification, self-criticism and criticism in celebration of the 30th anniversary of the implementation of President Hồ Chí Minh's *Testament*.

The purpose of this drive is to make the Party's lines and policies even more conformable to the people's hearts and minds to make our State for ever a State of the people, by the people and for the people; to oppose corruption, bureaucratism, authoritarianism, vexing and harassing the people; to restore order and discipline; to prevent and eliminate social evils; to punish strictly culprits; to consolidate the organization; to educate Party members; to reward properly meritorious people; to multiply the examples of good people and good deeds to enable the patriotic emulation movement to record more and more achievements.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam has confirmed its resolve to organize effectively this drive. It proposes to the Central Committee of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and the Fatherland Front Committees at all echelons to carry on the efforts to supervise cadres and Party members, to commend good aspects and criticize weaknesses so as to encourage them to steel themselves into faithful offspring of the people and the country.

The Report of the Front's Central Committee has initiated a very rich and practical programme of action.

I am of the view that all the jobs useful to the country on which the Congress has decided will build up a more solid bloc of all-people unity, promote even more strongly the people's right of mastership, to realize more effectively the democratic institution at the grassroots level; better the living conditions in residential areas, and mobilize the people to fulfil the tasks laid down by the National Assembly and the Government. This is an extremely profound humane and cultural cause.

In the long history of our nation, our great all-people bloc of unity has a very precious characteristic: the people's hearts are cemented thanks to a sound policy. This was the case in the epoch

of the Hùng Kings¹, the Trưng Sisters², Lady Triệu³, Lê Lợi⁴ and Quang Trung⁵. It is all the more so in the Hồ Chí Minh epoch.

President Hồ Chí Minh is the loftiest symbol of the nation, the brightest and greatest image of the Vietnamese personality. Our entire nation turns to His banner of great justice. His thought is radiating in all parts of our country. His *Testament* is beckoning us to march forward into the new work of building ours into a more beautiful and prosperous country, to join forces to defend our country, to attend to our people, to make our country wealthy, to bring it out of poverty and backwardness, and to enable it to stand on an equal footing with other countries in the world.

He passed away 30 years ago. With irrepressible mourning, we are resolved to carry out his *Testament*. On this great festive day, he seems to be still living among us, the beloved children of the great Vietnamese family, attending together to the cause of the country. I wish the 5th Congress of the Vietnam Fatherland Front great success to bring a new source of inspiration to the entire nation, and of joy to our friends.

...

1. According to legend, Vietnam came into being at the time of the Hùng Kings, 2000 years B.C.
2. A lady general who vanquished the aggressors of the Northern Han dynasty and proclaimed herself queen in 40-43 A.D.
3. A lady general who rose up against the Eastern Ngo aggressors in 248.
4. A king who defeated the Ming aggressors (1428-1433).
5. A king (1788-1792), who defeated the Qing aggressors at Đống Đa (Hanoi) in 1789.

YOU MUST STRIVE TO LEARN FOR THE COUNTRY, FOR YOUR FAMILY AND FOR YOUR FUTURE

*(Speech at the opening ceremony of the 1999-2000
school year at Hàn Thuyên General Secondary
School, Bắc Ninh, September 6, 1999)*

...

On the occasion of the start of a new school year, the festival of more than 22 million pupils, students and 850,000 teachers across Vietnam, I wish to convey to them my best wishes for good teaching and good learning so that the last school year of the 20th century may record the best comprehensive achievements.

I would like to express my joy in attending the school-year opening, ceremony held by the teachers and pupils of Hàn Thuyên General Secondary School, an outstanding advanced school of Bắc Ninh province.

I think that today the teachers, pupils and students should review together the past 30 years of implementations of beloved Uncle Hồ's *Testament* and 54 years of implementation of his teachings on education.

Fifty four years ago in September 1945, on the occasion of the opening of the first school year of the independent Vietnamese motherland, Uncle Hồ addressed a letter to the pupils across the country.

He wrote:

"From this minute, you begin to receive a completely Vietnamese education... the education of an independent country, which will train you into useful citizens of Vietnam, and which will develop fully your capabilities..."

Whether or not the Vietnamese land may become a beautiful one and the Vietnamese nation may ascend to the tribune of honour abreast of the powers of the five continents, depends to a great extent on your efforts in learning."¹

In implementation of Uncle Hồ's teaching, during the years of resistance against French aggression, teachers and students all over the country perseveringly carried on their teaching and learning in spite of multiple difficulties and hardships: kerosene lamps; thatched classes; shortage of food, warm clothes, stationery.

In the years of resistance against US imperialists, schools were evacuated several times; teachers and pupils barefoot and wearing straw hats, went on with their teaching and learning even under the ground in Vĩnh Linh, next to bomb craters in the Third and Fourth Zones plain, in the Đồng Tháp (Plain of Reeds) maquis, in the zones totally devastated by the enemy in Quảng Trị-Thừa Thiên, in the Fifth and Sixth Zones, on the mountain flanks of Tây Nguyên (High Plateaus), in the Northwest and Việt Bắc. And whenever the Motherland called for the resistance teachers and students went to the battlefield. There were students who went abroad for study but remained faithful to the country, for example Nguyễn Thái Bình.

In that protracted and hard fight, various generations of teachers and students overcame all difficulties to ensure good teaching and good learning and contributed to forming the

1. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 4, pp. 32-33.

contingent of people who led the resistance wars against foreign aggression and the construction of Socialist North Vietnam to victory and to the complete liberation of the South and the reunification of the country.

Over the past 54 years, the Party, the Government and the people have made resolute efforts to build Vietnamese education, contribute to preserve the identity of our national culture, to promote the long-standing civilization of the country and to attain the height of the epoch.

The school, along with the family and the native land, is a great cradle to cultivate ethics, grow up talents, foster physical strength, preserve pure souls, fight against social evils, set up a lasting orientation for future generations, build the foundations for generations to become good citizens. There lie the happiness and pride of the various generations of teachers, pupils and students. It is our responsibility to carry on and fulfil excellently these tasks.

We are very proud of the generations who fulfilled their military obligations, returned to the rice fields and factories, overcame all difficulties and became heroes; when they had conditions to carry on education, they strove to become medical doctors, engineers, army officers, generals, writers, journalists, state managers doctors of science and professors, etc.

Uncle Hồ told us: We must study well to be worthy of the great sacrifices made by our compatriots and comrades who laid down their lives; we must study to build up the heritage left by our ancestors.

Our pupils and students understand that they must strive to learn for the country, for the family, for their own future, to express gratitude to their teachers and friends, and for the great cause of our nation in the first decades of the new century. That is the cause of industrialization and modernization along the socialist path.

The Vietnamese nation is a nation with civilization and undauntedness. Vietnamese education is an education for Vietnam, for the Vietnamese people and for the Vietnamese man.

The Vietnamese man loves his country and his compatriots, is faithful, benevolent, devoted to his friends, hates enemies, is hard-working, thirsty for learning, shows gallantry in dangers, and perseverance in hardships, and thus can overcome any difficulty and vanquish any foe.

Every place in Vietnam bears the mark of long-standing culture along with brilliant feats of arms in national construction and defence.

There are in the Bắc Ninh land the oldest schools, the first Trạng Nguyên of the country (first grade laureate of former court examinations) Ngô Gia Tự¹ and Nguyễn Văn Cừ², the Đình Bảng³ guerilla detachment and *quan họ* villages⁴. It is one of the lands representative of Vietnamese culture and personality.

All this has been accomplished by us in accordance with Uncle Hồ's teachings and *Testament*. Given the lofty qualities of Vietnamese teachers and pupils, given our resolve to correct the shortcomings that we have detected through the drive of Party building and rectification, self-criticism and criticism, I can be confident that the last school year of this century will record great success, effectively implement the Resolution of the 2nd Plenum of the 8th Party Central Committee on education-training, and will be the best preparation for Vietnamese education to enter the new century and new millenium.

1. 2. Two outstanding leaders of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

3. In Bắc Ninh province, where there was a guerilla detachment against the French aggressors.

4. Villages famous for alternate singing festivals.

TRAINING OF KNOWLEDGEABLE PARTY CADRES IS A BASIC TASK OF THE PARTY

*(Address at the celebration of 50 years' tradition of
the Hồ Chí Minh National Political Academy,
September 28, 1999)*

...

We are boundlessly grateful to President Hồ Chí Minh, the national hero, the leader of genius of the Communist Party of Vietnam, who, from his initial efforts to popularize the revolutionary ideal to the time when he wrote his last instructions, dedicated his whole life to attending to the training of cadres.

As a citizen of an enslaved country and born in a poor and backward land, Uncle Hồ came to Marxism-Leninism from his love for the country and the people. With a persevering will, he learnt everywhere while carrying out revolutionary activities and earning a living. He learnt in all circumstances, in the struggle, in prisons, through books and in the school of life. By doing so, he accumulated the quintessence of mankind, he had broad and far-reaching knowledge, was versed in ancient and modern knowledge, well-acquainted with the affairs of the world. He trained himself into an erudite man of culture, a prominent political figure, a great organizer, an ethicist whose deeds and words deeply penetrated into the minds of all people, went beyond the limit of time and the borders of the motherland.

One of the examples he set for us to follow is his study and steeling.

He wrote:

“To learn so as to work, to be humans, to be cadres. To learn in order to serve the organization, the class and the people, the motherland and mankind. To achieve one’s purpose, it is necessary for one to show industriousness, thrift, integrity, righteousness, public-spiritedness and disinterestedness”¹.

Such was the learning ideal of Uncle Hồ, the most basic cause which turned Nguyễn Sinh Cung² into Hồ Chí Minh, the most prominent son of the Vietnamese nation and working class.

Uncle Hồ was the most studious Vietnamese pupil; for this reason, he became the most exemplary and talented Vietnamese teacher.

In him, there was oneness of intelligence and morality of theory and practice, of revolution and science of sentiments and reason, viewpoints and methods, ideology and organization, staunchness and creativity; there was oneness of his writings, his teachings and his life; in him, history and the future, the epoch and nation, the nation and the class are closely linked together; there were crystallized into a mettle which we can call, with pride, Hồ Chí Minh mettle.

Hồ Chí Minh mettle is precisely the mettle of the Vietnamese nation, of the Communist Party of Vietnam, of the Vietnamese personality and morality tempered through several millenaries of national building.

1. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 5, p. 684.

2. Hồ Chí Minh’s name in childhood.

I am of the view that, to commemorate the 50 years' tradition of the Academy, which is also the tradition of all Party schools, all political schools in the whole country, the most practical way is to use the ideal, motto and method of teaching, learning, research and creation of President Hồ Chí Minh to light our process of teaching and learning, studying theory and summing up practice to promote the strong points and more particularly, to find out the pending issues and shortcomings in order to deal with them.

Are we to learn in order to work, to be men or cadres, to serve the people, the motherland and mankind or in order to run after diplomas and certificates or to be promoted to one or another position?

What is the extent of our combining theory with practice of education with self-education, study with self-perfection, self-criticism with criticism, study at school with study at work, in practice, learning from teachers, with learning from friends, from inferior echelon, from the people?

Teaching is a process of indefatigable learning. All the comrades who come to study in Party schools, or political schools have gone through practical work. To what extent have we managed to exploit the rich practical experiences of the students to teach them? It is necessary to assess the results through scores, tests and exams, but it is even more important to assess the actual changes, the growing to maturity in their ideological and moral aspects, and in their capability, and mettle. How have we pondered and on this significance?

I believe that the generations of teaching personnel and students of the Academy will carry out together this self-examination. All the cadres who have carried out studies in the National Political Academy bearing Hồ Chí Minh's name, while recalling the Academy, their class-mates, the first days of the

process of their being trained by the Party into cadres, will surely carry out together such self-examinations.

Uncle Hồ taught us that "Cadres are at the base of all jobs. For this reason, cadre training is a base job of the Party." The current drive of Party building and rectification, self-criticism and criticism is a continuation of the fostering of this roof. A good work in this field will temper the communist mettle and personality in cadres and Party members.

Since the preparatory stage for its birth, the Communist Party of Vietnam and Uncle Hồ have always attached great importance to the theoretical work. Without a revolutionary theory, there is no revolutionary Party. Without a vanguard theory to light the way, there is no vanguard action, and internal unity, national unity, class unity and international unity are not possible.

The Communist Party of Vietnam is a symbol of morality and civilization. It must be the quintessence of the nation. It must reach the height of science. Only on this condition can it become strong enough to lead the revolution and actually be a revolutionary Party.

For this reason, the research on theory and social sciences is a function of prime importance of the Party to ensure its steady leadership in all fields.

We are facing the 21st century. All of us understand that with all the accumulated knowledge of mankind, in the 21st century science-technology and production forces will develop in leaps and bounds in an unforeseeable manner.

This development will in its turn pose a host of burning problems for social sciences and social revolution.

The industrialization and modernization of our country, the building and defence of our socialist motherland and the world

revolutionary movement are posing to us extremely pressing questions to be answered in the theoretical field.

On the other hand, imperialism and political opportunists of all colours are frantically attacking Marxism-Leninism, Hồ Chí Minh thought and our national identity.

Therefore, the scientists, the generations of teachers and students of the Hồ Chí Minh National Political Academy, Party schools and political schools all over the country must unite, coordinate their activities, concentrate to a greater extent their forces and minds on the theoretical work and the summing up of practice, overcome the slowness and backwardness in theoretical field, and find at an early date answers to the burning problems posed by life.

To do this work well, we must learn and act in accordance with Hồ Chí Minh style and mettle: to show independence, staunchness, creativity and practicality; to firmly stick to realities of the country and the new developments of the general situation. We believe that the revolutionary nature and intelligence of Vietnam will record new achievements of higher value in this important field.

The 20th century a glorious century of the Vietnamese nation and the Vietnam revolution. Hồ Chí Minh appeared, found the path to national salvation; the Communist Party of Vietnam came into being to lead the people in a victorious fight against aggressors, completed the cause of national liberation and reunification of the motherland. The banner of national independence and socialism is raised aloft. Labouring mankind show love for and confidence in Vietnam and remain hopeful about it. The Party school and each cadre and Party member are parts of the Party's body. They have grown up with the nation and the century.

...

PARTY BUILDING AND RECTIFICATION FOR FURTHER RENOVATION

*(Closing speech at the 8th Plenum of the 8th Party
Central Committee, November 11, 1999)*

...

The Plenum has concentrated the discussion on the assessment of the implementation of the 1999 plan, defined the targets, tasks and major solutions to carry out the socio-economic plan for the year 2000; it discussed and expressed views on the orientation for the preparations of the documents to be submitted to the 9th Party Congress; it heard an initial report on the self-criticism and criticism drive in the spirit of the Resolution of the 6th Central Committee Plenum (2nd Session); it considered the disciplining with regard to a number of cadres directly under the management of the Central Committee.

On the basis of the analysis of the socio-economic situation of the country and the forecast of the possible effects of the economic-financial crisis in Asia, the 6th plenum (1st Session) of the 8th Central Committee (October 1998) defined the orientation, targets and overall socio-economic tasks in 1999 and 2000.

Thanks to the persevering and resolute efforts of the Party, people and army, we recorded positive results in 1999; the socio-

economic situation was kept stable; GDP achieved a growth rate of about 5% at a tempo which got higher after every quarter; agricultural production got an abundant crop; export tempo grew beyond expectation; some important macro-balances were improved; new advances were made in a number of social fields, such as the universalization of education and eradication of illiteracy, family planning, hunger eradication and poverty reduction.

However, the Vietnamese economy had not overcome its inherent weaknesses (imbalanced structure, low labour productivity and efficiency, weak competitiveness...); moreover, it has experienced the effects of the economic-financial crisis in Asia which has not been stabilized, despite some signs of economic recovery.

Consequently, our economy was confronted with new difficulties in 1999, coupled with the difficulties of the previous period: price decrease for eight consecutive months; difficulties in the marketing of the materials and commodities accumulated in storehouses; the credit funds mobilized from the people are accumulated in banks; unchecked smuggling, serious development of some social evils (drug addiction, prostitution, superstitions...), slow change in the implementation of the policies laid down in the 6th Resolution of the Central Committee on administrative reform; bureaucracy remains a common occurrence at all echelons and branches.

We are *entering the year 2000* in the context of existence of both favorable conditions and difficulties, both subjective and objective in and outside the country. It should be noted that natural calamities may cause unforeseeable turbulence.

To carry out to the highest extent the objectives and tasks of the five-year plan (1996-2000), the 10-year strategy of socio-

economic development (1991-2000) and to prepare conditions for the first years of the 21st century, it is necessary to strive to achieve at any cost the overall objectives of the year 2000: to stop the decline in the growth rate, to endeavour to achieve a growth rate higher than in 1999; to bring about new increases in the effectiveness of production and business; to raise the competitiveness of the economy; to attend to the fostering of the human forces, to resolve the social problems, to increase the people's incomes and living standard.

This objective requires a continued grasping of the development of the situation in the country, especially in localities and at the grassroot echelon for the purpose of taking sound actions, to raise the sense of responsibility and the organizational capability of various echelons and branches, in order to bring into life the lines and policies of the Party and the State, to create a new motive force for development, to create an enthusiastic and dynamic ambiance in all economic sectors, organizations and among individuals so as to bring into full play all resources, to help the country overcome difficulties for the sake of continued development.

In this spirit, after this Conference and after the 6th session of the National Assembly, it is necessary to unfold measures to deal correctly with the difficulties, which are arising in the economy, especially the price decline, the stagnation of goods and funds.

In this connection, I would like to stress an important urgent task in the 2000 plan, namely to overcome *the aftermaths of the recent floods*. The situation, which is already difficult, will be even more difficult.

There must be a correct assessment of these aftermaths, a comprehensive plan must be worked out at an early date to mobilize the forces of the central echelon in combination with

those on the spot, to resolve urgent requirements, quickly to stabilize the people's life, restore production, communications, schooling; ensure medical care and attend to spiritual life.

At the same time, long-term plans are to be worked out to enable the Central Vietnamese provinces recently devastated by floods to carry out this five-year plan. Timely actions are to be taken on a national scale to prevent economic troubles and price fluctuation, especially during the last months of the year, and on the occasion of the traditional Tết (lunar New Year) holiday.

...

For the Vietnamese nation, the 20th century is a century of struggle for national independence and advancement to socialism and the 21st century will be a century of firmly defending national independence and sovereignty, building, consolidating and perfecting socialism.

Through the practice of 70 years, the 9th Party Congress will assert the soundness of the Platform laid down since the founding of the Party and of the 1991 Platform; it will continue to concretize, supplement and perfect the Platform on national construction in the period of transition to socialism and we are determined to implement this Platform. *That is the thought of the 9th Congress.*

The study, concretization, amendment and development of the line expounded in the Political Report and other documents prepared for submission to the 9th Congress are designed to ensure the effective implementation of the Platform of the Party. After this Plenum, the Political Bureau will base itself on the views of the Central Committee to direct the sub-commissions responsible for the preparation of the documents to be submitted to the 9th Congress to finalize the drafts, organize the recapitulation of a number of required issues for the Central Committee

to discuss in order to ensure that the preparation of the documents will bring into play the intellect of the whole Party and secure the most effective contributions of the people.

The continued deployment of *the drive for Party building and rectification, self-criticism and criticism*, is an issue about which the whole Party and people are very much concerned. To meet the expectation, I propose you to carry out the following:

To strive to complete in the main, before February 3, 2000, the self-criticism and criticism drive in provinces and centrally-governed cities and bodies.

Those places, which have completed the self-criticism and criticism drive need to consider whether there are pending issues to be object of definite conclusions.

The problem now is to raise quality. The Party committees which carry out this work subsequently must do better than the preceding ones. To this end, it is necessary to *raise the Party character, the fighting spirit, self-consciousness in self-criticism and criticism*.

The member of the Central Committee and the secretaries of the Party Committee under its direct management are the executives who bear the main responsibility in the implementation of the Resolution on Party building and rectification. It is only with your self-consciousness and courage that the self-criticism and criticism drive at the level of provinces, and centrally-governed cities and bodies can achieve high quality results.

It is necessary to heed the suggestions of the higher and lower instances, mass organizations and the people, to give one another serious, frank and science remarks.

Democratic discussions must be ensured to make a clear distinction between the right and the wrong and reach clearcut conclusions on the issues raised.

To encourage one another to promote good points, to correct shortcomings, and organize in unity the successful fulfillment of the tasks set for the year 2000.

During the last two days of the Plenum, the Central Committee considered the sanctions to be taken against a number of comrades under its direct authority in the carrying out of State management; the discussions took place in a serious, clearcut and fair manner. This action of the Central Committee is aimed at consolidating the revolutionary nature, discipline and principles of the Party and the State apparatus, highlighting the responsibility of the leaders in State management and in the building of the staff under their authority.

In the time to come, the Political Bureau will continue to consider the pending issues. It will resolve those which are within its competence and report its decision to the Central Committee. Those which are under the jurisdiction of the Central Committee will be submitted to it in subsequent plenums.

...

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF VIETNAM – A PATH OF 70 YEARS

*(Speech at the celebration of the 70th anniversary
of the founding of the Communist Party of Vietnam,
February 2, 2000)*

....

This grand meeting is attended by many generations of Vietnamese patriots and Party members from 1930-1931 generation with 70 years of Party membership and nearly 100 years of age, to that of Party members who are building and defending the Motherland. They have joined forces to fight for three quarters of the century. Let us review together the distance our nation has covered, ponder over the forthcoming one, make clear the age-old aspiration, the selected path and the future that our nation is resolved to attain for the survival of the Motherland and the eternal happiness of our offspring.

In 1858, French troops attacked Đà Nẵng, opening their invasion of our country. Đà Nẵng riposted and won the first battle. It was followed by Nam Kỳ (Conchinchina), Huế, Hanoi. Heroes and personalities such as Trương Công Định¹, Nguyễn Trung Trực², Hoàng Diệu³, Nguyễn Tri Phương⁴ joined the people

1. 2. 3. 4: Patriotic personalities, who opposed the French colonialists at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

everywhere in a heroic fight against the enemy for 26 years. However, six provinces of Nam Kỳ were lost, the Huế Court signed in 1884 a capitulation treaty.

Not reconciling themselves to a loss of independence and to becoming enslaved, Phan Đình Phùng¹, Hoàng Hoa Thám², Nơ Trang Long³, Cầm Bá Thước⁴, Phan Bội Châu⁵, Phan Chu Trinh⁶, Nguyễn Thái Học⁷, Phạm Hồng Thái⁸, etc., stood up fearless of shackles and sacrifices. But all of them were defeated, the fight for national salvation was plunged into a crisis. The colonialists and the puppet mandarins restored to the most brutal ruling methods. They put forth the deceptive claim that "the Metropolis would bring in the light of civilization". But as a matter of fact, they plundered raw materials, opened sea harbours to link the colony-exploiting economy to the exploiting economy in the Metropolis.

They cut off dykes, shut aquaducts in 1916, creating an immense sea of water flooding a whole area for six months, compelling desperate peasants to serve as coolies to avoid starvation. Due to the loss of independence, lands, ricefields, crop failure, the rural areas were plunged into destitution. The Vietnamese peasants had to groan in poverty and misery. But the plight could not make our peasants subject to slavery. Instead, it sparked their hatred for the invaders and the traitors.

The programme of colonial exploitation in Vietnam undertaken by French colonialists at the end of the 19th century was stepped up after World War I in order to tighten their rule and to "fatten" permanently the colonial regime. In fact, it created a stratum of new slaves, the Vietnamese working class, the hired labourers who became conscious through struggle and were ready to undertake their historic mission.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8: Patriotic personalities, who opposed the French colonialists at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

Two kith-and-kin brothers-workers and peasants-joined youths, students, civil servants, patriotic intellectuals, medium and small property owners unable to bear the shame of slavery, to bear the double yoke of oppression. They united and became the diggers of graves for colonialism.

The trade between the colony and the Metropolis brought to Vietnam sailors from France and other countries, books, newspapers, leaflets and also conscious men who served as seeds. French sailors organized struggles against the shipowners. The Saigon people organized “*Communist rice soup meals*” to entertain the former. A ship transporting French soldiers about to leave harbour for Kwangchou, which was then seething with revolutionary spirit in the Kwangchou commune, was stopped by Ba Son¹ workers.

The Moroccan and Syrian people started a struggle when Saigon harbour and barracks resounded with slogans opposing the dispatch of Annamese soldiers to those countries for repressive operations. Among those labourers, trade unions were set up by Tôn Đức Thắng², the heroic worker, who raised the anti-war flag in defence of the Russian October Revolution on board a ship of the Black Sea Fleet when he was a sailor of that fleet.

Before these events, 21-year-old Nguyễn Tất Thành (alias Nguyễn Ái Quốc) left the country with his ardent and sensitive patriotism, with the initial asset of knowledge and plain hands, in search of a path to national salvation.

Through his observations of several hundred uprisings in our country since the loss of independence, the comparisons he made between various revolutions in the world, his study of the

1. A seagoing ship building and repairing yard in former Saigon harbour, now Hồ Chí Minh City.

2. Subsequently, Tôn Đức Thắng became President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

October 1917 Revolution, Lenin's *Thesis* on nations and colonies, he found this path in Marxism-Leninism.

He wrote: *There is no other path to national salvation than the path of proletarian revolution. Only socialism and communism can liberate oppressed nations and labourers of the world from slavery.* His choice was the choice of the Vietnamese working class and people, the choice of the epoch.

He wrote: Attaching importance only to the struggle in the Metropolis equals killing a snake from its tail. The venom and vitality of the capitalist snake are now concentrated in the colonies rather than in the Metropolis. While many people thought that the revolution in colonies must be subordinated to the revolution in the Metropolis, he pointed out that the revolution in colonies could win victory before the revolution in the Metropolis and create conditions for the development of the latter. We must liberate ourselves with our own force. He carried out preparations in the political, organizational and cadres fields; he established a close link between the world revolution and the Vietnamese revolution. And he came home at the right moment.

There must be a revolutionary Party if the country is to be saved, and the revolution to be accomplished. The Vietnamese Communist groups rallied together under his aegis, worked out an abridged Platform and Tactics, then came to the 1930 Platform which chartered a correct line for the Vietnamese revolution. The various Communist groups helped one another to overcome the limitations in their conception, agreed to unite and merge. The Communist Party of Vietnam came into being to meet the requirements of history and the people of the Motherland and the epoch. That was a combination of Marxism-Leninism with the working class and patriotic movement in Vietnam. This law determined the working class nature of our Party, a child of the labouring people. Our Party was thus right

from the start a genuine revolutionary party working for the people and the country. This law was the source of a harmonious combination between revolution and science, the nation and the class, the nation and the epoch, genuine patriotism and pure internationalism, the immediate and the long-term tasks in each stage of the revolution, the line of national independence and socialism, a consistent line from the birth of the Party to the completion of the final objective. That was the apex of intelligence, the invincible banner of our Party, of our nation and of the epoch. That is the reason why the birth of the Communist Party of Vietnam marked a decisive historic turning point of our country on the path to the liberation of the nation and the people and the building of a life in welfare, freedom and happiness.

Thanks to the banner of national independence and socialism, which conforms to the people's minds and hearts, the Party managed to develop all over the country, to build up at an early date the basic force made up of workers, peasants and intellectuals, to unite various social strata in a national united front, to give shape to mass organizations and the political force, to build the armed forces, which are protected by the people and which can defeat any enemy.

Just after its founding, the Party created the surge of the Nghệ Tĩnh Soviets¹, a very glorious movement. When it was 15 years old, with only 5,000 members, it led the people in an armed uprising to seize power in the whole country, and established the first people's democratic state in Southeast Asia. It led the Vietnamese people in two protracted wars, which lasted 30 years; defeated the aggressors and carried out the lofty interna-

1. A revolutionary surge (1930-31) led by the Communist Party of Vietnam and directed against the French colonialists and Vietnamese feudalists; it seized power for workers and peasants; it remained in existence for eight months in Nghệ An and Hà Tĩnh provinces.

tional duty, broke the yoke of slavery, liberated the country, achieved national reunification and brought the whole country into the period of transition to socialism.

The work of those 45 years in a great revolution which helped bring about the disintegration of the colonial system, the bankruptcy of colonialism and neo-colonialism, and pushed the world movement for national independence, peace, democracy and social progress.

After the historic victory of Spring 1975, our people continued to highlight patriotism and revolutionary heroism, undertook economic restoration and the endeavour to overcome the heavy aftermaths of the war of aggression. They carried out a timely recapitulation to draw lessons in the application of the law of socialist construction. At that time, several socialist countries went through a serious crisis; in a number of countries, the Communist and Workers' Parties lost their leading role...; the hostile forces availed themselves of these mistakes and difficulties to stage resolute counterattacks to do away with the remaining socialist countries. At the 6th Congress, our Party carried out self-criticism and mapped out the renovation line. This was an important historic landmark in the revolutionary cause of our Party. The renovation drive over the past 15 years has recorded very important initial achievements which opened the way for our country to pass through the big whirlwind in which several socialist countries collapsed. This success asserted the soundness of the path followed by us. Difficulties and challenges did not cause us to vacillate and to deviate from the path to socialism that our Party, Uncle Hồ and our people had opted for.

An important lesson in our Party's leadership is its staunchness, its resolve to stick to practice and its creativeness in working out a correct political line. At the same time, the Party attaches great importance to building and rectifying the organi-

zation, training and tempering the cadres, carrying out self-criticism and criticism, and imparting the ideal. The life-or-death struggle between the people and hostile forces develops in a very quick and complex way; it requires that the Party's leadership must be sharp, timely and capable of resolving situations that arise, especially at the turning points which are all-round and violent trials of the staunchness of the Party: whether or not to maintain confidence or to show vacillation. In those conditions, the Party can get a clearer view of itself, realize its good points, its shortcomings, weaknesses and the pending issues. The Party has no conceit with its achievements nor does it try to hide its shortcomings, it has the courage to overcome its weaknesses, which is regarded as an indication of its ability to recognize and deal with serious diseases threatening its life.

Without the sincere and strict criticism and self-criticism during the unification conference of the Communist groups in 1930, without the active organizational consolidation endeavours following the failure of the Soviet Nghệ Tĩnh surge and the Nam Kỳ insurrection, without the self-criticism carried out when it decided to shift the orientation of the 1936-1939 democratic movement, without the study campaigns to raise the class and national consciousness in the anti-French and anti-American resistance, it would have been difficult for our Party to win great successes in strategic turning points, which were at times very critical.

Prisons were turned into schools, self-criticism and criticism were undertaken right in colonialist jails, which were turned into training places for several generations of faithful and staunch Party members. Hundreds of Party cells had to be constituted and re-constituted for dozens of times; fallen Party members were replaced by new ones; Party cell secretaries who laid down their lives were replaced by new ones.

The development of the revolution requires a growth of the Party in all regards – political, ideological, organizational, intellectual, capability, moral quality so as not to lag behind the situation. Thus, the 70 years of activity of the Party were also 70 years of Party building and rectification. Party building and rectification is a work of vital significance for the revolutionary cause, the existence and development of our Party. It is always regarded as a fundamental, permanent, crucial and urgent one.

With his epochal outlook, Nguyễn Ái Quốc correctly predicted the trend of World War II. Under his guidance, our Party undertook at an early date the preparations of forces; it had a sound perception of the relationship between forces and opportunities. When the opportunity arose in August 1945, *we must win independence at any cost, even if we would have to burn down the Trường Sơn range*. When we had made concessions to the last limit, but the enemy wanted to go ahead and provoke a war of aggression, *we would rather sacrifice everything than to lose independence and be enslaved*; we took the initiative to start an all-round and protracted people's war.

In the complex international context of the 50's and 60's, our Party made a wonderful choice: *to maintain peace while pushing up the revolution*, to carry out both the revolution for the liberation of the South and the socialist revolution in the North. This choice led our revolution to total victory on 30th April 1975. When all conditions had been met to win independence and complete unity, we firmly grasped the objective and correctly observed the principle. In particular, when the Soviet Union and the East European socialist countries disintegrated, our Party and people staunchly stuck to the selected path: *national independence and socialism*, laid down in the 1991 Platform¹.

1. Platform adopted at the 7th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

At present, our nation is being confronted with a strategic turning point of paramount importance. Accordingly, the people require that the Party building and rectification drive yields good results to enable the Party to assume the historic mission for the people and the country as laid down in the 1930 Platform¹ and the 1991 Platform... After the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the East European socialist countries, imperialism sought every means to completely do away with the remaining socialist countries, and to launch attack on the movement for independence, democracy and social progress. What are its schemes to achieve this ambitious target when it is facing the disintegration of the colonialist system and the bankruptcy of colonialism, old and new, which once sustained it?

As we know, during the period of capitalism – imperialism, science and technology achieved a high development. And capitalism-imperialism fully taps the advantages of science and technology to carry out exploitation, receive tremendous profits, enriched itself quickly, and broadens the world market to every place under its influence. Meanwhile, the newly-independent countries, having gone through long nights of slavery, are just late comers, poor and backward ones, need capital funds which are bigger than their total property. They need science, high-technology, management experience, intelligentsia and qualified workers, which were not available under the rule of imperialism. Between developed and developing countries, the economic gap can be measured with exact figures. For this reason, they need to make use of the new factors and the new tricks of their opponents, although they know that these opponents are not good and do not treat them on an equal footing.

1. First Platform of the Communist Party of Vietnam, adopted at the 1st Congress.

The old target of imperialism has remained unchanged. But in the new conditions, it cannot proceed in the 19th century pattern, but has to make adjustments and seek new perfidious tricks to survive and to develop.

In the forthcoming century, science and technology will develop by leaps and bounds, which cannot be as yet forecast. Each advance of science-technology will bring about for man a new life in welfare and civilization. But mankind is also filled with worries, and is preparing politically for itself when it reconsiders the past experiences. Since classes came into being in history, each step to civilization was accompanied with a step to war and crisis. In the history marked with the existence of classes, the more developed science-technology, the greater the scale and intensity of wars, the more frequent and acute economic crises

It was so in the 19th century. It is so, too, in the 20th century. Wars and economic crises do not take their origin in the nature of man; misery, ignorance, backwardness, racial discrimination are not crimes caused by man and nations. Instead, their deep and long-standing cause lies in class oppression and national oppression. When imperialism sets out to seek markets and push up the liberation of trade, services, global investment, the rich countries get richer, the gap between rich and poor countries, rich and poor people becomes greater, too.

Nobody denies the importance of the new factors brought about by science-technology, the new production forces; but at the same time, many politicians, scientists, heads of state have the following observation: *While the world production of basic food can stand at 110% in comparison with the need, every year 30 million people continue to die of famine and over 800 million people suffer from food shortage. Among the 6 billion people of the globe, only 500 million people live in welfare, while 5.5 billion are suffering from privations.*

The world does not yet enjoy tranquillity. Local wars, armed conflicts and economic crises continue to happen in one place or another. Will peace last long? Mankind is still wondering about the new developments after Kosovo.

This is precisely the reason why national independence, sovereignty, national integrity, peace, equal development, and mutually beneficial cooperation remain a burning aspiration of all nations, states, especially underdeveloped, developing, and even some developed countries.

However, the big powers continue to need a framework of mutual stability; the United States is adjusting its tactics in order to carry out its design of globalization with new forms and new contents. Other developed countries are seeking to increase their competitive strength to foil the design of achieving a unipolar world and to achieve a multi-polar world. The remaining socialist countries are readjusting their tactics to remain in existence and to develop. Underdeveloped and developing countries need time for construction. The pressing aspiration of the world peoples is peace. Hence, while the national and class struggle is taking place fiercely, the general situation on the macro-scale is detente with both cooperation and struggle for development. The main form on a world-wide scale is the economic, political, cultural, and ideological struggle.

But in each region and each country, the struggle among the different forces is carried out in comprehensive, very complex forms. Depending on circumstances and places, the main form may be armed conflicts or economic and political struggles.

Without a sound analysis, this general form may lead to misconceptions which consist in regarding detente as the nature of things, absolutizing competition and economic cooperation, stressing the scientific-technological revolution without seeing the social revolution.

However, if we do not realize the new features in comparison with the past situation in the world, we will have no appropriate strategy and tactics, we will not know to concentrate on economic construction to overcome poverty and backwardness in order to secure enough all-round strength while raising aloft vigilance and standing ready to successfully cope with complex situations.

We are carrying on the renovation, industrialization and modernization along the socialist path in such a context.

The 20th century was a century of very glorious struggles and victories of our nation. Our Party has carried out in part its historic mission. This success eloquently asserts the soundness of the 1930 Platform, the 1991 Platform, and the line of national independence and socialism.

The 21st century is one of firm defence of our Motherland, successful construction of socialism, and continued implementation of the 1930 and 1991 Platforms. After achieving national liberation, we should march forward to the social revolution and the liberation of man. In order to carry on this century-old historic mission, we persevere with the selected path, firmly grasp Marxism-Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh Thought, closely stick to the realities of the country, creatively renovate, amend, develop and perfect our line and render it concrete in each step until the final target is achieved. Our orientation is socialism. To unceasingly foster the socialist elements in the process of development is our prime concern. We concentrate efforts on construction and regard economic construction as the central task. We strive so that in the year 2020, our beloved Vietnamese Motherland will get out of poverty and backwardness and become a basically industrial country.

Industrialization and modernization mean in the first place industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural

areas. With a highly-developed economy based on modern production forces and public ownership of the main materials of production, it is necessary to bring into play all resources, all economic sectors, the State economy, cooperative economy, household economy, farm economy, private economy, joint ventures with foreign countries. Among them the State economy plays the leading role, and together with the cooperative economy it constitutes the foundation; these factors are combined into a single entity, support and stimulate each other, make the released production forces constantly dynamic and ensure a strong, balanced and sustainable growth of the economy.

The stand of our Party emphasizing leading role of the State economy and concentrating efforts on its consolidation is completely correct. The State economy should be made an associating centre to push up the development of all economic sectors, to maintain stability in complex situations, to consolidate step by step the market economy operating under State management in the socialist orientation.

Eradication of hunger and reduction of poverty are a lofty socialist work. It promotes the tradition of benevolence and mutual support; it stimulates equal progress all over the country. Our forefathers have left us the great Red River civilization with thousands of kilometres of dykes. Following their example, we perseveringly build up and complete the system of water conservancy works against floods and droughts, especially in Central Vietnam and in the Cửu Long (Mekong) delta, to enable the Vietnamese to live and work peacefully in areas with harsh natural conditions. To ensure sustainable happiness for generations, we should exploit and preserve the seas and islands, promote entirely the potentialities of the rice-fields, hills and forests, care for the forests, at the same time, ensure an all-round protection of the living environment.

It is necessary to actively promote the internal forces while making continued efforts to multilateralize and diversify our economic cooperation and trade with all countries to push up the growth of the external economy, to take the initiative in penetrating the world market, to absorb capital funds, modern science-technology, to learn the management experience of other countries.

We understand that the market with a fierce competition is like a battlefield, and in this sense, economics is also a front on which we are facing opponents having developed economies and greater forces than ours. This requires comprehension from all citizens, all enterprises to join the State in mustering intellectual efforts and promoting the overall strength of the country to win victory on this front. We wish that the fighters on the economic front, which is now the central one, will bring into play their patriotism and eager desire to see the people rich, the country prosperous, all households happy, that they actively and perseveringly study and raise their knowledge so as to turn out many new high-quality products, to carry out work effectively, to win success in each deal, for each item, at each moment and that they complete successfully, and preserve independence and sovereignty. Let's remove prejudices, irrationalities that hinder the development of production and business. The State encourages everybody, every household, every economic organization, every enterprise, every initiative. Every new element thinking and acting boldly must not be hindered. Let those who have talent, intelligence and capital funds engage in competition and boldly strive to get rich with lawful means, to bring about interests for themselves and make practical contributions to society.

The close combination between economy, society, science, education and culture is designed to secure mutual complementary action and common development. The central issue is that

of man, the cultivation of man. The nurturing of revolutionary generations for the present time and for future is a pressing requirement for the promotion of the intellectual resources and the creative forces of the Vietnamese man, especially the younger generation. Special measures are to be taken to detect and put to use talented people; all talents and creations must be utilized and promoted. Our Party, State and people always regard education-training, and the development of science-technology as a national policy of prime importance. We must make persevering and serious efforts to secure effective implementation of this national policy. Our country has an age-old civilization. The promotion and defence of a culture imbued with national identity and unceasing absorption of the quintessence of mankind's culture constitute a standing task. Our country requires the elaboration of moving literary and artistic works, which clearly mark the past and present epic stages. Through them, the Vietnamese generations look at themselves, become aware of the need to live a lofty life, worthy of the new cause of the nation. Nothing in the future can replace these works, just like nothing can replace the Bronze Drum¹, the *Bình Ngô Đại Cáo*² and the *Tale of Kiều*³, when we speak of the age-old culture of the country.

To resolutely oppose all outward-looking trends that would lead to the loss of the national identity is precisely to defend and build the Motherland, to defend and promote the Vietnamese man, the Vietnamese mettle and personality.

The industrialization and modernization of the country in order to build socialism successfully and firmly defend the

1. A cultural Vietnamese vestige.

2. Vietnam's Second Declaration of Independence publicized after the victory over the Ming aggressors.

3. An immortal cultural work in poetry written by Nguyễn Du, a cultural celebrity of world significance.

Motherland is a great cause, a cause of the whole people, the cause of the great unity of the entire people, of the 54 fraternal nationalities in the whole country. From the epoch of the Hùng Kings to the Hồ Chí Minh epoch, the most valuable feature of the great national united bloc is its "radiating across the country while converging into a single-link, based on a single foundation and rotating around a single axis". Any Vietnamese is a patriot and a descendant of the Lạc-Hồng. Twenty-five years have elapsed since 30 April, 1975, a new generation has come into life. The Communist Party of Vietnam, with its historic responsibility, pledges itself to unite with all Vietnamese, irrespective of social background, state of welfare, religious belief, ethnic groups, former origin, residence at home or abroad, provided they are animated with patriotism and a desire to bring into play these feelings to work together for national construction, for the building of a wealthy nation, a prosperous country, a fair and civilized society, an eternal motherland, and families united in peace. Our Party highly appreciates the role of the Vietnam Fatherland Front. The great national unity is an eternal one; it is increasingly broadened and tightened.

In the final analysis, we have fought during three quarters of the century to smash the rule of imperialists and feudalists, to win power for the people and maintain this power, to achieve the people's mastership; we obey the people's order to attend to them and to manage the country. All big and small policies, down to the daily routine work must absolutely be in the people's interests and proceed from their aspirations and life requirements. Cadres and Party members are not bureaucrats standing arrogantly above the people's heads; they must be the people's servants. In the past, patriotism meant to live to fight the enemy, to be ready to make sacrifices when required by the Motherland. Today it means to be occupied night and day with

the concern for the people and to find genuine happiness in this fine sentiment.

Certainly, administrative cadres must be good at administrative management; they must know to carry out agitation work among the people, keep close to them and attentively listen to them; control and adjust policies on the basis of practice. Citizens come to the administration but not to mandarins; they come to a reliable place to be defended by the law, to have their interests attended to, to carry out their obligations, to be listened to attentively, to have their legitimate requests dealt with expeditiously. To receive bribes is a crime. Only if the spirit of being "revolutionary mandarins", showing arrogance, readiness to waste public wealth is washed off, can the people be respected and all powers and forces lie in them. For this reason, Party building and rectifying are aimed at building and rectifying the State machinery to make it transparent and strong, capable of fulfilling increasingly important tasks in the new period.

We must promote at any cost a democratic life from village, commune, and street to the nation-wide echelon; correctly implement the democratic rules at the grassroots level, so that the people can know, speak, discuss, control, supervise, select and dismiss the representatives elected by them. The population of a commune or urban quarter are to discuss the affairs of the commune or quarter; the people of the whole country are to discuss the affairs of the country. By doing so, we can make the atmosphere completely different; and the State apparatus will be dynamic. Within the Party, broad democracy is to be achieved. Only when there is democracy in the Party will there be democracy in society.

As the State has laws, the entire Party, people and army must live in accordance with the laws. The laws of the country must be strictly observed, if society is to be governed by discipline.

The position of the country will be solid only if its laws are correctly applied. The people's happy life requires that the people's security forces defend in all initiative the tranquillity of society and preserve its political stability and social security. The judiciary branch, which is entrusted by the people with the heavy responsibility of ensuring of law enforcement must be fair and judge cases in conformity with the law, so as not to allow the guilty to evade punishment or to issue wrong sentences; and concentrate its efforts on dealing appropriately with complaints and denunciations.

The Vietnamese nation is a peace-loving one; it wants to extinguish forever the flames of war. We have solemnly stated to the world: *Vietnam wants to befriend all other nations and states for the sake of peace, independence and development.*

It does not matter whether a river is long or short, and a mountain high or low, provided it has a name. With this plain reasoning, we respect and like any nations big or small, rich or poor, strong or weak. There is no superior and no inferior nation. All the nations, who have vanquished nature or aggressors and have remained in existence up to now are great. We respect the choice of all nations, the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states; we do not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. Each country has its own regime, its own way of social construction according to its own features and mode. Therefore, various countries co-exist in peace. All current international problems can be resolved through negotiations. A genuine nation is the synonym of an independent and sovereign nation. For this reason, we demand respect for our independence, territorial integrity, the socialist regime and the line of independence and sovereignty that we have selected.

The 19th century has gone far into the past. The 20th century is about to pass. We do not accept inequality among nations, nor

do we accept political hegemony, the existence of a single super-power. The world community must be a democratic community; all states have equal rights and equal obligations. We oppose the imposition of the values of one nation upon another; we oppose wars of aggression; we want to remove war and its cause from human life.

We share the joy and concern of the underdeveloped and developing countries which suffer the same fate of slavery as we did in the past, and which are struggling against intervention and imposition.

Faithful to its friends, Vietnam will never forget the services rendered by the Communist and workers' parties, the international working class, the once oppressed and exploited nations, peace-loving mankind, the world peace movement, the non-aligned movement, the personalities, intellectuals, the activists for peace and democracy, the great persons such as Lawyer Loseby and his wife, Raymonde Dien, Henri Martin, Morrison, etc., who once encouraged and assisted Vietnam to stand up and win victory. This broad solidarity was and will be forever our strength.

The Vietnamese working class and Motherland have given birth to the Communist Party of Vietnam; the people nurtured and protected the Party in critical situations. Words do not suffice to express our gratitude for this service. Through 70 years of fighting, the Party has led the Vietnamese revolution from one victory to another. Yet, it had mistakes and shortcomings, too. Thanks to the people and for the people, the Party has corrected its mistakes and shortcomings. It expresses to the people its sincere excuses. But no excuse is more serious than the efforts to clearly realize the shortcomings, to carry out sincere and frank self-criticism and criticism, and to make resolute efforts to correct the shortcomings, to promote the revo-

lutionary nature, to make the Party truly pure, strong and worthy for ever of being the vanguard of the working class, to fulfill its responsibility to the nation in the forthcoming century.

The Central Committee of the Party makes this promise to the people and the Motherland, and requests all Party organizations and members to do the same.

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HỒ CHÍ MINH THOUGHT AND THE PATH OF THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

*(Speech at the celebration of the 110th birthday
anniversary of President Hồ Chí Minh, May 18, 2000)*

...

Uncle Hồ was born into a poor but honest Confucian scholar's family, in a multiethnic country which had early become a unified nation-state. In the millenary process of nation building and defense, our people have created and developed a brilliant national culture, the core of which is *Vietnamese patriotism*, staunch struggle, kindness, tolerance, community sense, and national cohesion for mastering nature and society. It is precisely Vietnamese culture with the positive influence from Oriental culture that has shaped up Hồ Chí Minh's personality and greatly contributed to the formation and development of his thought.

In the middle of the 19th century, the French colonialists invaded our country. Although anti-French patriotic movements continuously took place, and despite the fact that when a combatant fell, another behind him immediately stood up, ready "to move mountains and to fill up seas with an iron will, and to wash away the shame of slavery"¹, all of these insurrections

1. Phan Bội Châu's statement. Phan Bội Châu was a Vietnamese patriot who launched the "Going to the East" movement in early 20th century to send Vietnamese youths to Japan for study, who would return to Vietnam to engage themselves in the struggle against French colonialists. Phan Bội Châu was later put under house detention in Huế by the French.

ended in “hundreds of failures and not a single success”. The reasons are multiple but in final analysis, the main reason is that there was not a correct policy.

Witnessing the painful failures of his elder patriots and the harsh living of the people under the cruel colonial yoke, the outstanding young Vietnamese Nguyễn Tất Thành left the country to seek a way for national salvation. Initially, he set out only with deep patriotism, great pity for the people, and earnest aspiration for independence and freedom. He chose a way different from that of his predecessor revolutionaries. He set foot in the most civilized centers and also on the poorest and the most unfortunate places of the world. He first came to France, a world center of civilization and the country that was dominating his nation.

During his long years of peregrination, he came to many countries, came in contact with many strata of people of various ethnic groups. When living in developed capitalist countries in Europe and North America, he saw the harsh oppression and overexploitation of the working class. In Asian, African, Latin American countries, he saw with his own eyes many nations living under the extremely cruel and savage ruling of the colonialists. He clearly realized the indomitable struggle of the working class, the inflexible spirit of the oppressed peoples and the poor laborers everywhere, including the working people in France. Recognizing the common enemy, he came to an important conclusion: “Although the skin color is different, *in this world there are only two races: the exploiter and the exploited. There is only a genuine good friendship: the proletarian friendship.*”¹ From patriotism and pity for the people to the differentiation of “the two races” in society, Nguyễn Ái Quốc had undergone a profound ideological change and developed a class conscience, causing him to go in a very

1. Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995. Vol. 1, p. 266.

natural way, like a historical necessity, to Leninism, to Marxism-Leninism, the peak of human intelligence. Enlightened by Marxism-Leninism, Nguyễn Ái Quốc “grew up at once to the level of his mission as a maker of history.”¹

His activity in the communist movement, the worker and the national liberation movement, the continuous study of Marxism-Leninism, the experiences of the communist Parties and the Soviet Union, the cradle of the October Revolution, helped him accumulate rich knowledge and practical experience. He gradually mapped out his path for national salvation and affirmed: “*For national salvation and liberation, there is no other way than the proletarian revolution.*”²

In the spring of 1930, under the instruction of the Communist International, he chaired the Conference unifying the three communist organizations in Indochina, founded the Communist Party of Vietnam. The documents of the Party-founding Conference were prepared by him, such as the *Communist Party of Vietnam's Platform in Brief, Policy and Tactics in Brief, Program in Brief, and Statutes in Brief*, which are models of the creative application of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine and the line of the Communist International to the concrete conditions of our country. They became the first political platform of our Party, i.e. “*to carry out a bourgeois democratic revolution and an agrarian revolution to eventually establish a communist society.*”³ This line associates national independence with socialism, patriotism with genuine internationalism, the Vietnamese revolution with the proletarian revolutionary move-

1. Phạm Văn Đồng. *Hồ Chí Minh – A Man, a Nation, an Age, and a Cause*. Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, 1990, p. 14.

2. Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1996. Vol. 9, p. 314.

3. Hồ Chí Minh. *Op. cit.* Vol. 3, p. 1.

ment. The revolutionary path of Vietnam, the way for national salvation had been pointed out by Hồ Chí Minh. Nguyễn Ái Quốc's correctness from the very beginning had been tested and confirmed. From then on, the Vietnamese revolution recorded one victory after another, opening a new, most brilliant phase in the history of Vietnam.

Hồ Chí Minh was a talented strategist. Grasping Marxism-Leninism, understanding the developmental trend of the era, he very early pointed out that the national liberation revolution must follow the way of the proletarian revolution and that the Vietnamese revolution was an integral part of the world revolution. From the viewpoint that imperialism is a "two-proboscis leech" he considered that the revolution in the mother country and the national liberation revolution in colonies are the "two wings of a bird", the two currents of the world revolution. Creatively applying Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of a colony, Hồ Chí Minh came to a new theoretical point: the revolution in a colony does not depend on the revolution in the mother country; it can take the initiative to rise up and "use its own strength to free itself."¹ Moreover it "can assist its brothers in the West in carrying out complete liberation."² Therefore, in a colony, the primary task is to carry out the national liberation revolution to advance to socialism. This is a great historical lesson having a principal significance: practice is the criterion of truth; revolution is creative; dogmatism and imitation will lead to failure.

Early in 1941, he returned to the country and together with the Party Central Committee, led the Vietnamese revolution. At the 8th Plenum of the Central Committee, it was decided *to shift the strategic orientation of the Vietnamese revolution, the*

1. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 3, p. 554.

2. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 1, p. 36.

*national liberation task should be carried out above all and first of all. On the basis of the correct analysis that the sharpest contradiction of our society then was the contradiction between the whole Vietnamese people and the French colonialists, the Japanese militarists, and their feudalist agents. "If the question of national liberation is not solved, if independence and freedom are not recovered for the whole people, the entire nation will not only remain enslaved, but the interests of the working class will also be unrecovered for 10,000 years more."*¹

*Hồ Chí Minh always highlighted the national motive force. He always advocated the cohesion of all national forces. In 1924, he already said: "Nationalism is a great motive force of the country."*² In his thinking, the nation is viewed from the position of the working class, harmoniously combining patriotism and genuine internationalism. That is "nationalism oriented to communism." That viewpoint is the greatest contribution of President Hồ Chí Minh to the Marxist-Leninist ideology and to the world revolution.

Under the banner of national independence and socialism, the national liberation revolution not only brought independence and unification to the country, it gradually brought freedom and happiness to the whole people. Therefore it has mobilized and put to the fullest avail the strength of the national and class motive force, won the approval and support of the international communist and worker movement, of the national liberation movement, and of all the progressive mankind to vanquish several times stronger foes. These viewpoints are the basic thoughts of Hồ Chí Minh that revolution

1. Communist Party of Vietnam: *The Party's Completed Documents*. National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2000. Vol. 7, p. 113.

2. Hồ Chí Minh. *Completed Works*. National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995. Vol. 1, p. 466.

must be based on the strength of all the people; "with the people's support, we can do everything", and on national unity, a constituent part of the general line of the Vietnamese revolution for our people's past and ever lasting national construction and defence.

With regard to the construction of socialism in the North, only after a short period, President HỒ had put forward very fundamental and profound viewpoints about the starting point, the basic immediate and long-term objectives, the social forces, the mode of implementation, the steps to be taken, and the role of science and technique... He stressed that the characteristics of the socialist revolution in our country are that we directly advance to socialism from a small production and a backward economy without passing by the phase of capitalist development. Therefore the construction of socialism will take a long time and develop gradually; it cannot be done hastily. He said in practical, concrete terms, easy to understand: "Socialism is above all aimed at freeing the working people from poverty, creating jobs for everybody, ensuring an abundant and happy life to everybody,"¹ "Independence has no meaning if the people are not happy and free,"² "Socialism consists in making the people have enough food and clothes and a happier and happier life, ensuring that everybody can go to school, receive medical care when sick, that the elderly who are no longer able to work may rest, that bad customs and habits can be gradually eliminated."³ "Socialism is aimed at bettering the material and cultural life of the people; this betterment is done by the people themselves."⁴ In a word, "Socialism is to make the people rich, the country

1. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 17.

2. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 4, p. 56.

3. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 591.

4. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 556.

strong,”¹ etc. These are the characteristics of the nature of the socialism that our Party and people are striving to achieve.

Regarding the progress to socialism, he said that above all we must develop production. “To install socialism, there is no other way than everybody making the greatest efforts in production. Production is our principal battlefield now;”² “Production must go along with thriftiness”, “Our most important task is *to build the material and technical base of socialism...* having modern industry and agriculture, advanced culture and science.”³ He also said that socialism and science would bring mankind to unbounded happiness. The socialist revolution is aimed at overcoming backwardness and poverty and building everlasting happiness for our people and descendants.”⁴ He spoke about economic sectors, about the development of the State-run economic sector as foundation, about economic management, about how to encourage the peasantry to enrich themselves, the poor to improve their living conditions, those who have improved their lots to get rich, the rich to get richer, etc.

The achievements of the construction of socialism in the North during the anti-US resistance war made it really become the great rear playing the most decisive role in winning complete victory together with the South which played the directly decisive role, liberating South Vietnam and unifying the country.

After national unification, all Vietnam now advances to socialism, on the basis of President Hồ’s fundamental and

1. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 8, p. 226.

2. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 312.

3. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 13.

4. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 292.

correct viewpoints, experience obtained during the years of socialist construction in the North, and the country's realities. Our Party has put forward the renovation policy resulting in significant achievements in the socialist construction in Vietnam.

President Hồ Chí Minh was a great organizer who laid foundations for the building of the Party, the State, the armed forces and the National United Front, for winning international support and assistance - the fundamental factors for ensuring the success of the Vietnamese revolution.

Correctly and creatively applying Lenin's principles of a new-type political Party, Hồ Chí Minh had successfully built a communist Party in a colonial country where the majority of the population are peasants. He said: to bring the revolution to success, first of all there must be a revolutionary Party which takes Marxism-Leninism as the guiding doctrine. The working class in a colonial country is small but it is the only class having the mission of leading the revolution. The coming into being of the Communist Party of Vietnam is the result of the combination of Marxism-Leninism with the workers' movement and the patriotic movement of Vietnam. That is why, from the very beginning, our Party's nature is that of the working class, the faithful representative of the working people and the whole nation. In view of the reality of the Vietnamese revolution, he paid attention to the diffusion of Marxism-Leninism and to increasing the capability and quality of Party members. As a result, though the Communist Party of Vietnam was born in a colonial country and the majority of its members are not industrial workers, the working class nature and the revolutionary vanguard role of the Party are solidly maintained. And precisely through practically leading the revolution, our Party has become

the only leader of the Vietnamese people and is considered by the whole people their Party and their only leader.

President Hồ always paid attention to the strengthening and enhancement of Party members' quality and morality. He put in the first place "the essential qualities of a revolutionary" and he himself is a shining example of revolutionary ethics. He early discovered the violation by Party members of the required quality and morality when "the Party becomes a ruling party." He severely criticized bureaucratism, commandism, corruption, wastefulness, the violation of the people's mastership rights. He gave importance to national unity. He stressed that: "Unity is a precious tradition of our Party and people. Party members, from the Central Committee to Party cells, must preserve the Party's unity and one-mindedness like the pupils of their eyes."¹ He always taught Party cadres and members to keep flesh and blood ties and close contact with the people: "Under the sky, nothing is more precious than the people; in the world, nothing is stronger than the people's solidarity."²

Whenever the revolution shifted to a new strategic phase, he always reminded us to readjust the Party and to make it up to the requirement of new tasks. In his *Testament*, he foresaw the phenomena to be remedied in the Party after the victory of the resistance war but it is regrettable that we have not fully abided by his recommendations, that we have let individualism appear and develop with worrying manifestations.

Hồ Chí Minh was the founder of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the first people's democratic state in South-East Asia, which he led for 24 years. He determined that it was a State of the people, controlled by the people, in the interests of the people, under the leadership of the Party of the working class.

1. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 12. p. 510.

2. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 8, p. 276.

According to him, our country is a democratic one, "the people are the masters;" Government officials are the people's servants, who must wholeheartedly serve the people and the country. The State must be democratic to the people and authoritarian to the opponents of the people's interests. He criticized the government officials who violated the interests of the people, "standing above the people and being revolutionary mandarins".

Hồ Chí Minh was the organizer and trainer of the people's armed forces, the people's army, a new-type army of the Vietnamese people characterized by the working class nature - Old Hồ's soldiers. That army originates from the people and fights for the people's sake; it is directly led by the Communist Party of Vietnam. Hồ Chí Minh's military thoughts constitute the core of our Party's military line and our people's policy for the solid defense of the country.

The realization of national unity and the building of the broad National United Front are great achievements recorded by President Hồ Chí Minh. He had gathered the genuine revolutionary organizations into one bloc, concentrated the strength of the entire nation, received the support of all strata of people, and built international solidarity. A great organizer Hồ Chí Minh turned the well-known motto "*Unity, unity, great unity; Success, success, great, success*"¹ into moral spirit and intelligence, into a huge force to vanquish the cruel enemy forces for national construction and defense. Unity of the Party, national and international solidarity will remain forever a great force of the Vietnamese in the national democratic revolution and in the socialist revolution.

Hồ Chí Minh laid foundations for modern Vietnamese diplomacy. He developed the peace-loving spirit of the nation: "To

1. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 607.

undertake the great cause to overcome cruelty and brutality; To take humanity to replace ruthless violence,"¹ to safeguard national independence with determination, to firmly keep principles but to apply flexible tactics according to the guiding line of "Taking the invariable to cope with ten thousand variables", to secure international approval and support for our people's revolutionary cause. Precisely it is due to this creativeness that we have been able to combine the three fronts: military, political, and diplomatic to win over the enemy.

President Hồ Chí Minh is the embodiment of Vietnamese culture and a celebrity of world culture. He inherited the cultural traditions of ancient and modern time, of the East and the West; particularly he grasped Marxism-Leninism, the peak of the humanist ideas of mankind. Thanks to this fact, cultural values, national, modern and humanist at the same time, had crystallized in him. Being a vanguard combatant in art and literature, as well as in revolutionary journalism, he fought for national independence, socialism, justice, compassion, and reason in the world. His cultural contributions are rich and diversified, impregnating all his life and work and radiating from each action, each gesture of his, each relationship of his with his comrades, his compatriots, and his foreign friends.

The kernel of Hồ Chí Minh Thought about culture is patriotism, love for people, deep compassion for and confidence in human beings; everything is in the interests of man and done by man. This is a humanist world outlook and philosophy of life, a communist humanism. He said: "*In final analysis, all questions... are related to living and to being a man. Living and being a man require love for the country, for the people, for the*

1. Nguyễn Trãi. *Proclamation of Victory over the Wu.*

suffering and oppressed mankind."¹ All his life he accepted sacrifices and struggled against oppression and injustice, for a free and happy life of the people, nation and mankind.

For him, culture is manifested in the new ethics: industriousness, thriftiness, integrity, righteousness, disinterestedness and devotion to public interests. Hồ Chí Minh was a communist ethical paragon. He gave great importance to ethics. He said: "A river takes water from streams; without streams it will dry up; A tree must have roots; Without roots, it will die. Revolutionaries must be virtuous. Without virtues, they cannot lead the people, however capable they may be. National liberation is a great task. Without virtues... a man cannot do anything."² Revolutionary ethic is an important component of Hồ Chí Minh thought and culture, an invaluable heritage for us today and for future generations.

President Hồ Chí Minh was a great man leaving a remarkable imprint on Vietnamese history and world history in the 20th century. Reviewing the formation and development of Hồ Chí Minh thought through the Vietnamese revolution, we see a whole system of comprehensive and consistent thoughts about the fundamental questions of the Vietnamese revolution: development from the national democratic revolution to socialism without passing by the phase of capitalist development; national independence associated with socialism. That is the colonial revolution for national liberation, then for social and human liberation, advancing to communism in Vietnam. That is the central concept of Hồ Chí Minh thought, the deepest theoretical thinking of his. His thought has a great value not only in the 20th century, it will also radiate in the 21st century.

1. Hồ Chí Minh. *Vietnamese State and Law*. Legal Publishing House, Hanoi, 1990, p. 174.

2. Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995. Vol. 5, pp. 252-253.

Hồ Chí Minh creatively applied and developed Marxism-Leninism in the specific conditions of the Vietnamese revolution. The 7th Congress of the Party for the first time correctly affirmed the position of Hồ Chí Minh thought in the lines and policies of the Vietnamese revolution: Marxism-Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh thought are the ideological foundation, the compass of the Party's actions. This is an accurate summing up and a new development in the theoretical thinking of our Party.

Under the banner of President Hồ Chí Minh and the Communist Party of Vietnam, our people have fulfilled the tasks of the national democratic revolution; all the country has begun the transitional period to socialism for one fourth of a century.

During the 15 years of renovation and national construction, our people have recorded important achievements. Our country has gone out of the socio-economic crisis and continued its socialist-oriented development.

The world situation is experiencing rapid and sweeping changes. The tremendous development of the modern scientific and technological revolution at present, particularly the revolution of informatics, is creating unprecedented qualitative change in the forces of production and gradually shifting mankind to a new level of civilization, the information civilization. A number of developed countries have stepped from the industrial socio-economic era into a new socio-economic era, the era of knowledge-based economy and global information society. On that basis, a globalization trend has appeared, pushing the whole planet into a hurricane controlled by a small number of developed countries and transnational economic corporations. While the lessening of tension and peaceful cooperation reflecting the aspiration of mankind are developing, the struggle between classes and ethnic groups is becoming violent and complicated. Local wars, ethnic and religious conflicts continue with the hith-

erto unseen armament race for hi-tech weapons. It is paradoxical that while material and spiritual riches are increasingly produced, the gap between rich and poor countries is widening, the danger of environmental deterioration, social evils, and mortal diseases is becoming more serious.

Our country has entered a new period. Its stance and strength have greatly changed, but for the time being it is still one of the poor countries with low labour efficiency and competitiveness, backward technology as compared with developed countries. While the advanced countries in the world have completed two industrial revolutions and are carrying out the information revolution, Vietnam is just beginning the period of industrialization.

In such conditions at home and in the world, our country is facing great opportunities and, at the same time, has to confront new serious difficulties and challenges.

To maintain the steady and correctly-oriented development of renovation, national construction and defence, to catch up with the countries having a middle-level economy, then the developed countries in the region and in the world, we should continue the thorough study of Hồ Chí Minh thought, on the basis of grasping Marxist-Leninist theory and method, to fully understand and to diffuse it more widely, and to apply it to the renovation cause in a creative way.

All our Party and people will persevere in our ideals of national independence and socialism that President Hồ has chosen. We should well grasp that nation building must go along with national defence; that these two strategic tasks must be fulfilled simultaneously. We should preserve our economic self-reliance, our cultural identities, our national independence in the integration with the region and the world. We should realize international cooperation on the basis of equality, mutual interest,

and mutual respect. Our foreign policy should be diversified and multilateralized to win the approval and support of the world movement for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress. The cooperation among countries in the Southern hemisphere, in the non-allied movement should be strengthened, thereby contributing to forming a fair and equal world order for the sake of peace, stability, and human development.

The construction of socialism to bring about a qualitative change of our society in all respects is a difficult, complicated, important, and lasting undertaking, as Uncle Hồ said. In the transitional period, the fundamental contradictions remain. We should use the Marxist-Leninist position, standpoint, and method to sum up the experiences of our Party, and to correctly analyze the characteristics of our country. Only in this way can we gradually understand the development laws of the Vietnamese revolution, to determine the lines, guiding principles, and concrete measures of the socialist revolution that are suitable to the situation of our country¹. In this spirit, we should deeply analyze the salient contradiction of our society today, that is the contradiction between the low level of the production forces and the very high requirement of modern production, of socialism, and of the ever-raising material and cultural life of the people. That is why our primary task at present is to strive to develop the production forces and abundantly produce riches in order to overcome poverty and backwardness, to bring a plentiful, free, and happy life to the people. Each progress of the revolution results in practical improvements of the people's life and more social justice. Democracy and justice are the characteristics of the superior nature of socialism.

1. Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995. Vol. 8, p. 494.

To develop production forces, we should step up industrialization and modernization, chiefly the modernization of agriculture and rural areas with a new content appropriate to the developmental trend of modern science and technology, for the purpose of building the material and technical basis of socialism. However, the production forces can only develop in suitable production relations. That is why the State should control the crucial economic sectors; the State-owned economy should obtain high socio-economic effects and play a leading role in the national economy. At the same time, we should study and develop the various forms of economic organization, from lower to higher levels: State economy, cooperative economy, individual economy, small proprietors, private capitalism, joint enterprises with foreign countries, mixing different forms of ownership, etc., so as to push forward the socialization of production in the socialist orientation.

With the reviewed lines, policies, and laws of the Party and the State, everybody, every family, every economic organization, every enterprise should devote their capability, intelligence, and investment to emulating with one another in creating jobs, many high-quality products competitive on the home and world markets. Any discrimination with regard to economic sectors should be eliminated. Goods producers and managers, private or State-owned enterprises, that operate with high efficiency, quality and effectiveness, those who get rich legally and help the poor or have public utilities at heart, all are highly appreciated by society. Abundant production and thriftiness constitute our main endeavors at present, as recommended by President Hồ.

For the purpose of industrialization and modernization, we should develop science and technology and make them really become direct forces of production and main motive forces in socio-economic development, thereby overcoming the danger of

lagging behind in science and technology. In the current information revolution, we have no other choice than rapidly to get acquainted with the newest knowledge and technology of the era to modernize the economy and to bring about a change in the economic structure aiming at gradually forming a knowledge-based economy capable of competing with the ever-increasing added value.

To build socialism there must be socialist men and women and the internal general strength of the country, primarily of the Vietnamese, must be put to the fullest avail. Therefore, there should be a strong change, a revolution in education and training, an improvement of popular education. An advanced education should be built to suit the development trend of the era, thereby enabling all the people, the young generation in particular, to incessantly raise their knowledge and capability and the contingent of scientific workers to reach the heights of human intelligence. That is also the premise or primordial condition for actively pursuing the open-door strategy and for integrating with the region and the world to develop quickly and sustainably.

Our people have embodied a well-known truth: humanity, knowledge, and heroism. Our Party, each official, each Party member, each communist youth, each patriotic Vietnamese innately have these fine qualities. Each of us should emulate to over-fulfill our plan, each locality should well carry out their key projects; the working class, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, the vanguard youths and volunteers who are engaged in production, work, or opening the Truong Son route, or conquering the high seas, the armed forces all over the country should create a new revolutionary surge to fulfill the 2000 plan with the highest results. That revolutionary surge will certainly bring about new heroes among the present young generation and also those who

have participated in the gallant years of the resistance war. This is the best and most realistic way to celebrate the anniversary of President Hồ Chí Minh's birthday.

Implementing Uncle Hồ's *Testament*, the Party should activate the movement of Party building and rectification, criticism and self-criticism according to the example set by President Hồ. Reviewing the one year following the start of the movement, we see that Party organizations have made efforts to raise the problems within Party committees for settlement; questions outstanding for several years have been discussed and concluded; many comrades have sincerely realized their shortcomings; internal solidarity has been consolidated; the sense of responsibility for the assigned functions and the maintenance of close contacts with the grass-root level have been raised; cases of corruption have been criticized, supervised, and inspected by the people; a number of cases have been examined and brought to court; the people's confidence in the Party has been strengthened. It is hoped that the movement of Party building and rectification, criticism and self-criticism will be continued more seriously and more effectively.

However, speaking more strictly, the results of the movement are not great. A number of outstanding problems in Party committees have not been resolved; a number of violations of Party Statutes and State laws have not been severely dealt with; a number of comrades, including leading ones, have not sincerely self-criticized; a number of political viewpoints are not yet determined whether they are right or wrong; the shortcomings are not yet seriously rectified after criticism or self-criticism. The eradication of bureaucratism is very slow; the prevention of corruption is not resolute; wastefulness and luxury are still common. Work performance still tends to be perfunctory; speaking a lot but execution is not effective, laziness in studying,

in going to the grass-root level, and in summing up realities is still noted. In particular, the implementation of the 7th Central Committee Plenum Resolution regarding the improvement of the ideological - political stand and the ethical qualities of Party officials and members in Party and State organs is slow; the reforming for one step of our apparatus and the streamlining of staff are not strictly carried out, as required by the Resolution.

Therefore, to learn President Hồ's thoughts and morality, Party officials and members will strive and must strive to be good men, good communists as taught by Uncle Hồ: faithfully and resolutely sticking to the objective of national independence and socialism; preserving the revolutionary qualities and ethics, internal cohesion and people solidarity, close contact with the bases. They should be ready to accept difficult tasks, to listen to the people's views, to enhance the strength and the initiative of Party organizations and the people in solving problems arising from actual life. They should live a wholesome, simple, and thrifty life. They themselves and their families should not indulge in corruption and cover manifestations of bureaucratism and corruption; they should cultivate their knowledge, raise their intellectual and organizational capability to be able to assume revolutionary tasks in the new phase.

Our Party embodies ethical qualities and civilization. The image of the communist must remain forever the fine and noble image of a life-long servant of the country and people, the member of the Party founded, led and trained by Uncle Hồ, and the official of the State built and cultivated by Uncle Hồ for several decades now.

The movement of Party building and rectification, criticism and self-criticism constitutes a very fundamental and important content of the Party congresses at various levels and the 9th Party National Congress. All Party organizations and the entire

Party should fully understand this significance so that, through the congresses, Party organizations will be politically, ideologically, ethically, and organizationally consolidated.

Fortified by President Hồ's thoughts and qualities and enlightened by his great example, our Party and people are confidently entering the 21st century. We are determined to achieve the aspiration of beloved President Hồ, namely 'to build a peaceful, unified, independent, democratic, rich and strong Vietnam and to contribute a worthy part to the world revolutionary cause.'¹

1. Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 12, p. 512.

"VIETNAM DAY" AND FRANCE-VIETNAM RELATIONSHIP

(Address to the ceremony to inaugurate the "Vietnam Day" in the Senate of France, May 24, 2000)

...

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to H.E. Chairman of the French Senate and the Senate itself for holding the "Vietnam Day" and inviting me to inaugurate this event today in the Senate.

In our recent meeting with Mr. Chairman of the French Senate in Hanoi, I said to him that all the good deeds of President Mitterand, President Jacques Sirac, Premier Jospin, Mr. Chairman of the French Senate and French officials had sowed the seeds of solidarity and friendship between France and Vietnam the harvest of which we are honoured to reap today. And this harvest will continue the sowing of seeds for new harvests. With great pleasure, I wish Mr. Chairman, Senators, ladies and gentlemen present here good health and happiness.

Coming to Paris, I recall to mind the great heroes of France in national salvation. Like a light standing up to darkness, those heroes are a beautiful symbol of the French heart, who raised aloft the flag of independence, sovereignty, ardent patriotism and readiness to sacrifice their lives for national salvation.

France is a party to many alliances and cooperative organizations. But it always sticks to the ideas of independence and sovereignty. I think this is not only the pride of the French people but it is also supported by those who love justice, righteousness and equality – the truths that the French people promoted in the Enlightenment, the century that brought about the great 1789 Revolution.

Yesterday, I had talks with President Jacques Sirac, a State leader who enjoys great respect and love of the Vietnamese people for his friendship with them and the Vietnamese Government. We are really moved by the warm reception of President Jacques Sirac, the French Government and French friends with regard to me and this high-ranking delegation of the State of Vietnam.

We informed each other of the situation of each country and exchanged opinions about various international issues of mutual interest. The two sides reached a high unanimity in the assessment of the bilateral relations and an agreement on active mutual promotion and development, both in width and in depth, of the cooperation and friendship relations between the two countries.

On behalf of the Government and people of Vietnam, I expressed sincere gratitude to President Jacques Sirac, the Government and people of France for their support for Vietnam in its cause of renovation, for their active contributions to the settlement of Vietnam's debts at the Paris and London Clubs and for their assistance to Vietnam's development of relationship with international donors.

As you know, our country started to advance from a very low starting point and had to overcome the heavy aftermaths of the destructive war that lasted for many decades while suffering economic blockade and embargo. From mid-1970s, Vietnam

fell into a serious economic crisis; production stagnated and inflation rocketed; the people's livelihood met with great difficulties. A Vietnamese saying goes, "Gold is tested through fire, and man's strength through hardships". In such difficulties, Vietnam was determined to carry out the renovation, enhance the will of independence and self-reliance, mobilize all the potentialities of the whole nation and all the forces of the Vietnamese man and broaden its relations of multi-lateral and diverse economic cooperation and association to gradually improve the situation. In 1995, we got rid of the socio-economic crisis and managed to safeguard ourselves from absorption into the financial economic turbulence in 1997. In ten years, between 1991 and 2000, Vietnam's GDP grew by 6.7% yearly on average. Vietnam produced 34.3 million tonnes of food and exported 4.5 million tonnes of rice. The structure of the economy was transformed steadily; the State economic sector was consolidated while the possibilities of other economic branches were brought into full play.

Today, we have over 5,000 State-owned enterprises and 36,000 private ones, tens of thousands of farms of various scales in the midlands, mountain regions and plains. The household economy has developed vigorously. The economic sector of joint ventures with foreign partners has been further expanded. Many corporations from 70 countries are now present in our country.

We have endeavoured to make in-depth investments, promote the spearhead economic sectors and step by step develop industry. The State and private economic sectors cooperate in business to enrich themselves and the country. Numerous mechanisms and policies have been amended and supplemented, which has helped to remove obstacles, facilitate the people's business and make it more dynamic. The Law on

Foreign Investment has been made more propitious. We concentrate all our efforts on hunger eradication and poverty reduction. And I think you will share with us the difficulties of this endeavour, particularly in remote, mountain, far-flung and sparsely-populated regions and the many localities where production is extremely backward. We understand that giving charity to one person is an easy act for many people, but bringing happiness and a wealthy life for a whole society, a whole nation is not easy at all. Transforming a poor and backward country into an industrial and modern one is an extremely difficult cause.

However, along with heaped difficulties, our nation has many advantages and potentialities in terms of natural resources, labour force, internal political stability and consolidated good relationships with neighbouring countries. Our people are industrious, eager for learning and want to befriend all nations in the world, to learn the experiences of all countries and respect their creations. This helps us make up for our limitations in the knowledge of modern technology and widen our vision. We learn while working and work while learning, learn in life, in books, in friendship, including learning from France.

In 1946, i.e. half a century ago, President Hồ Chí Minh always reminded us that revolution always required continuous renovations. I think the achievements from the continuous renovations of the advanced and modern science and technology of France will help develop our country's science and technology to catch up with other countries. In fact, we have had the conditions for our national construction and economic development for less than ten years, which is a very short span of time compared with the millennia of national construction of France, Paris, Germany, Berlin, North European countries and the centuries of national construction of the USA.

The biggest question of all nations, since their birth in this world has been how to secure their existence and development in independence and sovereignty. Independence and sovereignty are the life of these nations and constitute an eternal torch of patriotism. Therefore, we are determined to build a self-reliant economy. Independence and sovereignty do not mean closing the doors. One can't stand loneliness in life, so one can't stand isolation in business. The expansion of economic cooperation and joint venture makes our economy continuously develop thanks to the advanced technology in the world. It pushes up the elimination of out-of-date methods of production and helps us quickly absorb advanced technologies, whose development in one year now is obviously equal to that recorded over hundreds of years in the past.

The French friends have a humorous way of saying: buying is selling and vice versa, because buying and selling are the actions that bring about interests for both the buyer and the seller.

In this sense, we have established diplomatic relations with 167 nations and commercial relations with 154 countries. Many corporations and companies from 70 countries worldwide are present in Vietnam with their registered capital of over US\$ 36 billion. France is a very important partner among them. Through the seven conferences of donors for Vietnam, the international community has pledged over US\$ 15 billion of ODA for Vietnam. Since 1993, Vietnam has been the member of international monetary and financial organizations such as IMF, WB, ADB, the member of various regional organizations and forums such as ASEAN, APEC, AFTA and ARF and the founder-member of the forum Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). Vietnam has signed trade agreements with many countries and the EU, and is under negotiation for joining WTO and under negotiation with the US on a Trade Agreement.

A few days ago, we solemnly celebrated the 110th Birthday Anniversary of our President Hồ Chí Minh. The Vietnamese people all know that in his itinerary to search for a way to save his country, President Hồ Chí Minh set his foot first in France, one of the civilization centers of the world at the time. President Hồ Chí Minh worked and studied indefatigably, absorbed the cultural essence of France and mankind in Paris, the Capital of Light. He made friends with great French celebrities, intellectuals, scientists, writers, journalists, poets and painters. We understand that to the last moment of his life, President Hồ Chí Minh remained a sincere friend of the French people. On these days, we recall to mind his teaching to us: The Vietnamese and French people can and should shake hands in a cause of frank cooperation to build happiness for both nations.

We always follow this teaching. At present, France is an important European partner of Vietnam. Vietnam always thinks highly of the friendship relations and cooperation with France and cultivates this bilateral relationship so that it can be continuously strengthened and developed. We look forward to ever more constructions of France-Vietnam cooperation and to more investment projects from France in our country in all aspects such as the economy, commerce, science and technology, transport and communication, culture, education-training, gymnastics and sports, and tourism. I affirmed this wish in my talks with President Jacques Sirac. Today, I would like to affirm it again at this forum of the Senate, which has a 200-year history.

We will, together with France, actively contribute to making the Francophone Community develop increasingly and to sow the seeds of the essence of French culture, which has now become the cultural essence of mankind, so that it can blossom elsewhere for the happiness of human beings and nations.

The European Union is a strong community. Europe is not only one of the ancient centers of civilization of mankind. But it is also a continent that always plays an extremely important role in the world politics, economy, science and technology, culture, security and military affairs.

In international forums, France always has a voice of great weight and independence and sovereignty. In my opinion, France will contribute considerably to the struggle for a world of justice, democracy, peace, friendship and co-existence and co-development.

The “Vietnam Day” is the very day of France-Vietnam friendship and cooperation, of peace and the moment of sowing the seeds for more bumper harvests of France-Vietnam cooperation and friendship.

I believe that around the four round-tables of this “Vietnam Day” meeting, the representatives of France and Vietnam will have a common voice, set up feasible and highly effective projects and many contracts to be signed right now and in the future, and push up the cooperation in the economy, commerce, investment, science and technology, culture, education-training and tourism between the two countries to a new height.

...

WE MUST PERSEVERE WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF RENOVATION

*(Closing speech at the 10th Plenum of the 8th Party
Central Committee, July 4, 2000)*

...

The Party's 9th National Congress will be held in the late first quarter of 2001, a moment of historic significance as humankind has just ended the 20th century to enter the 21st century. The entire Party, people and army of Vietnam have solemnly celebrated the 70th founding anniversary of the Party and the 110th birthday anniversary of President Hồ Chí Minh, and are going to celebrate the 55th founding anniversary of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (present-day Socialist Republic of Vietnam), and the 55th Anniversary of the Party's leadership with regard to the Government in building and defending our Socialist Motherland of Vietnam. Inheriting the glorious traditions of the nation, the tradition and experience in the Party's leadership over the past seven decades of the 20th century, the 9th Party Congress will sum up the five-year implementation of the 8th Congress's Resolution, the 15-year *đổi mới*, the 10-year implementation of the Platform on national building in the period of transition towards socialism, and the Strategy of socio-economic stabilization and development for the 1991-2000 period.

The Congress will further concretize, supplement and perfect the Party's lines and policies; and define orientations and tasks for the early 21st century. Therefore, the Congress will be of paramount importance to the country. The 9th Party Congress will *bring into full play the strength of the whole nation, continue the Renovation, and push up the cause of industrialization, modernization, construction and defence of the Socialist Motherland of Vietnam.*

The 20th century has left extremely deep imprints on human history. It is the century of vigorous economic growth intertwined with big crises of capitalism, and scientific and technological leaping advances. During it two bloody world wars were waged by imperialism, and hundreds of armed conflicts and unprecedented armed races took place. The century saw a far-reaching revolutionary movement throughout the world and the victory of the Russian October Revolution, which paved the way for the transition from capitalism to socialism. On the other hand, the ebbing of socialism took place at the end of the 20th century,

For Vietnam, the 20th century is one of profound and great changes, and a hard struggle of the Vietnamese people for national independence and unification and socialist construction. This is also a century of victories of historic and epochal significance. Thanks to the great victories won in the 20th century under the leadership of the Party, Vietnam was turned from a colonial country into an independent and free nation developing along the socialist path.

The Vietnamese people have become the master of their country and society, and been freed from slavery. Vietnam is starting to get out of poverty and backwardness and stepping into the period of intensified national industrialization and modernization. Vietnam, which used to have no name on the world map, has

become an independent nation, having broad foreign relations and a deserving voice and position in the region and the world as well.

Under the leadership of the Party, the entire Party and people of Vietnam have overcome all difficulties and challenges and gained great and important achievements during the 15 years of *doi moi*, and of the implementation of the Platform on national building in the period of transition towards socialism, and the Strategy of socio-economic stabilization and development for the 1991-2000 period. The country's economy has grown rapidly. Its GDP doubled within 10 years. The socio-economic infrastructure and the production capability (of some major products) have been raised. The country has got out of the socio-economic crisis. The economy, which used to be in shortage of food and consumer goods, is now able to produce them in abundance. It has shifted to a market socialist-orientated economy from the bureaucratic, centralized and subsidy mechanism. Formerly, it had two sectors; now it has many sectors with the State sector being dominant. Progress has been made in cultural and social affairs, the people's living standards have improved markedly. The political and social situation have been kept stable while national defence and security has been preserved; and foreign relations expanded. Over the past five years, in the face of complicated developments of the world situation and successive natural calamities nationwide, we have managed to keep the Vietnamese boat from falling into the severe turbulence of the regional and global economic crises, reduced the turmoil, overcome the difficulties and gained important socio-economic achievements.

In general, the position and strength of Vietnam have become much greater than in the past decade, which has brought about positive changes in urban, rural and mountainous areas, fortified

the independence of the nation and raised its prestige on the world stage. Along with the victories won in the 20th century, the significant achievements of the 15-year *doi moi* process, the 10-year implementation of the socio-economic stabilization and development strategy and the enriched experience in the Party's leadership constitute the major elements of our internal strength that brings forth great opportunities and advantages for the country's growth in the years to come.

However, we should point out our shortcomings and weaknesses. The country's economic growth rate has slowed down in recent years. Although the figure in 2000 shows some rise, it cannot yet equal those recorded in mid-1990s. The economy remains at a low level of development. Production forces have not yet been fully released for vigorous development. Education and training have failed to meet the posed requirements, especially in terms of quality. Science and technology have not become truly the lever for development yet. Many burning social issues, such as job shortage or social evils, have not been properly solved. A section of the population still meet difficulties in their livelihood. Red-tape and bureaucracy have not been checked. The Party has warned four dangers for the nation, namely further economically lagging behind, deviation from the socialist orientation, "peaceful evolution"; corruption and bureaucracy and moral deterioration of a section of cadres, Party members and civil servants. These four dangers still exist and are showing complicated developments. They constitute great *difficulties and challenges* to us. Especially, it is necessary to stress the biggest, basic and long-term challenges we have to encounter: the poor performance of our economy and the wide gap in development between Vietnam and many countries in the world. Meanwhile, Vietnam is facing ever more severe international competition. Bureaucracy, corruption and moral deterioration

among a section of cadres and Party members in the machinery of the Party and State are eroding the people's confidence.

The 6th Party Congress, which started the country's *doi moi*, affirmed, "The entire Party, people and army are united as oneness and determined to mobilize all morale and forces to further fulfil two strategic tasks: successfully building socialism in Vietnam and firmly defending the socialist Motherland of Vietnam." The Platform on national building in the period of transition towards socialism passed at the 7th Party Congress asserted, "A lesson drawn from the whole process of the revolutions in our country is to hold firmly the banner of national independence and socialism."

The Political Report made to the 8th Party Congress pointed out the first lesson, "Sticking to the objectives of national independence and socialism in the Renovation process; grasping two strategic tasks: building and defending the Motherland, and persevering with Marxism-Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh Thought."

In the draft documents to be submitted to the 9th Party Congress, the Party Central Committee stressed those points and asserted: "During the Renovation, we must stick to the objectives of national independence and socialism, which are based on Marxism-Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh Thought." Such is the core standpoint the Central Committee wants to present in the Congress, making it the thread running through its draft documents.

A fundamental and consistent content of Hồ Chí Minh Thought is as follows: To gain complete victory, nation liberation must be achieved by means of proletarian revolution, and the national liberation revolution must be developed into the socialist revolution. Uncle Hồ said that his utmost aspiration was

to bring complete independence for the country and complete freedom for the people, and to enable every Vietnamese person to have enough food, clothes, and access to education. Only socialism can realize Uncle Hồ's aspiration which is also the aspiration our people have entertained for thousands of years. Such a choice has originated not from subjective wish but from the development conformable to the laws of history.

National independence is the prerequisite for the realization of socialism, and socialism a solid foundation for national independence. Socialism cannot be built without national independence. Genuine national independence requires the oppression and slavery by one nation with regard to another must be eliminated and such independence must be closely linked with freedom, equality and happiness of the people. Therefore, it can be only linked to the development of a socialist society.

Developing socialism passing by capitalism is a qualitative change in all fields. As a hard and complicated cause, it has to undergo inevitably a long transitional period with many distances and transitional forms of socio-economic organization. In all the fields of such a transitional society, there will be intertwining and struggle between the new and the obsolete.

There exist various forms of ownership of production means and various economic components in Vietnam in the transitional period. The interests of the class and those of the nation are in unity. To gain the objectives of making the people prosperous, the country strong and society equitable, democratic and civilized, it is essential to transform radically the underdeveloped socio-economic state and overcome the hindrances to the fulfillment of such objectives.

At the moment, the main driving force for national development is to bring into full play the aggregate strength of the entire people and of the great national unity; the capabilities of all

economic sectors and the entire society for the sake of a prosperous people, a strong country and an equitable, democratic and civilized society.

The Party considers economic development the central task and Party building the crucial one in the Renovation process. Therefore, along with the draft Political Report, the draft strategy of socio-economic development for the 2001-2010 period and the draft 5-year economic plan (2001-2005) are also included in the draft documents to be submitted by the Party Central Committee to the upcoming Congress.

The thought in the draft documents asserts the consistent implementation of a multi-sectoral economy whose backbone is the State sector and the building of a socialist-orientated market economy in Vietnam. Yet, such are very new problems in history. The documents of the 6th, 7th, and 8th Party Congresses and resolutions of the many Party Central Committees or the Politburos have gradually clarified them. This time, proceeding from the reality of the 15-year Renovation, the Party Central Committee has asserted again the Party's concepts about the accordance between production relations and the character and level of production forces. At the same time, it has defined a general economic model for the country for the transitional period towards socialism.

The Party Central Committee has also discussed a crucial issue: building an independent and self-reliant economy closely linked with international economic integration. We assert consistently the policy on multilateralization and diversification in international economic integration in order to ensure our country's interests, to preserve our economic independence and self-reliance, and make full use of every opportunity for this cause. We have considered economic independence and self-reliance the fundamental material foundation for political inde-

pendence and sovereignty, we have to follow the policy of economic independence and self-reliance linked to active international economic integration. The general principle for this policy is that we must ensure solid national independence and sovereignty, socialist orientation and national security; preserve the identity of national culture; protect the environment; ensure co-operation on an equal basis and for mutual benefits; and oppose any imposition of injustice and inequality.

The general objectives of the 2001-2010 socio-economic development strategy are to push up industrialization and modernization, to take the country out of the state of underdevelopment; concentrate efforts on building some selected important establishments of heavy industry and high-tech which can turn out necessary means of production for equipping and re-equipping agricultural, industrial and service sectors with advanced technologies and techniques to meet the requirements of the national defence industry and to create foundations for Vietnam to be turned into an industrialized country by 2020. The quality of the material and spiritual life of the people should be improved considerably. The socialist-oriented market economy institution should be basically shaped. Our human resources, scientific and technological capabilities, infrastructure, and economic and national defence potential should be strengthened; the country's position in the international cooperation should be enhanced.

Vietnam's GDP in 2001 should be doubled that of 2000; and the ration of internal accumulation of the economy should equal 30% of GDP; the competitiveness and efficiency of products, enterprises and the economy should be raised. Attention should be paid to the industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas. The economic restructuring should be pushed up in the direction toward reducing the percentage of agricultural labour to 50%. The infrastructure should be able to ensure socio-

economic development. The indigenous strength of science-technology should be brought into play; the State economy should be strengthened; other economic sectors should be strongly developed; the HDT should be raised considerably. Basically, there should be no more poor households according to the present standards.

Between 2000 and 2001, adjustments should be made in accordance with the 10-year strategy. We should ensure a high and sustainable economic growth rate, quick economic and labour re-structuring in the direction toward industrialization and modernization; raise considerably the competitiveness of commodities; bring about drastical changes in the way to bring into play the human factor; develop science-technology, education-training.

Unemployment should be solved; hunger should be basically eliminated and poverty-stricken households strongly reduced. The people's living standards should be further stabilized and improved. Socio-political stability must be maintained; national defence and security must be strengthened; independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity must be preserved solidly. GDP growth should show a yearly rate of 7% at least.

The above-mentioned are socio-economic orientation and objectives that we are determined to achieve for the sake of prosperity of the country and happiness of the people.

As stressed earlier, the Communist Party of Vietnam considers economic development the central task, and Party building the crucial one during the Renovation. The leadership responsibilities of the Party and the people's confidence in it requires that the Party should lead and manage quick and sustainable socio-economic development in conformity with the socialist orientation, constantly improve the people's material and spiritual life and ensure social equality.

During the process of the Party's leadership over the revolutions and the 15-year Renovation process, the country's development has fortified the people's confidence in the Party. The sacrifices for national independence and national unification, the high sense of blood-and-flesh attachment to the people; the devoted services for the people, the industriousness and simple lifestyle of many cadres and Party members are bright examples for society. In the Renovation, many cadres and Party members have promoted the glorious revolutionary traditions of the Party; they are loyal to the Party's ideal, dynamic, creative, observe the discipline of the Party and the State law and regulations, devote themselves to serving the people, preserve a transparent and simple life. They have contributed to the very important achievements that have been recorded so far. Yet, a section of cadres, Party members and civil servants show a weakening in their political ideals, deterioration in their morality and lifestyle; they do not observe properly the principle of democratic centralism in Party activities, thus affecting the prestige of the Party among the people and the efficiency of the State machinery. The drive of Party building and rectification carried out in the spirit of the 6th Central Committee Plenum Resolution (2n Session) has brought about some positive results: political perception has been raised; many burning issues pending resolution for many years have been raised for thorough consideration; the sense of internal unity has been strengthened for a step forward.

The sense of responsibility in work and the practice of linking to the grass-roots echelon has been raised. Corruption cases are criticized; some violations of Party discipline and State laws have been dealt with either through punishment or through the court. Therefore, the people's confidence in the Party has been consolidated.

However, it is necessary to point out that the Party building and rectification drive has not met the requirements posed by the Central Committee and the people's expectation. The deterioration in the political thought, morality, lifestyle and the bureaucracy and corruption among a section of cadres, Party members and civil servants remain serious and not yet radically checked, which has caused the people's discontent. Such phenomena as envy of positions, rivalry for fame and gains, bribery for gaining positions and power, internal disunity are grave in many places. Tensions between cadres and people in some localities have not been handled in time and the relations between cadres and workers or subordinates in some places are not good. Lack of unanimity in thought, perception, and viewpoints, and loose enforcement of the Party's resolutions of the State's laws have resulted in slow introduction of them into practice. Theoretical, organizational and personnel work still shows a number of weaknesses. There are many reasons for this situation. But chiefly, this is due to burgeoning individualism. Many cadres, Party members, even leading officials and managers fail to show examples in personal quality, morality. They are lazy in learning and study. Criticism, self-criticism and the correction of shortcomings are improper in many places; the struggle against red-tape, corruption, boastfulness and waste is not yet resolute. Meanwhile, the implementation of the Party's resolutions and the State's laws shows such bad manifestations as "many words; few actions", "only words but no action", or "divergence between words and actions".

Therefore, the Party Central Committee will propose to the Congress to continue the Party building and rectification drive and consider it the pervading task, which requires greater determination and effort to bring about radical changes in the political, ideological and organizational fields of the Party.

We should promote the class nature and the vanguard role of the Party; launch the movement to study Hồ Chí Minh's Thought, morality and lifestyle; raise the knowledge of all aspects, the management capability and fighting spirit of various Party organizations and members; ensure that every Party organization and member firmly preserve their political mettle, raise their capability to grasp realities, perseverance and creativeness, and get in tune with the knowledge-based economy and information society in the new era. It is necessary to consolidate the organization, to broaden democracy and to strengthen discipline. Any cadre or Party member who is found guilty must be dealt with in accordance with the Party's discipline and the State's laws, regardless of who they are. Unity must be preserved among Party members and State bodies. Heads of the bodies where disunity is found must be disciplined.

The Communist Party of Vietnam is the vanguard of the working class and devotes itself to serving the people. The only objective of the Party is to struggle for national independence and the people's happiness. The Party's leadership and State's management are aimed at helping the people exercise their mastership in accordance with the law. Therefore, we must resolutely fight all manifestations of imperiousness, trouble-making, oppression or violation of the people's mastership. The close relationship between the Party, State and the people is vital for the survival of the Party and the strength of the State. The entire Party must follow Hồ Chí Minh thought, ensure that all interests are for the people, all powers belong to the people, raise the banner of great national unity, appreciate talents, attend to meritorious people, encourage the people to enrich themselves lawfully, assist poor and unfortunate people. All is for gaining the objectives of making the people prosperous, the country strong, society equitable, democratic and civilized, and for

steady advancement to socialism. Before the Congress takes place, the Party Central Committee will make known the Party's draft documents in order to collect the people's opinions, and supervise cadres, Party members and civil servants with the help of the people. Trusting and relying on the people, the Party will surely gain greater strength to be qualified and capable enough to lead the country and carry out effectively a mission entrusted by the people. Party congresses at all echelons should be held as soon as this Central Committee plenum finishes. From Party congresses at various echelons we should proceed to the 9th National Party Congress, the Party's biggest political activity which takes place every five years; it is also the greatest concern of the entire people, armed forces and international friends. Each locality, branch, and agency should design concretized plans based on the Party Central Committee's documents and its actual situation in the spirit of practicality, creativity, attack, and resolute victory. They have to answer the question "How will the socialist-oriented industrialization and modernization strategy be realized in their localities, branches, agencies, communes, wards, districts, provinces, cities, enterprises, companies, offices, in the next five years?"

They must grasp thoroughly the set criteria being truly democratic in the election of new Party executive committees and representatives to the Party congress of the higher distance.

...

IDEOLOGICAL WORK IN THE CURRENT RENOVATION

*(Speech at the celebration of the 70th anniversary
of the Traditional Day of the ideological-cultural
work, August 1, 2000)*

...

The ideological and cultural work of the Party is linked with the leadership of the Party. The maturity of this work is closely connected with the maturity of the Party and this work is the task of the whole Party and Party members, first and foremost, of Party leaders and secretaries of Party committees. Since the founding of our Party, Party General Secretaries have been taking a direct part in the instruction for the ideological work. This is one of the typical features of the 70-year-tradition of the ideological-cultural work and the honour of the branch.

It is impossible not to emphasize that the contingent of cadres engaged in the ideological-cultural work of the Party has been developing along with each advance of the revolutionary cause to become larger and larger and more mature, generations after generations. It is very delighted to see at this gathering the presence of the predecessors, the veterans of the ideological work and today's generation. It is our great honour to perpetuate the glorious revolutionary cause of our predeces-

sors who were led by the Commander-in-chief, our beloved Uncle Hồ and his excellent pupils: comrades Trường Chinh and Lê Duẩn, great thinkers of the Party; Phạm Văn Đồng, an economist, ideological leader and man of culture; Lê Đức Thọ, an organizer and leader of the ideological work; former Party General Secretaries Nguyễn Văn Linh and Đỗ Mười and other prominent Party cadres who are excellent ideological workers of the Party, among many others.

Ideological-cultural workers, more than anyone else, should be fully aware of the special position and importance of their work. Uncle Hồ, Party leaders and veteran ideological-cultural workers have spoken much of this aspect and their opinions have been published by the press during this anniversary. I only wish to add some points.

We all know that the ideological-cultural work is an integral part of all the revolutionary activity of the Party. The Vietnamese Communist Party always considers this work a sharp weapon and the shock group of our revolutionary fight.

It should also be noted that the ideological work is not new. In the past, our ancestors used to do this work very well, thanks to which they could defend, build and develop the beloved country that we have inherited. Diên Hồng Conference¹ was a form for the Trần Kings to exercise democracy, wasn't it?

This historic event has become a symbol of the work of mobilizing, rallying, encouraging and stimulating the national strength in the one-and-the-same will to defeat foreign invaders.

1. A Conference convened by King Trần Nhân Tông (1279-1293) and gathering generals and the representatives of the elderly across the country to consider the strategy to fight the Yuan-Mongolian invaders.

*Bình Ngô Đại Cáo*¹ (Proclamation about Victory over the Wu) by Nguyễn Trãi, and *Hịch Tướng Sĩ*² (Appeal to Generals and Soldiers) by Trần Hưng Đạo are profound ideological-cultural works that highlight the national pride and stimulate the struggle for national defence.

In the history of the country, there were examples of good ideological workers: a man disguised as a vendor penetrated into the military post of the enemy to spy and then solicited the enemy to surrender, contributing to the national victory. Such people were ideological workers who used justice to persuade the enemy into surrendering...

The current revolutionary cause of our country takes place in a different situation, and has conditions and objectives different from the past. But the Party always attaches great importance to learning our ancestors' experience and its ideological work develops to a high extent, on the basis of the revolutionary thought, the modes of mobilizing the masses with a view to meeting people's aspirations. The construction and defence of our socialist Motherland is the revolutionary cause of the masses and requires from them a high sense of self-consciousness. The ideological work and the mobilization of the masses should be carried out regularly because several individuals cannot lead the cause to victory; without self-consciousness and voluntariness, there will be no strength for overcoming difficulties and advancing. Let's cite trivial things as examples: a strong football team may lose a match due to its poor ideological work while its rival may win

1. Considered to be Vietnamese second Declaration of Independence delivered after King Lê Lợi led Vietnamese people to the victory over Chinese Ming invaders (15th century). The Declaration was written by Nguyễn Trãi, advisor to Lê Lợi, from the ideas contributed by other people.

2. In the 13th century.

because the latter knows how to arouse in its players the will to gain victory, endeavor and the team spirit. The example can be easily understood. Life has both material and spiritual aspects which, if linked together, will create strength. Ideological work should pervade all matters, small or big.

The history of our revolution will forever record the great achievements of the ideological work and the prominent contributions by cadres and fighters on this glorious front whom we have the right to be proud of. We make the date 1 August 1930 the Traditional Day of the ideological branch and so far the work has been done for 70 years now. So, the ideological-cultural work is of the same age as the Vietnamese Communist Party. But as comrade Tố Hữu once put it, the history of the ideological work is longer than 70 years because much earlier it had contributed a great deal to the political and ideological preparations for the founding of the Party. Uncle Hồ was the man who germinated the revolutionary ideal and was the first to diffuse Marxism-Leninism into Vietnam. He combined Vietnamese patriotism with the scientific revolutionary theories of the era, built the political Platform, rallied, awakened and trained the young patriotic members of the Vietnam Revolutionary Youth League as a preparation for the merge of Communist organizations into the Vietnamese Communist Party.

Since the birth of the Party, under the leadership of the Central Party Committee, the ideological-cultural work has been contributing to the successful fulfillment of political tasks in each revolutionary stage: we carried out the August Revolution, seized power, built a new social regime; launched the holy 30-year-long resistance war to protect firmly national independence and unify the country; launched the all-round renovation, restored and developed the country, got the country out of a socio-economic crisis in the face of the ebbing of socialism;

firmly stood and have been developing and gained great achievements in the fields of socio-economy, international relations, national defence and security.

Notably, the ideological work brings into play its vital role at all the turning points of the revolution where it draws for itself many valuable lessons.

Let us look back on the year 1954 when the North was liberated and the country had to simultaneously shoulder two tasks. At that time, not a few people and soldiers in the South believed that the country would be unified in just two years. We timely warned the people that our struggle for national unification and liberation of the South would be extremely complex and protracted because the enemy was very obstinate with many cunning tactics and plots, and was backed by imperialist oligarchies. However, because our ideological work was carried out not very thoroughly, a part of the population still kept a one-way trust in the stipulation of the Geneva Agreements. So, when the imperialists and their henchmen broke the negotiations for general elections, which led to the failure to unify the country, there had been questions in the ideological regard. The question was how to enable our cadres and people to understand definitely that our struggle for justice would certainly end in victory and we would definitely wrest back national independence and reunify the country; to understand the difficulties and the resoluteness of our struggle so that they could stick to their confidence and become undaunted. On the other hand, the need was to persistently educate the whole Party, the people and army about the tasks assigned to the two regions: the North would undergo a transitional period to socialism and it must be strong to create position and force for the nationwide revolution and the South, and, together with the whole country, to defeat the enemy, to liberate the South and unify the country. At the same time the

North must be on the alert for the possibility of the enemy's expansion of the war to the North... All of these questions manifest the profundity of the ideological work: on the basis of the persistent pursuit of the ideals and objectives, the ideological work must analyze and make right forecasts of the actual state of the country and the developments in the thinking of cadres, army-men and people, and determine the orientation of action in light of its assigned political tasks.

Another milestone in the history of the country is our victory in the resistance war against US invaders in 1975 when the whole country was unified and starting to advance towards socialism. The whole country gathered its strength to restore the economy and heal the wounds caused by the war while facing numerous challenges: the economic embargo and blockade, the socio-economic crisis, the collapse of the socialist countries in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the setback of the socialist revolution. These challenges exerted great effects on the thinking of cadres, Party members and the people. The majority of Party members and people held a strong belief in the revolution and persevered with their revolutionary stances. But some cadres, including ideological workers, got dispirited or showed vacillation. A lesson about ideological work drawn out here is: it is the task of paramount importance to educate the people and to form in them the determination to stick to Marxism-Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh Thought and to the path of national independence linked to socialism. This task should never be loosened even for a moment and should spare no one, even meritorious people and those who have been drilled for a long time. Socialism building is a long cause that requires us to shoulder many tasks and deal with many difficult and awkward situations in a tactful manner. This cause encounters many advantages and difficulties. Yet, hard time is the trial for the

mettle of the Party and of ideological-cultural workers. The achievements that we have obtained so far and the current state of the country clearly manifest that Vietnam has overcome the trial because the line of the Party is right and the people are praiseworthy. Gold has been attested pure after undergoing the test of fire. It is a great joy to note that the majority of ideological workers show firm mettle in all circumstances, even dangerous ones.

Let's recall that in the past, we did not have the facilities and means as today. The ideological work was carried out mostly through meetings of the organization, oral propaganda, through propaganda teams, or shock performing art troupes. The radio and press were limited. At that time, we attached great importance to oral propaganda and ideological gatherings in various, lively, practical and effective forms in each civil and military unit. In order to grasp thoroughly one of the Party's resolutions or a task and guiding thought for a military campaign, we had sometimes to hold short meetings or secret meetings; sometimes, our soldiers held "meetings" right during their marches: the front man relayed the information to the back one and so on. Despite such difficulties, cadres, Party members and soldiers all grasped thoroughly their assigned tasks, and raised the assault and revolutionary spirit and readiness to cope with sacrifices and hardships. They all knew well where to attack the enemy, the situation of our forces and the enemy, and the tactics to fight the enemy. Now, we have modern facilities and much improved technologies, which is a great advantage to the ideological work. However, the effectiveness of modern facilities will be limited, if the contents of our ideological work are not profound, the forms are not varied, and our leaders and ideological workers lack revolutionary enthusiasm and detach themselves from mass movements and lack creativity in the modes of activity. I do not

mean to think light of modern facilities in the ideological-cultural work. But I want to stress the mettle, the sense of responsibility, and the creativeness of ideological-cultural workers. I agree that we should focus on further renovating the technology. But if we overvalue the importance of technology and think light of the importance of the contents of our ideological work, there will be no effects or there will be dangers especially when the content is wrong. This is a point we should focus on in the ideological-cultural work.

On this occasion, we recall our glorious tradition as our pride. But we should also pay attention to the tasks ahead. The ideological work must be linked with, and emanate from the political line of the Party and the people and should be carried out on the basis of this line. At present, we should grasp thoroughly the contents of the draft documents to be submitted by the Party Central Committee to the forthcoming 9th Party Congress. Though these drafts are subject to comments of Party congresses at various echelons and of the people, they are the products that the Party has inherited and developed on the basis of the thoughts and standpoints of the previous congresses, the continuation of the path opted for by the Party, Uncle Hồ and the people, and the Party will lead the people to the destination, i.e. achieving fully the ideals of national independence and socialism. First and foremost, the ideological-cultural work, through diversified and lively forms and multi-channels, must help assert the definite victory of socialism in our country and the world and promote in the whole Party, people and army a strong confidence therein. Some people say: "stop speaking of socialism and just say national independence" or "speak of only national independence and socialism but not of the final victory of socialism so soon"...The Party Central Committee does not accept these opinions and reaffirms in its draft political report to

be submitted to the 9th Party Congress that Vietnam will persevere with the goal of national independence and socialism and is determined to follow this path to its end. It is extremely important especially for ideological workers to stick to their objectives and ideal. If ideological workers do not have a strong confidence in such ideal and persevere with it, how can they make other believe in it? We should listen to all the opinions gathered from different echelons but we should stick to our belief, ideal and objectives. While keeping our strong belief in our ideal and sticking to our revolutionary stance, we should always be creative because life and things always develop, which requires solutions to emerging issues. Only with creativeness and new developments can we persevere with our belief and be linked to reality. But creation would be puzzling and meaningless without an aim and target. It should be repeated that our determination is to build an independent, united, socialist-oriented Vietnam. Vietnam has been taking this path and will go to its end, all for the sake of the prosperity of our country and happiness of our people. We have always openly stated to the world about our determination.

The draft documents to be submitted to the 9th Party Congress reaffirm that our Party is becoming aware more deeply of the path of socialist revolution with steps more conforming to the new situation of the world and the actual state of our country. The ideological work should take into account this point: The ideological work is to consolidate the strict adherence to our objectives and ideal through political-ideological education; yet it should grasp the standpoint, line and policy of the Party in each stage of our revolution through the line of the Party and State law. It should clarify the final targets and the objectives in each of our advances, clarify the theoretical foundations and the diversified practice, so that each cadre, Party member and citizen can volun-

tarily implement the line, policy and law. It should illuminate the viewpoint of the Party in each of our revolutionary stages to make cadres, Party members and people know what to do in the current context and how to keep themselves close to the objectives while not "bypassing stages". In this respect, we have amassed a great deal of useful experience in our revolutionary process and should continue bringing it into play.

Society is developing in a various and diversified way. Each subject has its own demand. Each field of the ideological-cultural work has its own features. To translate the resolutions of the Party into life and to turn them into voluntary actions of all strata of the population, we should be active and take the initiative in ideological-political education, should use suitable instruments to impact on the perception, sentiments, intellect, and morality of each person. The ideological-cultural work should deeply penetrate each field and each subject, especially the youth, pupils, students, workers, peasants, intellectuals, entrepreneurs, etc. This work should be shouldered by the Central Committee for Ideological-Cultural Work in close collaboration with all ministries, branches, and industries, especially the Ministry of Culture and Information and the Ministry of Education and Training. The primary contents of political-ideological education are teaching and diffusing Marxism-Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh Thought, making them the guiding line in society; propagating the scientific outlook on the world and the revolutionary outlook on life; preserving and bringing into play the traditions of national culture; absorbing humane values and scientific advances of the world; combating superstitious practices; building the Vietnamese man in mettle, morality and intellect to enable him to develop the country in the new era.

An important issue in the ideological-cultural work is to link propaganda and agitation to the organization, to promote in the

whole Party, people and army the spirit of revolutionary attack. Our revolution should always be kept ready for attack. Propaganda should be linked to agitation. Promotion of emulation movements is an important content in the ideological-cultural work, which encourages all people to bring into play their talent and strength for the cause of national building and defence. Patriotism means one's active participation in the maintenance of national independence. Patriotism is attached to the love for socialism. Striving for socialism means, as Uncle Hồ said, making the country become the one where everybody has enough food to eat and clothes to wear; can receive education, freedom and happiness or where the material and spiritual life of the people is ensured and the people may enjoy socialist democracy. National independence is attached to a prosperous life and freedom and happiness for the people. This is also the nature of socialism and its requirements. Good agitation requires us to have right mottoes and good models. It is necessary to agitate strongly for the movement of hunger eradication and poverty reduction and encourage people to enrich themselves legally. We should praise the examples representing a strong will and creativeness in national building and defence, and in improving the life of their families. A recent TV programme showed a blind war invalid tilling land to turn it into a farm, attracting other farmers to follow. Such a kind of TV programme is very useful and needs multiplying. There are many good people with good deeds but we should be watchful of "false" exemplary models. There are cases of people using tricks or bribery to "buy over" the title of hero. There is an enterprise that has been "blown up" by the press and many echelons as successful. But in fact, it has over VND 100 billion in debt and is about to be prosecuted; there is a case where the subject was arrested for corruption shortly after he was awarded a medal...

It is necessary to develop more forms of propaganda and agitation. Now, we have much more means for this work than in the past. The radio network has expanded its coverage to every part of the country. The TV network covers the whole country and is expanded to many parts of the world. We also have many kinds of newspapers, magazines, cultural and arts activities. In short, we have many facilities in our ideological-cultural work. But as I have said above, we should be always concerned about the contents, so as to bring about comprehensive impacts on the thought, sentiments, soul and personality of the Vietnamese.

We must ensure democracy in the ideological-cultural work, must avoid imposing opinions on other people, especially in the activities within the Party. Every cadre, Party member and association member have the right to say, but in an organized and right manner and their speech must be constructive and responsible. The listener must accept the comments in a selective manner and is not allowed to bear prejudice against, and take revenge on the speaker making critic remarks or holding the opposite view in debates. No one has the right to impose his/her own ideas on other people. Any idea should be subject to democratic discussion by the collective and the conclusion must be made according to the majority. The minority can reserve their viewpoints in accordance with the Party Statutes and in conformity with the law.

The ideological-cultural work should aim at praising deserved things, criticizing and preventing all things that run counter to the Party line, State laws and our traditional culture.

Although we have obtained many achievements in the cultural field but our management has been loose in many cases, allowing for the flooding of unhealthy products. A great amount of music tapes and foreign films, healthy and unhealthy, are imported into our country. Our films fail to meet the demand of the audience due to their limitations in both content and mode of presentation. We

should raise the question: why other countries can produce interesting films whereas we cannot. If we lag behind other countries, we cannot maintain sustainably our independence and sovereignty. In fact, the contents of our films are poor; there is a vast vacuum in the themes on history and reality. The fine features of the nation and our relationship with other countries have been touched superficially. There are manifestations of disorder in the cultural life-style in public places and residential quarters. The ideological-cultural work should carry out well the Resolution of the 5th Party Central Committee.

We have also gained many achievements in our social work. But many pressing problems have remained unsolved that trouble the people: unemployment, developing social evils; some areas still face a lot of difficulties; improper handling of the complaints and denunciations lodged by the population, etc. The ideological-cultural work should take part in the implementation of the line and policies of the Party and State with regard to social affairs.

We are going to celebrate the 990th anniversary of Thăng Long (Hanoi). On this occasion, we should focus on educating the people about the civilized and fine living style of Hanoians, build a healthy and ordered social and natural environment on a sustainable basis. We must try our best in these efforts so that, when visitors come to Hanoi, they can see a civilized and decent Hanoi with a long cultural tradition typical of Vietnamese culture.

I have exposed some ideas as recommendations for you in the ideological-cultural work. If the work is well carried, it will make the political life better, society more stable and the people more closed to one another. We have seen how people attached to one another in floods. But so long as there are children found collecting rubbish for their living on the Lunar New Year's Eve, we communists cannot keep an indifferent attitude. We are

entrusted by the Party and people the task of making the life of our people better. But have we fulfilled our task?

As regards international relations, we respect our friends but we should also take a great pride in our nation. Our annual per capita GDP is lower than that of other countries, but in the social field, we have many things worthy of pride. Economic development should be kept in parallel with attending to culture, social affairs; economic growth should be made parallel with increase of social equality.

In the renovation process, the Party has defined that economic development is a central task and Party building is a key task. Cadres and Party members should grasp thoroughly the draft socio-economic strategy to be submitted to the 9th Party Congress. The Party Central Committee holds that in the next 10 years, we should concentrate our efforts on stepping up industrialization and modernization and building a foundation so as to make Vietnam a basically industrialized country by the year 2020. We must answer many questions posed by reality: Which structure will we follow? Should we build heavy industry? Invest in metallurgy? Develop mechanical engineering? etc. Some people among us tend to think that the world has produced a lot of steel; so we need not produce any steel but buy it from foreign countries. But in case of fluctuations in the steel market and the supplier stops selling steel to us, will our economy be able to avoid becoming paralyzed? And if we build a heavy industry, we should define the scale and select what is appropriate for us. In short, the process of industrialization and modernization of the country poses many problems the ideological work should deal with in order to fulfill its tasks.

As regards Party building, at the moment, the ideological and educational work should focus its strength on overcoming for a step forward the degradation of moral quality of a part of cadres

and Party members. This is a very important task. Corruption is now rampant. There are rings and hooks of corruption, which causes difficulties in handling. There were cases in which corrupted people colluded with each other to trap dignified cadres into taking bribes so that the latter could neglect their crimes or collude with them in embezzling the State budget. The ideological-educational work should arouse the mettle of straight and frank struggle to encourage wrongdoers to self-criticize and correct their mistakes and cooperate with other cadres in combating rings and dens of corruption and fraud. Bad people will surely not surrender easily. They will gather their forces to fight against the administration and even collude with some media men in their plots. If our work is not well carried out, bad and unqualified people many make their way into Party committees of various echelons, even the Party Central Committee. This is a big threat. Fighters in the ideological front should be the vanguards in promoting new elements and in the struggle against negative manifestations in the Party machinery, State apparatus and society. The fighters should criticize off-track tendencies, and combat the schemes and tactics of the hostile forces and be resolved to maintain the healthiness and rightness of the country; internally, they should build and bring into play the new fighting strength. Only by doing so can they contribute to the common cause of the country and win final victory. If cadres and Party members only want to preserve their seats intact and keep an indifferent attitude towards wrongdoings, they will weaken themselves.

In the current renovation, the position and strength of the country have been boosted and the standing of our country on the international arena has increased. Our friends and comrades in the world wish that Vietnam will build and develop successfully socialism. Our responsibilities to history, therefore, are very burdensome.

Sound policies are a factor of decisive significance to the success of Party leadership. Given the development of the country, we can affirm that the Party's line is basically sound. If there are shortcomings, we should timely detect them and make timely supplements thereto.

On the basis of maintaining the ideological foundations of the Party, ideological workers should grasp the line of the Party, raise their political mettle, study with assiduity, raise the fighting spirit, go deep into reality, stay in close touch with the people, have dialogue with the people and make the line of the Party and the State laws become the force of life.

The strength of the ideological-cultural work of the Party lies in the line of the Party, the laws of the State and the great strength of the people. The contingent of ideological-cultural workers is developing in a diversified manner but it should bring into play its aggregate strength directed toward a common objective. All spheres of activity like propaganda, training, the press, oral propaganda, cultural-artistic life, etc.; professional and non-professional ideological-cultural forces; organizations for ideological-cultural activities of the Party and State, mass organizations and the armed forces should all serve the common target, that is, to contribute to build a healthy, diversified spiritual social life, to nurture and develop the strength of the Vietnamese so that they can be strong enough to raise higher, seize opportunities, overcome challenges, advance the country forwards in the 21st century for the sake of a wealthy people, a prosperous country, an equal, democratic, fair and civilized society on its path towards socialism.

I hope that veteran ideological workers will continue passing down their experience to today's ideological-cultural workers of the Party, making the work become really effective and vivid.

WRITERS AND ARTISTS WITH THE RENOVATION CAUSE

*(Address to the 6th Congress of the Union of
Literature and Art Associations, September 3, 2000)*

This Congress is held at the time when the Vietnamese people and humankind are taking the final steps towards the end of the 20th century and preparing for the 21st century. Therefore, I think that the Congress is aimed at not only looking back at the 1996-2000 period but also reviewing a period of nearly one century, the 20th century, which is our people's greatest and most glorious one under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam and Uncle Hồ. This century has inherited the nation's traditional cultural values in general, and literary and artistic achievements in particular and elevated them to a new height. This process has been promoted with extremely vigorous vitality from our people's persevering revolutions.

The Vietnamese are a cultured and civilized people. Culture, along with other struggling activities, has secured the formation, existence and growth of our nation with a sustained cultural identity, strength, love for and confidence in itself.

The Vietnamese revolutions and our beloved Communist Party represent morality and civilization. Culture, morality and civilization serve as the constituents of our Party's revolutionary and scientific nature.

Previously, some patriots were engaged both in revolutionary activities and poem writing to encourage patriotism and to express their whole-hearted affection for the people and the Fatherland.

Inheriting those traditions, Vietnamese Communist Party members under the leadership of President Hồ Chí Minh, through their heartfelt affection, used literary and artistic works as weapons to condemn hostile forces and opportunists, diffuse their ideologies and unite miserable people. They kept singing and writing moving poems and prose even when in prison, on their way to the front, and when facing guillotines or firing squads.

Revolutionary literature and art serve as an integral part of the Vietnamese revolution. Over nearly a century, our country's literary and artistic circles, nurtured and supported by the people's revolution, have bequeathed us invaluable masterpieces.

Literary and artistic circles breathe the same air of the revolution and approached the people, history makers, like they did to their parents and siblings. They shared all the hardships and sufferings with the people in underground tunnels, trenches, life-and-death battles, bombardments, floods and droughts. Despite illness, cold weather or lack of food and clothing, they tried their best to write, paint, photograph, film, sculpt, collect, study, and create artistic images from real people and lives to whom they paid their deep gratitude and respect. They regarded lack of poems reading, singing or dance performances for the people as their fault. During the resistance war, there was a case when almost all members of a singing and dancing group were killed by the enemy's bombardment. In a battlefield, nearly half of the contingent of composers and artists fell.

We are proud that there is no stage of this one-century revolution, even the most severe, when our writers-cum-soldiers would fail to record and reflect timely the people's heroic lives in their works.

Our people and Party are proud of those artists-soldiers on the literary and artistic front who have, for some decades now, bequeathed their works which help to nurture the soul and the *raison d'être* of millions of the Vietnamese. Those works will live forever with the people, although some of them have not lived up to our expectation.

Apart from creation, we have also trained an ever-bigger number of successive generations of writers and artists in all localities of the country.

Looking back on those achievements, we, first of all, should pay our boundless gratitude to our 54 brotherly ethnic groups, Heroic Mothers of Vietnam, soldiers of the armed forces, voluntary youth forces and anonymous heroes whose humanity and nobility have served as an endless inspiration to our patriotic literature and art and revolution.

We are most grateful to President Hồ Chí Minh who gave birth to our country's revolutionary literature and who represented the ideal of life, artistic labour and heights of creation.

We grateful to the elder generation of writers and artists, those who fell heroically on the battlefield and who have left us both creations marking a period of time and the most valuable - their artist's life.

You have reviewed your shortcomings and pointed out your problems in the report by the Central Committee of the Vietnam Union of Literature and Art Associations.

I would like to suggest that the Union Committees of specialized Associations and local Associations, along with ideological

and cultural departments, should, during and after this Congress, re-study the Resolution of the Party Central Committee (5th Plenum of the 8th tenure) on culture, and review the shortcomings and problems in order to find out solutions. It is very difficult to have a proper viewpoint on one's shortcomings and problems. But it is impossible for us to make a step forwards if we avoid them.

National industrialization and modernization is an extremely great revolution, though difficult and complicated. Culture, literature and art serve as the constituents of that revolution and as part of the cause of building and defending the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Preserving the national identity means defending the Fatherland and exponentially multiplying the strength of the country, socialism and the Vietnamese people. Therefore, what worries us the most, regarding culture, literature and art, is unreasonable imitation of foreign cultures, loss of our national identity, pursuit of mediocre tastes and exploitation of bad aspects of the psychology of society, which undermine our ideological orientation and the chastity in the minds of the Vietnamese people and youth.

Culture, literature and art have been part of the cause of international solidarity of our Party and People. Uncle HỒ is the first Vietnamese revolutionary writer to have written about the world's oppressed peoples. Nowadays, our country's culture, literature and art should keep that cause going. The economy as well as culture, literature and art must have a good grasp of our people's cultural identity and nature if they are to do exchanges with the outside world and absorb selectively humankind's cultural quintessence. It is our people's culture, literature and art that make considerable contribution to the cultural quintessence of humankind.

Human beings are the finest creation of nature. Culture is the finest creation of human beings. That fine and noble creation, in our country, always needs the contribution of talented and far-sighted artists and writers who love their Fatherland, ancestry, labour and the Vietnamese, and who devote themselves wholeheartedly to that love. Science and technology can make a lot of miracles. However, nothing can replace literature and art with regard to the people's spiritual and sentimental life. As a product of each individual, an artistic work bears the imprint of his talent and spirit. On the other hand, an individual's cause lies in the common cause and spirit of the nation. The Party is attentive to each artist and writer while trying to build up a strong team of revolutionary artists and writers. Therefore, the Party always attaches attention to the various associations and the National Committee of the Vietnam Union of Literature and Art Associations. Local Literature and Art Associations of all levels must be consolidated. These Associations must bring into play their members' intellectual calibre and democracy, introduce more effective working methods and facilitate their members' artistic creation.

Any work must originate from the people's effervescent life and the proper viewpoints of artists and writers. Awareness, discovery and creation are the functions of literature and art. To have a good work, an author must have rich life experiences and throw himself into the realities and the people's movements. He should go on field trips held by Associations or by himself. By doing so, he can make a lot of discoveries from the daily life of the people and every locality across the country. Such discoveries are likely to serve as invaluable materials for them to create valuable works that can be widely acknowledged. Literature and art belong to the domain of the soul. Writers and artists must devote

themselves to each page of their work, easel, musical instrument, stage, etc. through their insight into reality and things.

Literature and Art Associations of all levels should discover and nurture talents. Attention should be paid to elderly writers and artists who used to be attached to the revolution and resistance wars. Meanwhile, training courses should be offered to young writers and artists so that they can acquire enough political stance, virtue and knowledge to continue their forerunners' cause of elevating literature and art to new heights.

I'd like to mention an issue that the Associations have so far made light of, or failed to make solutions to. That is the issue of criticism of which poor performance will badly affect the development of our literature and art.

Our country is in need of literary and artistic works, which can stir readers' hearts and record the indelible memories of the victorious paths, past and present. Various Vietnamese generations can raise their self-awareness and live a life worthy of the nation's new cause through enjoying such works. Nothing can replace such works in the future, just like nothing can replace the bronze drums, *Bình Ngô Đại Cáo* (*Proclamation of Victory over the Wu*), *the Tale of Kiều*, *Đam San*, *Birth of Land and Water* (*Đẻ đất đẻ nước*), *Sống Chụ xô xào*, etc., when we speak of the thousands of years of our country's civilization.

...

VIETNAM ENTERING THE 21ST CENTURY

(Address to the International Conference "Vietnam in the 20th century" held in Hanoi from 19th to 21st September, 2000)

...

In these fine autumn days we are very delighted to welcome you representative of various continents to the International Conference "Vietnam in the 20th Century". Your presence is a great encouragement to us.

Having read your papers at the plenary and panel sessions, I am deeply moved by the kind words you have reserved for our people, Party and President Hồ Chí Minh. Mr. Romesh Chandra, Honourary President of the World Peace Council, the oldest participant, in his paper says that in the second half of the 20th century, there appeared a word that had so many meanings: "struggle", "courage", "heroism"; it also meant "victory", "independence" and "freedom". That word was Việt Nam.

"Vietnam is a bright example in the 20th century", stated Mr. Phanduonchit Vongsa, President of the Lao National Administrative and Political Academy. "What has remained in the heart of the Cambodia people concerning Vietnam in the

20th century? It is our gratitude; it is friendship; it is the image of Buddhist soldiers coming from the remote realm of the Good to save the Cambodian people”, praised Mr. Chay Yihieng, Advisor to the Royal Cambodian Government. “I have witnessed your legendary heroism which once shook the whole world, brought about pride for your friends. It is no surprise that, when someone has attacked – or is going to do so – another person, he would be reminded: “Be cautious. Don’t forget the Vietnamese syndrome”. “On the strategic plane, the victory of your reforms will restore to a great extent the strategic significance of socialism in world development”, added Prof. Dr. Alexander Lilov, from Bulgaria. Meanwhile, Professor Charles Fourniau of France argued that “Only by connecting national struggle to the claims of peasants, the main pillar, could Nguyễn Ái Quốc organize, on the basis of Marxism and the Communist Party, a link between the national liberation movement and social revolution, which was just the August revolution”. Chinese Ambassador to Vietnam Qi Jianguo held that: “The prominence of Vietnam’s renovation exerts an influence beyond its national borders, impressing the whole world”. Prof. Furuta Moto, Japan National University said: “Vietnam will invent something for mankind’s civilization. I hope that Vietnam will continue to play an active role in its endeavour to fulfil the global task of mankind in the 21st century”.

I have very fond memories of the noble support extended by friends the world over to our past struggle for national independence and reunification and the current cause of building socialism and *doi moi* process. Beloved lawyer Loseby and his wife, other heroes that made sacrifice for Vietnam such as Henry Martin, Ray Mondien from France, Morrison, a great son of the United States who on 21 November 1965 afternoon burned himself in protest against the US war of aggression in Vietnam, Bertrand Russel, Paul

Sartre, peoples and governments, known and unknown heroes, Communist and Workers' Parties, peace-loving forces and Non-Aligned Movement, sailors in Marseilles and Paris, people in Laos, Cambodia, Africa, America, Germany, Italy, the Soviet Union, Finland, China from Shanxi to Guangzhou, Japan, Thailand, India, Algeria, Madagascar, Hong Kong and many others that I cannot mention all; to you we are grateful for your quiet and constant assistance to President Hồ Chí Minh and the Vietnamese Revolution since it was "a baby lying on grass"¹.

We always keep in our heart the statement made by President Fidel Castro at the height of our struggle, which is imbued with pure internationalism: "For Vietnam, Cuba is ready to sacrifice her own blood", and the fact that Latin America's hero Hoze Marti wrote about Vietnam and its people as early as 1895.

Vietnam is grateful to you all for your support and contributions and will forever remember the services you have rendered for Vietnam even though we have not been able to get to know and meet you all. On this occasion, I would like to request you, when you return home or when you travel to any country that had supported Vietnam, to convey the Vietnamese people's heartiest thanks to their friends.

The strength from international solidarity is one of the decisive factors for the success of our revolution. Fully aware of this, we will at present and in the future, in any circumstance, continue to consolidate and make the best use of that strength.

Your valued activities and praise for Vietnam encourage our people and Party to multiple efforts and not to flinch from any difficulties. The strength and determination of a nation and revo-

1. From a poem by Tố Hữu, a famous revolutionary poet of Vietnam. Văn học (Literature) Publishing House, 1983.

lutionary Party is demonstrated in their capability of recognizing their own weaknesses and shortcomings. We are resolved to overcome those weaknesses and shortcomings and bring into play our achievements to live up to the expectations of our international friends.

In the late 19th century, capitalism changed itself into imperialism. President Hồ Chí Minh observed that "By 1906, imperialist countries had completed the division of colonies and markets in the world".

As capitalism transformed itself into imperialism, fundamental contradictions emerged not only between capitalism and proletarianism, but also between colonies and imperialism, and between imperialist countries themselves. Proceeding from the reality, Lenin put forward the well-grounded slogan "Let the proletarian class and oppressed nations all over the world unite!".

Just 8 years after the division of colonies, imperialism waged the World War I (1914-1918) in order to seize and re-divide markets.

Taking advantage of the contradiction among imperialist countries, the Russian proletarian class carried out the Great October Revolution, establishing the Soviet regime, *ushering in a new era: the era of transition from capitalism to socialism, marking a fundamental turning point of human society.*

Despite the shortcomings and defects which were difficult to avoid during its maturation, the socialist regime in the land equal to one sixth of the globe eradicated in principle exploitation and relations of large nations oppressing smaller ones; production materials for creating social wealth to feed men were no longer in the hands of the exploiting class; instead they belonged to the working people.

This had not existed for millennia since mankind's society was divided into classes. This was the newest, greatest thing of the 20th century, which had been only the dream in the previous centuries. It was this event that determined the evolutionary trend of history.

Imperialism did not resign itself to regression and defeat, and neither could it reconcile the contradictions within itself. German fascism, the counter-revolutionary centre at the time, launched the World War II in an attempt to annihilate the Soviet regime and dominate the world. The tragedy and final fate of fascism proceeded from that cruel and greedy desire.

Bringing into play the superiority of the socialist regime, skillfully exploiting the contradictions between imperialist countries, closely united with oppressed nations and progressive mankind, the Soviet Union together with its allies played a decisive role in crushing fascism, putting an end to the most devastating war of aggression waged by imperialism in history, liberating a part of mankind from the cruel fascist yoke. Thus the socialist system was born.

Besides turning the USSR into a powerful country, the glorious victory over fascism, freeing humankind from the fascist disaster, was another extremely great contribution of the Soviet Union to mankind. That demonstrated not only the vigorous strength but also the fine nature and superiority of socialism. Today, although the socialist regime in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has disintegrated, the working class, peoples and the entire humanity will forever bear in mind, and feel grateful for, the historic contributions of the Communist Party, State and Red Army of the Soviet Union. Let's ask ourselves what sort of suffering and tragedy humanity would have had to endure if fascism had not been defeated.

Based on the success of the October Revolution, the victory over fascism and the establishment of the socialist system, oppressed nations stood up to throw down colonialism, and neo-colonialism, radically destroying the colonial system, freeing billions of people and hundreds of enslaved nations from imperialism's yoke. The national liberation and workers' movement and the movement of struggling for peace, democracy and social progress all combined into a revolutionary high tide, which had never been seen in world history, against imperialism, gradually foiling its schemes and forcing it to adjust its strategies and tactics.

At the end of this century, humankind had to witness a painful event, the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the socialist system in East European countries. As Professor Doctor Alexandre Lilov said "societies were not born to perfection. Socialism is not an exception of this historical logic". Our Party is fully aware that socialism, though having to travel along a meandering path fraught with complexities, will surely perfect itself and become a triumph.

Ninety years have elapsed since the day President Hồ Chí Minh started his travel in search of ways to save our country. He spent more than half of his life travelling across three oceans and 28 countries on four continents, covering an estimated distance of 200,000 km, from the world's most civilized centres to its poorest and most miserable corners. Along each leg he made, always intertwined were his love for the nation and people, which was nurtured since his early childhood, the pain he felt for suppressed nations' destitution, his burning desire to liberate his Homeland as soon as possible, and his dream of a beautiful, civilized and happy society for the working class. Crystallized with the nation's civilization and humanity's advanced knowledge, he deeply interpreted the suffering of his nation, class and

humanity, realized the correct way to eradicate that suffering and build up the will and fortitude of a hero who “builds a nation with two empty hands”.

He not only read Lenin's *Thesis on Nations and Colonies*. But also, the ten years he spent on a wide range of practical activities helped him strongly and ardently absorb the quintessence of that Thesis. That quintessence is “*In the present time, the national liberation revolution must be closely linked with the proletarian revolution, and national independence with socialism*”.

He then focused on diffusing that truth and applying it to Việt Nam's reality in a consistent effort to turn that truth into the invincible strength of our people and Party.

That truth found expressions in the 1930 and 1991 Party Platforms and is translated into Party lines and policies, thanks to which the Vietnamese people under the leadership of the Vietnam Communist Party have:

- Successfully carried out the August Revolution, established the first people's democratic state in Southeast Asia and ushered in the Hồ Chí Minh era in the nation's history;

- Won the wars for national liberation and defence in spite of extremely difficult circumstances, defeated big and powerful enemies with the best material and technological strengths in the world, completed the people's national democratic revolution all over Vietnam and brought it on the path of socialism without going through the stage of capitalist development;

- Implemented the cause of renovation, closely combined two strategic tasks, gained major and significant victories, consolidated national independence while making firm steps along the path of socialism in spite of complexities and dangers; and

- Fulfilled its noble international duties, saving the Cambodian people from genocide. King Norodom Shihanouk once said; "Without Vietnamese soldiers' help to save Cambodians from genocide, the King's children and grandchildren would have been killed all".

Prime Minister Hun Sen said: "The demand that the Khmer Rouge be put on trial is a political and justice compensation for all those who contributed to saving the Cambodian nation from the genocidal Pol Pot regime. Therefore, they have to acknowledge the truth that as long as the demand for the Khmer Rouge's top leaders to be put on trial exists, the heroism of Vietnam's volunteer soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the Cambodian people should be praised". Our crystal internationalism was formed and has been unceasingly fostered since the birth of the Vietnamese working class, manifested in Hồ Chí Minh's thought: "Helping friends is to help ourselves". That thinking coincides with the noble thoughts of heroic Saints Gandhi and Nehru: India's independence can never be complete as long as other nations are yet to be freed from colonists' yoke.

Five days ago, on 15th September, the Vietnamese people celebrated the 700th death anniversary of General Trần Quốc Tuấn at Kiếp Bạc.

To be honest, today I still fondly recall that morning. Almost all representatives of the whole nation came to pay tribute to Him, watching the re-enactment of the fighting in the Thương River. Witnessing that magnificent scene and people's tribute to him, I recalled his teaching: *it is necessary to nurture the strength of the people as the roots; superiors and subordinates should be of one mind, brothers should live in concord, and the entire country should join forces.*

I have, on many occasions, paid tribute to Nguyễn Trãi, a national hero and a cultural celebrity, at Côn Sơn some kilome-

tres from Kiếp Bạc. Nguyễn Trãi returned to Côn Sơn at the age of 50 and he wrote: "*Days and nights my concern for the people never ceases*". Crystallizing Vietnam's morality, he passed down to the next generations immortal thoughts: Our only need is territorial integrity, security, peace, friendship, and eternal cessation of war.

Our people fully understand that we are a poor country developing from a very low level.

Following our forefathers' teachings, Vietnam only desires peace, and stability for national building and the pursuit of happiness in order to realize the goal "Everyone can be well fed, clothed and educated". We realise the gap between our economy and developed ones in the world. We also realize that there will be enormous advances of science and technology in the 21st century. Acting upon Hồ Chí Minh's great thoughts "Use our own force to liberate ourselves", we continue to intellectualize our Party, our nation, our workers and farmers. The whole country will be a learning society, relying on the tradition started from the early days of our independence in 1945: "the whole country learns to eradicate the enemy of illiteracy; the whole country combats the enemy of hunger". We should hold high the banner of science in much the same way as we have held the national banner; an illiterate and poor nation is a weak nation. There is a popular saying among the Vietnamese. "Once you know how to use chopsticks, you will know how to sharpen bamboo stakes", and once you know how to sharpen bamboo stakes, you will know how to learn and operate computers, and to gain access to information technology, a door to the knowledge-based economy.

The encouragement Mr. Lend Aldis has given to us is very sincere and profound: "Having gained independence in the

struggle for many years and suffered great sacrifices, Vietnam will not surrender on the economic front”.

We will materialize that determination. During the 20th century, the Vietnamese nation has struggled for national independence and reunification. The country has been in transition towards socialism. In the 21st century, we are determined to defend our Homeland's independence and unity, to pursue happiness for the people and continue to follow the path of our own choice. Even though it requires 50 years, 100 years, even more, we will never be shaken and socialism will definitely triumph.

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VIỆT NAM BƯỚC VÀO THẾ KỶ 21
LÊ KHẢ PHIÊU

Chịu trách nhiệm xuất bản
MAI LÝ QUẢNG

Biên tập: Đoàn Lâm

Bìa: Ngô Xuân Khôi

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ENTERING
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