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Communique of the Third Plenum of the Seventh CPV Central Committee

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 7, Jul 92 pp 3-5

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Urgent Tasks Concerning Party Renovation and Reorganization

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in Vietnamese No 7, Jul 92 pp 6-12

[Article by Le Phuoc Tho, member of the Political Bureau and director of the Organization Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam]

[Text] In the history of our party, never before has the question of party renovation and reorganization taken on so particular an importance and so decisive a significance to the fate of the country and the survival of the regime as it does now. This is because many new problems have been posed in the situation of the world, the country, and the party.

Coming in the wake of the collapse of the socialist countries in East Europe, the fall of socialism in the Soviet Union and the quick disintegration of the CPSU and the Soviet state have radically changed the world political situation. The balance of power has tilted in favor of imperialism and international reactionary forces. Socialism has fallen into a serious crisis. Taking advantage of that situation, imperialism has continued to intensify its opposition and sabotage of the socialist countries and revolutionary forces in an attempt to wipe out socialism and establish a new world order under its direction.

"Running before the wind," the reactionary forces at home and abroad themselves have feverishly pressed forward with their activities to oppose and sabotage our country's revolution in an attempt to overthrow our party's leadership and our regime. By means of their "peaceful evolution" plan, they have sought all ways to sling mud at our party and lower its prestige, to actively agitate for political pluralism and multi-opposition party, to incite disunity within the party, and to drive a wedge between the party and the people. They have given encouragement to opposition elements, tried to attract the disaffected and the gullible, established contacts, built up bases, and rallied forces to oppose and sabotage us.

Our shift to the new mechanism, the development of our multisector commodity economy, and the broadening of our external economic relations have made the economy develop more dynamically and efficiently. The renovation undertaking has recorded very important initial results. The socio-economic situation has undergone positive changes, creating conditions for advancement and affirming that the road we are taking is right because our party has a great political ability, has been tempered in a protracted revolutionary struggle, has persisted in its objectives of national independence and socialism, and has been true to Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's thought. We will continue the cause of renovation for the sake of socialism. For socialism to come into being, we must renovate our conceptions; if we go back to our old conceptions and mechanisms, we will not be able to advance to socialism and our country will face numerous difficulties. On the other hand, renovation must be aimed at the goal of advancing to socialism. This is a matter of principle to which the entire party must adhere.

As for the party itself, in the new situation it has showed no few shortcomings and weaknesses. Most conspicuous has been the fact that a component in the party has declined in its fighting spirit, has become less enthusiastic about its ideals, has vacillated, and has lost faith. A number of people in this component have come under the influence of opportunistic and revisionist viewpoints and want to take a different road. Not a few cadres and party members have succumbed to an individualistic, pragmatist way of life and have become degenerate and depraved, and have indulged in dissipation and hedonism. The evils of corruption and smuggling, the squandering of the people's money, and the loss of unity in some places—caused by individualism, status-mindedness, departmentalism, and localism—have been very serious and gone on for a long time. Many links of the organizational system are sluggish and have failed to ensure a smooth leadership in all domains of social life. Basic party organizations in some places have been paralyzed and incapable of maintaining their leadership role. The party's mode of leadership has been slow in being renovated. The ills of authoritarianism and alienation from reality and the masses have been very serious. Many cadres and party members have failed to match words with deeds, have stood aloof from the people, and have even become separated and alienated from the life of laborers.

The revolutionary tasks in the new stage require that our party should renovate and reorganize itself in order to build and defend itself, to fruitfully carry out the political tasks set forth by the seventh party congress, of which the *central ones are economic development and firm maintenance of political stability*, and at the same time to make itself really a party of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's thought, a party that persists in the socialist-oriented line of renovation and that is really firm, strong, dynamic, and united with and closely bound to the people.

The seventh party congress set forth the general orientation and tasks for party-building work. The third plenum of the party Central Committee decided that in the immediate future we must concentrate on carrying out a number of urgent tasks as follows:

1. On Politics and Ideology

The party's strength originates from, first of all, its correct political line and the ideological cohesion and unity of the entire party. As a result of the complicated developments in the world and domestic situations, political and ideological work now occupies an even more particularly important position. We must foster and enhance the political ability, knowledge, and leadership capability of cadres and party members, continue to concretize the party's viewpoints and lines; and determine step by step a model of the path to socialism in Vietnam. We must attach importance to inculcating cadres and party members with faith, the will to fight, and a steadfast adherence to the revolutionary ideals and goals and the socialist path. We must struggle against hostile allegations and opportunistic and revisionist viewpoints designed to cause the country to veer off the socialist path. We must criticize deviant and ambiguous perceptions and the tendency to deny the fine past of the party and nation. To build faith, we must resolve many problems; in particular we must constantly and faithfully provide information on the new factors and incisively analyze them, and review the realities of renovation activities in each domain. At the same

time, we must strive to fruitfully implement the seventh party congress resolution; to successfully resolve a number of specific, burning immediate issues such as jobs, the standard of living, and reduction of the extent of poverty; and to effectively overcome negative phenomena, especially the evil of corruption.

In the conditions of the development of the market economy and the expansion of international exchanges, we must attach special importance to education and to the development of revolutionary ethics and a pure and clean way of life among cadres and party members, and must oppose individualism, pragmatism, dishonest business practices, extravagant and decadent ways of life. We must consolidate the cohesion and unity of the party and strengthen the close relations between the party and people. We must heighten the spirit of revolutionary vigilance and oppose the "peaceful evolution" scheme of hostile forces.

One of the serious shortcomings in our party-building work in the past was that we did not pay due attention to the education, management, and training of party members in the conditions of the market economy and expanded external relations. Ideological work was inefficacious and tended to be reactive and passive.

To enhance the quality and effectiveness of ideological work, we must further enhance its attractiveness, practicality, and timeliness, and must overcome the maladies of dogmatism, arbitrary imposition of one's will, simplism, and alienation from reality. We must pay attention to the quality of information and regularly carry out the task of keeping the people informed of the situation and new positions, policies, and laws. In particular, we must strengthen our leadership over the task of improving the quality and efficiency of the press, publishing, and cultural and artistic services to ensure that they strictly adhere to the party's lines and viewpoints and meet the diversified and varied demands of the people. We must renovate the curriculum contents and methods of teaching Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's thought in the party school system and in general schools.

Ideological work is the work of agitation and persuasion that relying on a scientific basis. As a conscious activity, it cannot be imposed in an impatient and hasty manner, and it requires perseverance and painstaking efforts. Therefore, democracy is precisely the factor that guarantees the effectiveness of ideological work. It is necessary to satisfy the need for information of cadres and party members as well as of the people; to carry out diversified and multisided information work; and to encourage discussion and debate of divergent opinions and viewpoints in order to reach profound agreement on the party's viewpoints and lines. However, development of democracy must always go hand in glove with a respect for discipline, a firm maintenance of order, and the upholding of a sense of responsibility.

2. On Organization

The party's political and ideological strength is guaranteed by its organizational strength. Tight organization and strict discipline will create an invincible strength for the party.

A. At present, in organizational work, a very important issue is to correctly apply the various principles of party organization and activities, especially the principle of democratic centralism, in order to check the evils of unorganized and undisciplined activities in the party. Recently, in addition to

the phenomena of undemocratic practices in many places, there were also fairly widespread and serious manifestations of a lack of organization and discipline and of departmentalism and localism. Many party directives and resolutions were not seriously implemented; the lower echelons refused to submit to the upper echelons; individuals refused to submit to organizations; statements were made casually; opinions running counter to the party's viewpoints and lines were openly propagated.... We must promptly check these phenomena. A failure to carry out this task satisfactorily will undermine order and discipline and weaken the bloc of cohesion and unity and the fighting strength of the party. It is necessary to make the entire party correctly understand the principles of democratic centralism, collective leadership, individual responsibility, the minority submitting to the majority, individuals submitting to organizations, the lower echelons submitting to the upper echelons, and organizations in the entire party submitting to the national party congress and the party Central Committee. Implementing these principles is an extremely important condition for ensuring the firm maintenance of the party's working class nature and vanguard character, and constitutes the source of the party's strength. They must always be the party's fundamental principles of organization to ensure that the militancy, initiative, and creativity of each organization, each locality, and each person are brought into full play, and at the same time to closely bind the entire party together in a bloc of unity of will and action. Any organizations and individuals violating the principle of democratic centralism and the party statutes and the state law must be strictly and timely disciplined. Severe party disciplinary action must be taken against any unorganized and undisciplined activities and any deliberate attempts to avoid implementing party directives and resolutions, to sow disunity and factionalism, and to weaken the party's ideological and organizational cohesion and unity.

B. The party apparatus organizational system at all levels must be reorganized. The party leads the political system and society not only by means of its programs and policies but also by means of its members and organizations. Therefore, we must constantly consolidate and enhance the operational efficiency of the party apparatus organizational system. Along with continuing to perfect the party committee echelons and to consolidate and improve the quality of various party departments, we must pay attention to organizing and improving the quality of the activities of various party groups in the elective agencies and mass organizations, and setting up party affairs committees in the government, in the various ministries, and in the commissions directly subordinate to the government. Reality has shown that setting up party affairs committees in these organizations is highly necessary. These committees will help the Political Bureau and the Secretariat [of the party Central Committee] exert their leadership over the study and implementation of party directives and resolutions. They will also participate in and contribute to the formulation of party and state lines, positions, and policies; administer organizational and personnel management; control the implementation of party and state lines and policies and the carrying out of party work; and work together with party committee echelons and grass-roots party committees in their own branches in carrying out party-building work. The setting up of party affairs committees is aimed at developing and not restricting individual authority and responsibility.

C. We must revamp grass-roots party organizations to really give them a leadership role and turn them into direct fighting units of the party at the grass roots. Recently, it was suggested that we should concentrate on consolidating and reorganizing the party at the central echelon. This is correct, but not sufficient. The central echelon occupies an extremely important position and plays a dominant role in the entire country, but the grass roots are where all party positions and lines are put into effect and where party resolutions and state policies are turned into realities. If we do not pay due attention to consolidating party bases and firmly maintaining the worker-peasant alliance, the party will see leadership slip out of its hands. At present, there are more than 40,000 basic party organizations in villages, subwards, state organs, state economic units, nonproductive units, and Army and public security units. We must define very clearly the roles, functions, and duties of the various forms of basic party organizations.

The most important function of the basic party organizations is to serve as the nucleus of political leadership in all fields at the grass roots. This function is reflected in the following tasks:

- Exerting leadership over the study and the organization of implementation of party lines, positions, and policies and state laws. At the same time, contributing ideas to the formulation of party and state lines and policies. In particular, exerting leadership over the implementation of democracy and openness in various economic and financial issues, in the distribution of income, in the execution of social policies, and in the struggle against the phenomena of corruption, negativism, and lawbreaking.
- Exerting leadership to ensure a correct implementation of cadre policies and managing the contingent of grass-roots cadres according to regulations.
- Controlling the implementation of the party statutes and state laws by party members, carrying out all assignments, and verifying the qualifications of party members.
- Carrying out ideological and organizational work and enhancing the political awareness, knowledge, and capabilities of the contingent of party members.
- Exerting leadership over mass-organization and mass-motivation work.

In the current situation, it is necessary to concentrate on satisfactorily carrying out the task of revamping basic party organizations in important political and economic units, namely villages and subwards, business units, and state organs, in particular the central, provincial, and municipal organs. While focusing our efforts on building and consolidating the basic party organizations in these units, we must not make light of the basic party organizations in other units. Regarding the villages, subwards, and production and business units having few or no party members, remedial plans should be worked out to set up basic party organizations in them.

D. A number of problems in currently stand out in party member-related work such as falling quality, high average ages, and decreasing numbers of new party members admitted annually. Party member-related work is strategically significant because basic party organizations can be strong only if their members are strong. In the days ahead, we must effect new changes in all the three aspects of party

member-related work, namely fostering and raising the standards, intellectual capability, and quality of the contingent of party members; screening the contingent of party members; and attaching importance to recruiting new party members on the basis of ensuring their quality and avoiding striving only for quantity. To this end, we must concentrate on satisfactorily resolving a number of basic issues as follows:

First, we must clearly determine the qualifications of a party member in the new situation as being the following: Party members must be persons who show political awareness and are loyal to the socialist goals and ideals. They must have quality, be virtuous, lead a healthy life, and stay closely bound to the masses. They must be good at production, official work, and management, must fulfill their tasks and abide by the party statutes and state laws in an exemplary fashion; must constantly study to enhance their level of knowledge and working ability; must show a sense of organization and discipline; and must preserve the cohesion and unity of the party. Of course, party members also have their personal interests to attend to, but they must know how to put the interests of the party and people above their own and those of their families.

Second, we must screen the contingent of party members. We have conducted several drives to consolidate the party and screen the contingent of party members, but the results were still very limited. At present, everybody knows that the party must be made pure and strong. But opinions still differ on how to go about this task, where to begin, and to what extent it should be done. Basing ourselves on the actual situation and the experiences we have already reviewed in the past, we advocate a resolute screening of the contingent of party members, but appropriate steps must be taken to ensure political stability and promote official work in all respects.

Third, new party members must be recruited. To overcome the graying of the contingent of party members, to revitalize and rejuvenate the party, and to ensure succession, party committee echelons should devise plans to constantly develop the party. They must pay attention to satisfactorily carrying out the task of creating sources of prospective members so as to select, train, and admit into the party outstanding, politically conscious persons from among the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union; among workers, peasants, intellectuals, and members of the Armed Forces; and in vitally important establishments and in places where there are few or no party members. On the basis of adhering to the party member qualification requirements and admission conditions, we should renovate our viewpoints on how to evaluate the masses and should not be prejudiced or narrow-minded.

3. On Cadre Work

Cadres are an extremely important question that plays a major role and can promote or hamper the revolutionary process, particularly at critical times such as the present.

A question is posed here: Why is it that despite the not so little effort we made in the past, we have not been able to effect radical changes in cadre work? Everybody seems to realize that cadres are a key, urgent issue, but no measures have been taken yet to resolve it in a really active manner. This question can be answered in a great many ways and has not a few different aspects. I think that an important cause was our failure to acquire a really firm grasp and consistently implement the fundamental viewpoints and principles of

cadre work, and to adopt measures to resolve this issue in an active and uniform fashion. At the same time, there still are snags in policies, and cadre examination and evaluation have not yet been done in a really objective manner.

To overcome this state of affairs, we must *firmly grasp a number of fundamental viewpoints and principles in cadre work*. First of all, we must clearly determine the standards of cadres in the new stage, considering them an important basis for correctly evaluating, promoting, and using cadres. As called for by the new requirements, we must clarify a number of basic points in the standards of cadres. At present, the foremost standards of leadership and management cadres are that they must have a good political ability, steadfastly pursue the socialist goals and follow the socialist path, and be resolved to successfully carry out the renovation undertaking; they must have the necessary knowledge and capability to participate in the decision-making process of the collective and organize the implementation of party and state lines, positions, and policies, and perform their official duties efficiently; they must uphold a pure revolutionary ethics, be straightforward and truthful, struggle to defend the party's viewpoints and lines, and have a sense of organization and discipline; they must follow an industrious, thrifty, honest, and righteous way of life; they must preserve the party's cohesion and unity; and they must stay closely bound to the masses and win their trust.

On the basis of holding fast to these cadre standards, we must devise a policy to attract and develop the country's talent, build a uniform contingent of cadres to meet the requirements of the renovation undertaking, and actively foster and use young cadres and build a succeeding force capable of meeting both the immediate and long-term requirements. At the same time, we must foster and bring into full play old cadres and look after cadres who have rendered services to the revolution. Concerning retired cadres, we should give these comrades encouragement and create proper conditions for them to continue making contributions to the revolutionary cause according to their ability and health. Old and sick party members should be exempted from party work and activities.

We must adhere to the principle of the party exerting unified leadership over and management of cadres, and at the same time we must bring into full play the responsibility of the entire political system in cadre work. The principles of collectivity and democracy must be strictly upheld in making decisions on cadres; at the same time, the responsibility of individuals must be brought into full play within the limits of the areas under their charge.

If we hold fast to the above viewpoints and principles, we will be in a position to satisfactorily fulfill a number of important tasks set forth by the third plenum of the party Central Committee, namely:

—*Examining, arranging, adjusting, and fostering the existing contingent of cadres*, especially the key leadership and management cadres in various sectors, at various levels, and in various important establishments. More cadres who fully meet the standards required and who are likely to perform their duties well should be appointed. At the same time, we must expel from the leadership organs those cadres whose viewpoints and stance are not firm and

who are opportunistic, lack quality and ethics, show a poor sense of organization and discipline, espouse individualism, cause disunity, and are not trusted by the masses. Concerning those cadres who lack the necessary knowledge and capability to perform their duties, adjustments should be made to give them more suitable assignments. In those places where prolonged sluggishness and deficiencies have been reported, key cadres must be promptly replaced. If need be, upper-level cadres could be sent down to directly lead the lower echelons. We must boldly promote to appropriate positions those cadres who have received training, have been tested, and fully meet the standards required. We must definitely adhere to the principles that "personnel are appointed to suit their jobs," that "there must be people going up and going down," and that "there must be people going in and going out." We must avoid assigning cadres to jobs for which they have received no training or jobs that they have never done before or of which they do not have a thorough knowledge yet. Cadres who directly manage business operations and cadres put in charge of specialized duties should undergo specialization.

—*Strongly speeding up the preparation of the succeeding contingent of cadres*. We must renovate the contents and methods of cadre planning, concentrate on building the contingent of key cadres at the central echelon and the contingent of key leadership cadres at various levels and in the key economic establishments. At each level, we must strive to shape a contingent of cadres of three consecutive age groups. In training cadres, we must pay attention to linking training to our goals and requirements and to the localities to which cadres will be ultimately assigned. We must use various forms of training suitable for each trainee, attach importance to the training of cadres through the actual performance of their official duties and through their activities in the mass organizations. We must timely review practical experiences and select promising and reliable cadres for formal training.

—*Improving the cadre compensation policy* to ensure objectivity and fairness, to attract talent, and to give incentives to those people who work well and efficiently. We must pay attention to the relations among party cadres, state cadres, and mass organization cadres, and among cadres of different regions and domains. We must overcome the state of egalitarian distribution of income and the excessive disparities in income between the various categories of cadres. Cadres credited with meritorious services must be timely commended and rewarded, and those who have made mistakes must be strictly and justly penalized. We must put an end to the state of good, highly efficient workers and poor, inefficient ones receiving the same treatment and compensation. Fitting compensation systems must be adopted in favor of grass-roots cadres, ethnic minority cadres, cadres from the highlands, and cadres from the lowlands working in the highlands. With regard to persons who enjoy prestige among the ethnic minorities and religious circles and who show good political attitudes (such as tribal village elders, catholic priests, and Buddhist clergymen), policies should be adopted to bring them into full play and create necessary conditions for them to satisfactorily serve the cause of national construction and defense. We must strictly implement the regulation that cadres are

entitled to standards and measures of compensation commensurate to the quality and amount of work they do in their specific jobs.

We should realize that, recently, the inequitable and nonobjective policies on the use, compensation, and treatment of cadres were a chief cause of many unhappy feelings among cadres, thereby limiting the contributions by the contingent of cadres.

—*Implementing the system of division of work and decentralization of cadre management.* In cadre management, there must be close coordination between the management sector and the various territorial divisions. In assigning, promoting, transferring, commending, rewarding, and disciplining cadres, management organs in the hierarchical organizational structure of the management sector should consult the local party committee echelons. In those organs administering management according to territorial divisions, the party committee echelons should consult the management sector before making decisions.

—*Resolutely opposing corruption and other negative phenomena.* At present, corruption is still a festering sore of our society, and struggling against corruption is a burning demand. If we fail to check this evil, the prestige of our party and state will continue to drop. We must resolve to carry out this task seriously from inside the party and from the top to the bottom. Along with resolutely and definitely dealing with the immediate cases of corruption, we should urgently carry out studies to build and perfect various mechanisms and policies and to improve the wage system.... because this is a basic measure to check corruption right at its source.

4. Renovating the Party's Methods of Exerting Leadership

Ours is a ruling party. The party is responsible for leading all spheres of social life. However, in the new situation, the party should have a suitable method of leading to enhance the quality and efficiency of its leadership and, at the same time, to strongly develop the roles and efficiency of the state and mass organizations and to build a compact political system capable of functioning in a dynamic, efficient, and effective manner.

With regard to the state, the party, basing itself on the seventh party congress resolution and the new constitution, should continue to perfect and concretize the viewpoints and principles of building a state of the people, by the people, and for the people, and should lead the state in elaborating the law on organization of state agencies and gradually perfecting the legal documents in this domain for implementation. At the same time, there should be a regulation determining the methods of exerting party leadership and the work relations between the party and state. The party leads the state but functions within the framework of the constitution and state laws. The party exerts its leadership over the state through the democratic mechanisms determined by law, and through the party organizations and members working in the state apparatus.

Concerning the Vietnam Fatherland Front, mass groups, and social organizations, the most important issue now is for the party to determine the direction of their immediate and long-term goals and development. The party should lead the sociopolitical mass groups in renovating their organizations

and operational methods to overcome by all means the state of sclerosis of these bodies and the tendency to bureaucratize and turn them into administrative organs. The party should attach importance to improving the forms of their activities and mass-rallying efforts and raising the quality of their members. The party should select and recommend fully qualified cadres as candidates for various key positions in the mass organizations so that these bodies can elect them in accordance with the regulations. The party should guide and control the activities of its members who work in the mass organizations, thereby ensuring that these organizations will operate in the right direction and that any incorrect perceptions and operational methods they may have will be promptly rectified. On the other hand, regulations should be laid down and openness implemented to create proper conditions for the masses to supervise and to participate in the management of state affairs. Regarding the social and trade organizations as well as nongovernmental organizations, the party should encourage them to expand on a voluntary basis, along the line of self-management and financial independence, and in accordance with the law. The party should study the people's wishes to set up associations and the developmental tendencies of various societies and mass groups so as to formulate general and specific orientation and policies suitable for each kind of organization.

Along with the above work, the party should renovate and perfect its own operational methods and work style. Specifically, it should devote even more time and energy to theoretical work, to the review of practice, and to political and ideological work. It should improve the processing of issuing resolutions and decisions; attach importance to leading the organization of implementation; and seriously implement the various control systems. It should improve its ways of doing things, devote much time to carrying out studies and surveys in real life, attach importance to making preliminary and final reviews of practical work, strongly turn its attention to the grass roots, give on-site guidance, match its words with deeds, and work effectively.

At this juncture, party renovation and reorganization must be carried out actively and resolutely, without any attempt to turn away from reality and without a rightist attitude; however, suitable steps must be taken to ensure firm maintenance of the party's leadership role and consolidation of the close relations between the party and people. To renovate and reorganize the party is to make it stronger and capable of leading the entire people in surmounting all difficulties and trials and fruitfully carrying out the political tasks set forth by the seventh party congress. Party renovation and reorganization cannot be done separately but must be linked to the renovation of social life in all domains, especially to the process of perfecting the new management policies and mechanisms, to the strengthening of the political system, and to the mass movement for action, thereby arousing and bringing into full play the people's creative power.

President Ho Chi Minh's Thoughts on a Ruling Party

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in Vietnamese No 7, Jul 92 pp 13-17

[Article by Tran Dinh Huynh, assistant professor, director of the Party Building Institute of the Marx-Lenin Institute]

[Text] President Ho Chi Minh, the founder and trainer of the Communist Party of Vietnam [CPV], from the time he found

the way to national salvation to the moment he "departed from this world," had always thought long and hard and acted in such a way as to successfully build a firm and strong ruling party, a party that is really of the people, by the people, and for the people. In many of his speeches and writings, he expressed fairly clearly his thinking on such a party and requested that cadres and party members implement it correctly. However, up to now we still have not completely understood and correctly acted on his thoughts. In view of the requirement that our party should renovate and reorganize itself, it is very important and necessary to research into, study, and implement his thoughts on a ruling party. Following are some of my initial reflections on this question:

1. On the CPV's Leadership Role

Ho Chi Minh devoted all his life of revolutionary activities to the struggle to win back national independence and to achieve freedom and happiness for the entire people. To attain that goal, he had affirmed at a very early date that the people must seize power. To this end, they must carry out revolution. A revolution must, first of all, awaken the people..., explain theories and the ideology so that the people can understand them, unite all the people, and absolutely avoid division and factionalism, which make the people as weak as scattered individual chopsticks. For this reason, the strength of a revolution must be concentrated, and to achieve such a concentration, there must be a revolutionary party. [Footnote 1] [Ho Chi Minh: *Complete Works*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1981, Vol 2, p 188]

Thus, a prerequisite is that a revolutionary party must be built to lead the people in the struggle to seize power. The great patriot Nguyen Ai Quoc had taken in this revolutionary concept of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: "The immediate goal of the Communists... is to organize the proletarians into a class, to overthrow the bourgeois rule, and to effect the seizure of power by the proletariat," "first of all, the proletariat in each country must seize power and must build itself into a national class." [Footnote 2] [K. Marx-F. Engels: *Selected Works*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1980, Vol 1, pp 558, 565]

Nguyen Ai Quoc came to V.I. Lenin driven first by his respect and love for a great patriot who had liberated his people. Great V.I. Lenin, with his "Thesis on the National and Colonial Questions," had enlightened Nguyen Ai Quoc, thereby enabling him to find "the way to the liberation" of his compatriots, who were enduring persecutions and sufferings. Following the path of Marxism-Leninism, of the Russian Communist Party, and of the Great October Revolution, Nguyen Ai Quoc vigorously pressed forward with the organization and building of a revolutionary party. From that moment on, at home he undertook to agitate and organize the masses, and outside the country he established contact with the oppressed peoples and the proletariat everywhere to build a ruling political party. A ruling party must be a really firm and strong party, because only a strong party can make a successful revolution. This is just like a boat, which can forge ahead only if the helmsman is steady.

2. On the Standards of a Firm and Strong Ruling Party

A strong ruling party is, first of all, a party equipped with a vanguard theory. Revolutionary theories and doctrines are the "intelligence" of a party. Ho Chi Minh often recalled V.I.

Lenin's advice: No revolutionary is possible without a revolutionary theory; only a party with a vanguard theory can carry out the duties of a vanguard party. Ho Chi Minh also added that a genuine, firm, and strong revolutionary party "must have an ideology as its core; in the party everyone must understand and adhere to that ideology. A party without an ideology is like a man with no intelligence, a ship without a compass." [Footnote 3] [Ho Chi Minh, *ibid.*, p 189] The CPV is a party embracing Marxism-Leninism as its ideological foundation. To Ho Chi Minh, however, Marxism-Leninism was always only an ideological weapon, a guide for action. It was definitely no dogma, no bible, no panacea, no all-purpose guidance for every situation, and no sterile theory. He had never regarded this ideology as a "golden rule" with which vibrant reality must comply. On the contrary, he demanded that party cadres firmly grasp the essence, the nature of that doctrine so as to creatively apply it to the reality in Vietnam and to develop it ceaselessly. Promoting fresh progress in life; building for the country a stable political system, a democratic state, a developed, healthy, and progressive economy and society in which people would live in humaneness and justice, and in which honor and dignity would be upheld...—this is the line, the formula of action for a revolutionary party and also a contribution to the development of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine in the new situation and conditions.

President Ho Chi Minh often reminded our party that it should know how to enrich its intellect with the knowledge of mankind, the national cultural traditions, and the experience of the revolutionary struggle movements of the people in other countries, and that it must become a political organization really representing the intellect of the nation.

A firm and strong ruling party worthy of its name must be capable of setting forth correct lines, strategies, and tactics. According to President Ho Chi Minh, the process of formulating lines and strategies involves the following:

1. The party must have knowledge and a revolutionary theory;
2. In determining its lines (expressed in slogans and directives), the party must always rely on the realistic conditions and revolutionary experience of other countries, of our country, and of various localities;
3. The party must always rely on the masses to check to see whether these slogans and directives are correct or not;
4. The party must always reexamine all its work. In all its work, the party must always side with the masses;
5. In doing each job the party must adhere to its principles and closely coordinate with the masses in order to lead them, to learn from them, and to improve them;
6. The party must firmly maintain its revolutionary character, skillfully use lively operational methods, and know how to organize implementation and to combine the masses' everyday and long-term interests;
7. The party must never hide its shortcomings, never fear criticisms, always check to see how its directives and resolutions are implemented. Otherwise, these directives and resolutions would become empty words; worse still, they might affect the people's trust in the party.

The party is not an organization one joins to win high positions or financial gains. The party must fulfill the task of

national liberation and make the fatherland prosperous and strong and the people happy. This is the goal and also the principle to follow in building the party of Ho Chi Minh, a party with pure, firm, and strong organizations and fully capable of leading the people in winning back and keeping power, building a prosperous, strong, and independent country, and bringing about democracy, freedom, and happiness for the people.

A firm and strong ruling party is a party capable of leading the people in organizing a state that really is a servant of the people. This state, from the center down to the villages, is "all a servant of the people, that is, a state meant to take charge of public affairs for the people." This state must love and respect the people and must try its best to do anything it deems good for the people and to avoid doing anything harmful to them.

Ho Chi Minh perceived very clearly and implemented very consistently the notion that "our party is a ruling party." This means that the party must maintain its role as a guide to help the people make revolution and to enable them to become the real masters of the country and to select worthy representatives to take care of state affairs. This organization of the Communists must be composed of people who are driven by revolutionary ideals and equipped with scientific knowledge and who have grown up in the revolutionary and patriotic movements of the people. Ho Chi Minh did not stop at V.I. Lenin's thesis that "the Communist Party is a combination of Marxism and the workers movement," instead, he creatively developed that thesis in keeping with our country's characteristics. The CPV is a product of the combination of Marxism-Leninism with the workers movement and the patriotic movement. It is because our party, founded and trained by Ho Chi Minh, has really and always been such an organization that it has been able to win and keep its ruling position.

According to Ho Chi Minh, those Communists who are trusted and entrusted by the people with various positions in the state apparatus must absolutely not turn into power-craving people bent on seeking fame and fortune for themselves and their families. The following words by Ho Chi Minh must be regarded as an exemplary oath to be taken by the Communists in their capacity as members of a ruling party:

"I absolutely have no wish for fame or fortune. If I have to assume the presidency now, it is because that is a mandate from the people, and I will try my best to do my duties, just like a soldier who goes to the front at the people's behest.

"When the people allow me to step down, I will be very glad to do so. I have only one desire, a strong desire, and that is how to make our country completely independent and our people completely free, and to provide every one of our compatriots with food, clothing, and education." [Footnote 4] [Ibid., Vol 4, p 100]

3. On the Dangers Facing a Ruling Party

When a communist party has successfully led the people in seizing power, the glory of historic feats of arms and achievements ... naturally determines the positions and powers of the communists. Once a communist party has become the ruling party, its members naturally hold the key positions in the state apparatus from the central to the grass-roots level. The new situation and totally new tasks, namely the organization and building of a new society, confront the power-holding

communist with a number of dangers. According to V.I. Lenin, power-holding communists have three main enemies: first, "communist arrogance," second, "illiteracy," and third, "corruption." "communist arrogance" drives party members in charge of state affairs to think that communist ordinances can resolve any problems. Meanwhile, "illiteracy" pushes the communists out of politics in an objective manner. An illiterate is a person standing outside politics. If such persons are not taught the alphabet first, there can be no politics for them, but there can be only rumors, untruthful stories, fanciful yarns, prejudices.... As for "corruption," it has the same effects. As long as corruption exists, one cannot talk about politics.... A law may even produce worse results if, in reality, it is implemented in the conditions of corruption still being condoned and spreading. [Footnote 5] [V.I. Lenin: *Complete Works*, Progress Publishing House, Moscow, 1978, Vol 44, pp 217-218] Also according to V.I. Lenin, if the power-holding communists fail to overcome bureaucracy, corruption, and bribery, their cause will also cease to exist.

We all still remember that, only a very short time after the *Declaration of Independence* announced (on 2 September 1945) the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam [DRV], President Ho Chi Minh sent a letter (dated 17 October 1945) to the people's committees of the various zones, provinces, districts, and villages. In the letter, he criticized the "very serious mistakes" made by state officials such as breaches of the law, abuse of position, debauchery, appropriation of public wealth, division, and arrogance. More than a year later, he sent two other letters—"Letter to the Comrades in Bac Bo" and "Letter to the Comrades in Trung Bo." The contents of these letters were also aimed at criticizing the party and state organs that had committed shortcomings such as localism, sectarianism, militarism, bureaucracy, narrow-mindedness, formalism, red tape, indiscipline, lax discipline, selfishness, arrogance, debauchery....

The contents of the three letters from Ho Chi Minh mentioned above can be said to be a warning of the danger of degeneration facing the Communists when they hold power. If they do not pay attention to taking precautions against this danger or overcoming it, the possibility of their losing power because of the loss of popular support cannot be ruled out. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on building the party once it has seized power consist in how to prevent and control at all costs the "virulent diseases," the dangers that threaten to corrupt the party, causing it to cease being a public servant, and turning it into a person who lords it over and harms the people. "If the government harms the people, the people have a right to dismiss it." [Footnote 6] [Ho Chi Minh, *ibid.*, p 283] This is an "open and straightforward" statement by a party that considers serving the people its goal; it also constitutes an eternal truth, an accurate political forecast for all communists with power in their hands.

4. On Party Reorganization

Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on a ruling party are also reflected in his viewpoints on party reorganization. It is not true, as some mistakenly believe, that only after realizing the danger of "the virulent diseases" spreading within our party did Ho Chi Minh write about the need to reorganize it in his testament. In fact, our Uncle Ho never considered party reorganization an expedient or a passive policy; he always regarded it as a necessary and sufficient condition for party leadership to be

really essential and indispensable. In his book *Duong Cach Menh [The Revolutionary Path]*, written in 1947, presented next to the concept of the necessity of a leading party was that of the necessity of party reorganization. In the process of making preparations for the founding of the CPV as well as in his unceasing training of it, Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on party reorganization were also given very clear expression. In 1949, in his address at the closing session of the sixth party cadre conference, after pointing out the tasks to be carried out immediately (successfully conducting the war of resistance and building a new form of democracy in order to advance to socialism), he stressed: "To fulfill these tasks, first of all we must reorganize the internal ranks of the party...." Holding fast to materialist dialectics, Ho Chi Minh predicted the movement of the party itself in the process of change and development of the revolutionary situation to clearly point to the objective necessity of party reorganization. When the revolution encountered difficulties, he touched on this issue with a calm, perceptive attitude, thereby preventing the party from falling into passivity, pessimism, and vacillation. When the revolution was in the full flush of victory, he also raised the issue of "the party must be reorganized first" to ward off the malady of "communist arrogance" that might develop in the party as a result of party members, bedazzled by their great feats of arms, becoming subjective and self-satisfied and eventually indulging in depravity and debauchery. Reality has showed that once a communist party has become a ruling party, it is very easy for its cadres and party members who have position and power to "lose themselves." Yesterday, they might be "great" men trusted and respected by the masses, but today they may quickly turn into mediocre, despicable persons hated and detested by the people. There are people who were enthusiastic, loyal, and unafraid of dangers, hardships, or the enemy during the past struggles, that is, people who are credited with services to the revolution. However, once they have acquired some power, these people turned conceited, extravagant, corrupt, spendthrift, bureaucratic... and, as a result, became guilty of doing disservices to the revolution. For this reason, to reorganize the party is precisely to "save" cadres, restore their revolutionary virtues, educate them, and take them back to the revolutionary path. It also means to restore the party's political prestige among the people, a vital matter for a ruling party.

5. On Cadre Work

In its capacity as the ruling party, the Communist Party must know how to strengthen all-people unity, bring into full play the dynamism, creativity, and the sense of mastery of the people of all walks of life; discover, train, and foster talent to mobilize the strength of the entire people for national construction. It can be said that "talent and national construction" is a strategic issue bearing on the prosperity or decline of a country. It was precisely for this reason that only eight months after the SRV Government was formed, Ho Chi Minh was already "afraid that the government may have not heard and seen everything it should, thus making it impossible for people of talent and virtue to come forward." It was also for the same reason that he announced that, to be able to "correct this matter and to put virtuous and talented persons in important positions," he requested that "the localities must investigate immediately to find out where there are people of talent and virtue capable of rendering useful services to the nation and people, and report their findings to the government at once." [Footnote 7] [Ibid., p 192]

Looking for talented and virtuous people was a link in the whole cadre policy of Ho Chi Minh. Knowing full well the deficiencies of the contingent of cadres after it assumed power and began to organize and build a new society, Ho Chi Minh paid keen attention to the question of educating cadres and requested that they should study constantly to know how to do their jobs. He held that making revolution was a profession, that every profession required training, that cadres must have good political knowledge and high professional skills, must be "both red and expert" and "brilliantly red and profoundly expert." With regard to the leadership echelons and organizational agencies, they must *select and use* cadres in a correct manner. If V.I. Lenin requested that the right people should be put in the right places and that personnel should be selected to suit their work, Ho Chi Minh advised that "people should be used in the same way as wood is." This concept reflects V.I. Lenin's viewpoint on cadre work and at the same time connotes a humane, tolerant spirit by pointing out that all men are usable, just as there are "different kinds of wood for different kinds of work," and that every person can contribute his talent and energy to the common cause according to his ability.

If Karl Marx believed that the succeeding generations must be capable of "standing on the shoulders" of the preceding ones to move forward, Ho Chi Minh said, in our ancestors' traditional ways of saying things, that "Lucky is the family in which the son does better than his father," and that "For the interests of one hundred years, let us grow people." Uncle Ho has always been a shining example, and he requested that the older generation should lead an exemplary life, set good examples, and educate and train the younger generation to be "the revolutionary generation of the future." This is also a very important task of a ruling party.

To educate the younger generation, we communists certainly cannot forget Ho Chi Minh's advice that to educate others in making revolution, one must revolutionize oneself first. This thought agrees with Karl Marx's great idea: It is high time the educators themselves should be educated.

Thus, Ho Chi Minh's fundamental thinking on a ruling party can be said as being the following: The party must constantly renovate and revamp itself to preserve and develop its status of a genuine revolutionary party.

Relations Between the Number and Quality of Party Members

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in Vietnamese No 7, Jul 92 pp 18-20

[Article by Nguyen Kim Dinh, Ho Chi Minh City]

[Text] In the past, we often remarked that "party members are numerous but not strong." That remark gave expression to the real state of relations between the number and quality of the contingent of party members. The rounds of party member classification conducted in the early 1980's showed that about 35 percent of party members performed with good effects, approximately 55 percent of them were "average," and around 10 percent weak. In the late 1980's and early 1990, the number of party members performing with good effects dropped to approximately 25 percent, the number of "average" ones totaled around 60 percent, and the number of weak ones remained about 15 percent, including some whose qualifications had to be examined and who had to be expelled from the party immediately. But according to a more realistic

examination, at present there are about 50 percent of party members who do not meet the standards required of a party member in the new stage (this group include the so-called "average" party members who do not have sufficient knowledge and capability to lead the masses, and weak party members).

This state of affairs has come into being and dragged on for a long time because the thinking on a model of party member has been slow in changing and because we have maintained for too long the models of party member of the period of national liberation revolution and the period in which of the ruling party operated in the environment of a subsidy-based economy.

During the period of resistance against foreign aggression, although everybody had to endure severe trials and great sacrifices, including the sacrifice of one's life, but because all activities were then focused on ensuring victory in fighting, everyday work seemed somewhat simpler and less complicated. The number of scientific branches applied to life were small and limited, as were the number of scientific workers and the sphere of scientific activities. The general cultural level of the people was low. Therefore, in admitting new party members during that period, the basic party organizations in general did not consider the cultural and professional levels an important standard. In some places, at times large numbers of new party members with a very low cultural standard were admitted, provided they felt hatred for the aggressors, showed high patriotism, fought well, and dared to make sacrifices for the revolutionary cause. Not a few of these party members eventually became commanding officers at various levels on the strength of their experience only, and some were even awarded the title of "Hero of the Armed Forces."

When we shifted to economic building, although the economy then was still a subsidy-based one, we already began to realize that party members must have a certain cultural and professional standard. However, this notion was not thoroughly understood in the party, for this reason, nothing much has changed in cadre work and party development. The majority of our party members still operate in an empirical fashion, and those who have become leadership and management cadres at various levels often owe their promotions not to a high level of intelligence and ability but mainly to their personal prestige and their long participation in the revolution. We have at times maintained that political and military cadres could do any jobs or hold any positions to which they were assigned, a notion that has given rise to such terms as "multipurpose cadre" and "all-purpose cadre," which mean a cadre who can perform in any position and do any job without having to acquire any knowledge or professional skill first.

Moreover, for several years our party and state were slow in determining the standards of various cadre positions, therefore the training and strengthening of the contingent of leadership and management cadres were not really realistic, appropriate, and systematic. Importance was often not attached to the kinds of knowledge that holders of various positions must have to do their jobs. Not a few people's committee chairmen at various levels had never undergone training at the National School of Administration. This school was founded not long ago; was this because we had thought for some time that the country could be managed by means of administrative orders and not law? Now that we

have switched to the management by law, not a few people's committee chairmen at various levels have been thrown into considerable confusion because they do not understand or lack a firm grasp of the law, and many of them have breached the law while carrying out their managerial duties, and so forth.

If the three factors making up the standards of a party member (political quality, knowledge and capability to lead the masses, and ethical quality), are used as criteria for evaluation, then there are around 50 percent of party members in the entire party who are deficient in knowledge and capability to lead the masses. This group normally comprise ordinary party members (those who do not hold any leadership positions) whose cultural level is low. The majority of these comrades have a very limited capacity for taking in party lines and resolutions and the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, usually perceiving and implementing them in a superfluous, passive, and mechanical manner, which inevitably affects their political quality. The mechanical application of the principle that "wherever there are people and the masses there must be party organizations and members" has also resulted in a failure to ensure that the necessary standards of knowledge and leadership capability are met in admitting new party members.

At the current stage, when the party operates in a multisector commodity economy, such relations between the number and quality of party members as mentioned above prove all the more inadequate. At this stage, the people's level of knowledge is higher than before, the scientific and technical revolution is developing like a storm throughout the world. "Opening our door" to the world has become a vital requirement for our country. The party's work has become much more varied, diversified, and complicated than before. This requires that party members should absolutely be people who excel in all respects and should be of a higher intellectual caliber than the masses in order to lead them. This is true. For example, in scientific research agencies, if party members have too low a cultural and professional standard, how can they lead the masses who are more knowledgeable? It is the same in factories and enterprises, if party members there lack the necessary cultural and professional standards and are not conversant with the various production and business management duties, how can they effectively exert leadership over the masses? It was also due to a misconception on the role and leadership effects of cadres and party members that one general who, after being appointed minister, planned to militarize his enterprises and assign Army officers to the leadership positions in workshops, bureaus, and sections. Luckily, this way of doing things was stopped in time. However, such cadre assignment methods have left no few serious consequences. A number of Army officers, who were only accustomed to leading men in combat, were appointed factory or enterprise directors immediately after their transfers from the Army without having to attend any training courses. As a result, not a few factories of enterprises under their authority operated in the red or went bankrupt, causing losses of tens of billions of dong of the state's money. Many were prosecuted and jailed, and some even committed suicide. According to press reports, for every 100 directors brought to trial, more than 70 were people who had a low cultural standard and had neither been trained nor equipped with the necessary knowledge for holding a directorship. Therefore, they had to apply the law of the jungle and fell into

criminal practices. This is a lesson the validity of which has been proved by reality at a fairly stiff price.

One of the causes of the decline in the party's prestige in recent years is the fact that the old model of party member is no longer suitable for the new stage. Many party members are no longer the shining examples that used to ensure them the trust and love of the masses. Because their perceptions have failed to keep pace with the new situation, a number of party members have become sluggish and turned into obstacles to the party's renovation undertaking and the country's future development. This may be the main cause of the state of party members being numerous but not strong. As for the party members who violate the standards of political and ethic quality, they are more identifiable and, in fact, regularly dealt with by party organizations. Moreover, these party members are not numerous and account for only a few percent of the total party membership.

The market economy, with its diversity and dynamism, requires that all organizations and members of society should be more active and dynamic. To suit this characteristic, we should change our thinking on the number and quality of party members in accordance with Lenin's guidance: "It is better to be small in number but good." The time when large numbers of party members are needed to lead the masses by "holding their hands and telling them how to do their jobs" has passed. Nowadays, the party should have a contingent of party members sufficiently intelligent and conversant with practical work in order to set forth lines, positions, resolutions, and policies in conformity with the laws of social development and the people's will, thereby enabling the people and various mass organizations to consciously organize their implementation under the party's guidance and control.

In my opinion, it is not sufficient to determine that persons holding key positions at the provincial and municipal levels must have a level-3 cultural standard and at the precinct and district levels, a level-2 cultural standard; and that ordinary party members must have at least a level-2 cultural standard. The standards of various cadres' positions and those of party members must be determined on the basis of the political tasks and trends of our time in order to establish progressive criteria, to strive to overcome the weaknesses and backwardness of the contingent of party members, to create new possibilities, and to satisfactorily fulfill the political tasks. The prolonged weaknesses of the contingent of cadres and party members and its inadequacy for the political tasks, as appraised in many party resolutions, are due to the fact that for a long time now there have been no realistic and correct standards of cadres' positions and party members; specifically, there have been no progressive criteria for cadres and party members to strive to meet. This state of affairs has caused not a few cadres and party members not only to lack a cultural standard and capability but also to be reluctant to study; but because they were liked by their superiors, they were still promoted and given pay raises very fast.

To meet the requirements of political tasks in the new stage, party members must have the necessary level of education and professional skills to compete in the manual and intellectual labor markets and to maintain key positions in the economy, state agencies, and mass organizations. Only in this way can the party's leadership role in the current multisector commodity economic environment be guaranteed.

The new guideline for new party member recruitment is that it should be done in accordance with the requirements of the leadership duties, and that we should not run after quantity. In addition to being equipped with political and ethic quality, party members absolutely must be persons who have knowledge and the capability to lead the masses and must be progressive people in the various working collectives so that they can, in case of necessity, be assigned to management or leadership positions. At present, a number of enterprises and corporations (such as some textile, engineering, metallurgical, electronic... enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City and the Water Supply Corporation in Ba Ria-Vung Tau) have laid down the regulation that new party members must be high school graduates; in expanding their party membership, they have paid greater attention to people holding the positions of production team leaders and up.

To create sources of prospective members for the expansion of the party, party organizations should create proper conditions for the masses to acquire a general education and to receive professional training, including foreign language training, so that they can operating in the multisector commodity economy. Through these efforts, party organizations will be able to discover outstanding persons. With regard to the party members admitted in the past, all echelons should work out concrete plans to compel those who are 40 years of age or younger to strive to study as required by their tasks. Concerning those in this number who refuse to study or who have no capacity for fresh knowledge, we should allow them to leave the party in different ways to suit each person, thus avoiding causing them psychological and mental shocks. Regarding those party members who are old and who have acquired many years' party seniority but have a low cultural and professional level, they should be assigned to suitable jobs and should not be given tasks that are beyond their capacity. At the same time, a system of wages based on party seniority and contributions to the revolution should be instituted for the benefit of these comrades to reduce any loss in their material benefits and to improve their psychological and mental stability.

If we satisfactorily implement the above measures, we will certainly be able to increase the proportion of outstanding party members and cross off the number of "average" ones. Thus, our party will be firmer and stronger and able to ensure its leading role in the new stage.

Work Related to War Invalids and Fallen Soldiers in the Situation

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 7, Jul 92 pp 21-24

[Article by Tran Dinh Hoan; not translated]

Renovate and Develop Our Country's Public Health Service

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 7, Jul 92 pp 25-27

[Article by Pham Song; not translated]

Elect a National Assembly of New Quality

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 7, Jul 92 pp 28-29

[Article not translated]

Research—Exchange of Opinions

The Right to Land Ownership and the Right to Land Use

923E0016E Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN
in Vietnamese No 7, Jul 92 pp 30-32, 36

[Article by Nguyen Sinh Cuc, M.A. in economics, director of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, General Department of Statistics]

[Text] *Editor's note: The right to land ownership and the right to land use are a very important question that has attracted our readers' keen attention, but they are also a very complicated and sensitive issue. The documents of the seventh party congress and the 1992 Constitution affirmed: "Land is under the ownership of the entire people; it is allotted by the state to peasant households for use on a long-term basis—land may not be privatized." However, in the concretization of this policy for implementation, there still are not a few divergent opinions which we should continue to study in depth. The following article is published as reference material for our readers.*

Regarding the renovation of the management mechanism in agriculture, the seventh party congress resolution clearly pointed out "... we advocate considering the households of cooperative members as independent economic units... Land is under the ownership of the entire people; it is allotted by the state to peasant households for use on a long-term basis... The adoption of the cooperative mode of production is effected according to the principle of voluntariness and mutual benefit and without coercion." [Footnote 1] [Documents of the Seventh National Party Congress of Delegates, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1991, p 17]

To really introduce this party resolution to life in the rural areas, it is necessary to concretize the issue of the right to land ownership and the right to land use in accordance with the renovation viewpoint to suit the present real situation.

1. The Right to Land Ownership

Land is under the ownership of the entire people (state-owned public land). This is natural. However, the question that should be raised here is: Does the state exercise identical right to ownership over different kinds of land currently available, without distinction?

In my opinion, the state should make a distinction in the right of ownership over each kind of land.

The state should exercise the right to full ownership over forest land, rivers, seas, the continental shelf, areas containing minerals, cropland that has been developed for several years, and land for specialized use (land for construction of projects in service of production and everyday life). This is rational because all this land is the state's property bequeathed by history. The state exercises its right to ownership over this land through the law to strictly manage and distribute it to peasants for use on a long-term basis so as to rationally exploit the potential of each kind of existing land.

The state, together with the people, can exercise the right to joint ownership over various kinds of infertile land, wasteland, barren hill and mountain, fallow land, and so forth, which are now ownerless. According to statistics, at present in the entire country there are up to 14,924,000 hectares of unused land, including 12.3 million hectares of wasteland and millions of hectares of fallow land. In the Plain of Reeds

alone, 120,000 hectares of fallow land remain unused. To exploit and improve this kind of land and to gradually turn it into agricultural, forest, and fishery land, there must be considerable capital investment. The state's capital investment sources are very limited, while the capital sources among the people and from foreign countries are substantial but still remain in the form of latent potential. To transform this potential into capital for opening virgin land, reclaiming fallow land, improving the soil, and carrying out afforestation on a scale involving tens of millions of hectares, it is absolutely necessary to radically renovate the agricultural policy in general, and the land policy in particular. Recognizing the right of the state and peasants to joint ownership over the land newly opened with capital mainly provided by peasants is an important step to fruitfully implement the party's policy of renovation in agriculture.

In their essence, the "full ownership" and "joint ownership" of land differ in various points. Specifically, under the form of "full ownership," peasants are people who rent land from the state for use on a long-term basis and who have only the right to use that land. On the contrary, under the form of "joint ownership," peasants are people who invest capital and work together with the state to open new land and expand the cultivated area, therefore they have the right to use this land forever, and to inherit, transfer, and rent (or even sell) it more freely and liberally than other kinds of land.

Application of the form of "joint ownership" of land in newly opened areas is necessary because it will create material incentives in attracting all sources of capital from the people for large-scale land reclamation purposes. This is the characteristic of the model of joint ownership of the means of production which necessarily exists in the multisector economic structure chosen by the seventh party congress. This also is a mode of association between the state and peasants to attain the goal of "prosperous people and strong country."

Realities over the past years have proved that any areas, any localities that found a popular solution to the land issue were able to mobilize all sources of capital among the people, including capital for investment in land reclamation, and to achieve encouraging results. Thoai Son District (An Giang Province), located deep in the Long Xuyen Quadrangle, owing to its bold policy of "anyone who has capital and manpower may expand his cultivated area as much as he wishes," managed to raise 28 billion dong in people-owned capital to open new land, reclaim fallow land, and improve the soil, thereby turning a wasteland called the "white area" into a double-cropping area of 32,000 hectares in 1991, an increase of 24,000 hectares over the previous two years, while the state had to invest only 1 billion dong for the building of a watershed canal. Similar situations have been reported in the newly opened Plain of Reeds, the Ca Mau Peninsula, and Thu Thua District (Long An Province). In these areas, the value of each piece of newly opened or improved land was a common product of the new "people-and-state" joint investment formula, in which the people's capital is the mainstay. In the current conditions of our country's agriculture and rural areas (little cropland, a large population, surpluses of labor, unemployment, low income), it is necessary to encourage the people to invest capital in land reclamation. In both the short and long terms, the "joint ownership" form has the effect of stimulating individuals and collectives (including overseas Vietnamese and foreigners) to invest capital in opening new land, reclaiming fallow land, improving the soil, and planting

trees on barren hills, thereby expanding agricultural and forestry land (both quantitatively and qualitatively), and increasing society's material wealth.

Of course, along with the "joint ownership" form, the state should adopt other policies to strongly encourage all organizations and individuals to invest in opening new land and reclaiming fallow land, such as allowing adequate tax exemption or reduction, providing materials, helping with product marketing, and, in particular, investing in building the infrastructure in the newly opened areas of land.

However, the form of "joint ownership" over newly opened lands also has its definite limitations. It may give rise to various forms of exploitation of hired workers by some landowners, excessively widen the chasm between the rich and the poor, breed the tendency to implement the right to "joint ownership" even over old cropland areas, and so forth. Of course, these limitations are not substantial, and the socialist state can check and overcome them by means of various macroscopic management mechanisms and policies applied in each specific period of time to new areas of land.

2. The Right to Land Use

The state's concept of giving peasants the right to use land on a long-term basis is correct and in keeping with the people's wish because it enables peasants to invest with confidence in improving the soil and increasing the fertility of land during the time they use it. On the basis of this viewpoint, I think that we should resolve the following issues.

A. Who Gives Peasant Households the Right to Land Use?

First of all, it is necessary to affirm that receivers of land are "peasant households" in general. Therefore, peasant households are the entities that use land, the persons who directly rent land from the state, and the state is the landowner, the one who grants peasants the right to use land. Agricultural production cooperatives or agricultural production collectives do not allocate land to peasants for the following reasons:

First, a common psychology of peasants is that they want to receive land directly from the state, not through any intermediary organizations. Lessons learned from the "collectivization" period have showed that the more intermediary organizations peasants have to go through, the more the land fund will shrink, and the greater losses will become. Contract quotas will also become unstable and, generally speaking, will rise gradually, hurting the interests of the peasant households directly engaging in production.

Second, cooperatives or production collectives are only a form of production organization and absolutely not landowners. The existence or nonexistence of this form of organization is decided by the congresses of cooperative or collective members, therefore it cannot represent the landowner. Even if an agricultural production cooperative is organized on a village scale or at a high level, it is by law not a landowner, therefore it cannot allot land to peasant households. After Resolution 10 was issued, in reality many cooperatives and production collectives in the mountainous regions and in Nam Bo were dissolved or continued to exist in name only. For this reason, in those places the state directly gave peasants the right to land use. On the nationwide scale, only the state at the district level has the full authority to rent land out to peasant households in the form of "long-term contract" or "package contract" land.

Third, under the new management mechanism the peasant household is a basic economic unit enjoying independence in production and business operations, whereas the cooperative is not a basic economic unit, because it does not exist on a long-term term, lacks stability, and does not have the function of managing the entire production and product-collecting process, but is mainly concerned with providing services. Each peasant household can participate in diverse forms of economic cooperation organizations.

Fourth, after the advent of Resolution 10, in many localities, especially in North and Central Vietnam, there was the state of agricultural production cooperatives directly allotting land under contract to the households of their members. Many key cooperative cadres took advantage of this function of allotting land under contract to enrich themselves. They violated the allotment principles applied in the "package contract" system, kept good, nearby land for their families and relatives, arbitrarily raised contract quotas and increased the number of fees (more than 15 kinds of fees) to be collected on contract land, thereby preventing the peasants from carrying out production with peace of mind. A number of households returned their contract land because the contract quotas were already too high but still kept going up gradually. (In 1989, the amount of agricultural tax collected at the Giao Lac Cooperative in Xuan Thuy District, Nam Ha Province, accounted for up to 13-18 percent of the contract output.)

Fifth, if the state directly allots land to peasants under contract, it will help save land while ensuring a fair and equal distribution of land among contractors in rural areas.

B. The Time Limit of the Right to Land Use

The state grants peasants the right to use land on a *long-term basis*. So, how many years does long-term mean? Because of our failure to clarify this notion, at present localities are applying it in vastly different ways. In the northern provinces, the time limit is universally set at from 10 to 15 years, while in the coastal region of Central Vietnam, it is from five to 10 years, but in some areas such as Hoa Nhon District (Binh Dinh Province), it is only from three to five years. This is one of the causes of the peasants' failure to really invest with confidence in the development of production on the land they received under contract and their reluctance in accepting land allotted through bidding. Results of sociological surveys of more than 6,500 peasant households throughout the country in 1990 showed that 59.4 percent of them did not like to receive land awarded through bidding, 3.9 percent wanted to return contract land to their cooperatives, and 25.9 percent thought that land contract methods were not rational yet. In Nam Bo, the principal method of allotting land on contract is "to let people keep the land they have been cultivating."

To overcome the above phenomena step by step, I would like to suggest linking the stabilization of peasant households' right to use land on a long-term basis to the socioeconomic and land conditions of each area and to each kind of land.

—Concerning the land used to grow annual plants (farm land), a stable contract period of at least 20 years should be applied.

—Concerning the land used to grow perennial plants (agricultural and forest land), a stable contract period of at least 30 years based on plant life cycles should be applied, as for forest land in particular, this period could be 50 years or longer.

—Concerning the land used for household economic development, the area of which should be universally fixed at 10 percent of the land fund of any locality, the right to use it should be made permanent so that peasant households can take the initiative in building and developing orchard and forest economies in accordance with the truck farming-pisciculture-animal husbandry formula or the truck farming-pisciculture-animal husbandry-forestry formula.

—We should not keep "land reserves" in villages and cooperatives because as long as "land reserves" exist, negative practices in the distribution and use of the land fund will continue and a high birth rate will be encouraged (since the more members and laborers a household has, the more contract land it will receive from the "land reserves"). The realities that emerged four years after the advent of Resolution 10 have proved that the existence of "land reserves" has given rise to more negativism than positivism in the socioeconomic situation in the rural areas. "Land reserves" cannot ensure social justice; they constitute nothing more than a kind of formalist humanitarianism.

To overcome the state of arbitrariness in the allotment of contract land at present, the state should adopt regulations at an early date on the *maximum* and *minimum* time for the use of each kind of land, on the contract output, on the time limit for the application of a fixed tax rate, and on the echelons empowered to change that limit.

C. The Right To Inherit and Transfer Land

This is a complicated question on which there have been differing or even opposite viewpoints. The *first* viewpoint does not recognize the right to inherit and transfer land lest it should create a chasm between the rich and the poor in the rural areas.

The *second* viewpoint, on the contrary, affirms that peasants should be granted the right to inherit and transfer land. I agree with this viewpoint because it responds to the wish of the peasants, accords with the need to accumulate and concentrate land for goods production, and creates proper conditions for a redivision of labor in the countryside. On the other hand, it also creates proper conditions for reducing the number of laborers engaged in crop growing and bringing into full play the land potential for the purpose of gradually shaping a comprehensive agricultural economic structure having commodity agricultural products and developed trades and services. The right to transfer and inherit land of the peasant households that receive contract land from the state will permit the resolution of the contradiction that has emerged recently in the countryside under the "contract system based on Resolution 10": That is the contradiction between the fragmentary, egalitarian, autarkic contract method and the need to develop a commodity agriculture and to redivide labor according to the method of "letting people engage in any trades they are good at." Resolving the contradictions concerning land will pave the way for the development of the productive forces in the rural areas in keeping with the viewpoint on multisector commodity production and socialist orientation and will, first of all, help promote the accumulation of land.

The question posed here is what form land inheritance and transfer should take to enable individuals to achieve the goal of making a more effective use of land and to ensure the state's ownership of land? To this end, in my opinion, in the

current conditions of our country's agriculture and rural areas, the form of land inheritance and transfer must ensure adherence to the following principle: *the right purpose, the right recipient, and voluntary execution* under the management and supervision of responsible state agencies (the issuer of land use certificates *must be* a responsible state agency, *not a cooperative*). A suitable form of transfer is one made with payment of refund based on agreement on prices. The responsible sectors should study land prices at an early date to provide a basis for the land transfer process in rural areas under the macroscopic management of the socialist state.

On Private Ownership of the Means of Production in Our Country at Present

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 7, Jul 92 pp 33-36

[Article by Hoang The Lien; not translated]

Develop the Monetary and Credit Market

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 7, Jul 92 pp 37-39

[Article by Hoang Ngoc Hoa; not translated]

Politics and the Building of Political Science

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 7, Jul 92 pp 40-42

[Article by Ho Van Thong; not translated]

Opinions and Experience

All-People National Defense Work in the 5th Military Region

923E0016F Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN
in Vietnamese No 7, Jul 92 pp 43-44, 47

[Article by Lieutenant General Phan Hoan, commander of the 5th Military Region]

[Text] The land area of the 5th Military Region is located in the middle of the country's panhandle and comprises *three* regions of great strategic significance not only in the military field but also in the socioeconomic field: the lowland and urban region, which stretches for more than 800 km along the North-South national highway and railroad from the Hai Van Pass down to Dong Nai Province and is dotted with many populous cities, towns, and townships, numerous fertile fields, and several major airfields and piers offering convenient means of domestic and international communications; the coastal region, which extends for 1,077 km and includes more than 200,000 square km of continental shelf, the two archipelagoes of Hoang Sa (Paracels) and Truong Sa (Spratlys), and hundreds of other islands of all sizes in the East Sea; and the mountainous region, which lies to the west of the lowland provinces, includes the Central Highlands, and shares a 723 km-border with Southern Laos and Northeastern Cambodia.

The provinces of Central Vietnam have abundant economic potential and a diversified economic structure in which "agriculture, forestry, and fishery are combined with small industry and handicrafts" and in which "industry is developing increasingly." In recent years, all localities have increased and diversified their sources of imports and exports, have operated dynamically in accordance with the

market mechanism, and have expanded international cooperation. The people in the central provinces are industrious by nature, have a tradition of undauntedness and a high revolutionary spirit, and have been trained, tempered, and tested in the various resolute wars of resistance of the nation. These are the basic advantages.

Recently, the world situation underwent complicated changes; in particular, the collapse of the socialist countries in East Europe and the Soviet Union has left serious consequences. Capitalizing on this situation, imperialism has strongly pressed forward with its global strategy in an attempt to abolish socialism and impose a world order of their own design.

These happenings have had a negative effect on the development of the revolution in our country as a whole. In the area of the 5th Military Region, there have been numerous additional phenomena showing that reactionaries of all stripes at home and abroad have been making every effort to rally forces; colluding with opportunist, disaffected, and corrupt elements; intensifying all kinds of propaganda and sabotage activities; and shamelessly calling for the overthrow of our regime. At the border of the western provinces, after the solution to the Cambodia issue was achieved, the situation became more complicated, and elements in the reactionary organization of FULRO [United Front for the Struggle of the Oppressed Peoples] came back to operate in many places.

Clearly realizing the position, situation, and responsibility of the military region, and with a profound understanding of Political Bureau Resolution 2 on national defense and Directive 56 of the chairman of the Council of Ministers on building provincial and city defense zones, over the past few years the party committee's Standing Committee and the command of the 5th Military Region have fruitfully carried out a number of tasks concerning security and national defense.

First of all, public order and security have been maintained in the inland as well as at the border. The defense disposition and potential in the entire military region have been consolidated and developed step by step. Acting in accordance with their plans, all the nine provinces and 108 districts and towns in the military region have conducted experimental defense zone exercises according to the new mechanism, namely that of *"The party leads, the administration manages, the military organ serves as the staff, and the military commander assumes the unified command of all Armed Forces."* Recently, one after another various localities also conducted exercises in a number of important cities and towns according to their plans to counter "peaceful evolution," rebellions, and subversion. Owing to such exercises, we were able to check the results of the process of building defense zones; to reexamine our capability to stay combat ready in any situation of hostilities and sabotage carried out by the enemy; to gain experience in mobilizing the Armed Forces, the reserve forces, and the economy in the situation of its being shifted from peacetime to wartime; and to consolidate, reorganize, and improve the quality of the building of the Armed Forces and the militia and self-defense forces at the grass roots. Some provinces, such as Quang Nam-Danang, Khanh Hoa, and Dac Lac, already have developed the capability to produce weapons for their Armed Forces....

Over the past few years, along with building its defense disposition, the 5th Military Region has closely coordinated

with various localities to speed up the resolution of numerous problems concerning Army welfare work, particularly a number of tasks left undone after the war, such as surveying and regrouping fallen soldiers' graves, managing and looking after war invalids and the families of fallen soldiers. In the 5th Military Region alone, there are up to 45,425 war invalids (one-fourth of whom are seriously handicapped), 158,091 fallen soldiers, and 249,779 families of fallen soldiers. Various localities have surveyed 183,914 graves of fallen soldiers, grouped 144,899 of them, and notified the deaths of 74,380 soldiers to their next of kin. Under the "return-the-favors" movement, various provinces have given as additional allowances hundreds of millions of dong—drawn from their local budgets—and hundreds of tonnes of rice to the families of war invalids (according to the figures calculated up to 1990, six provinces had distributed 838 million dong and 665 tonnes of rice). Many mass organizations have welcomed seriously handicapped war invalids to their localities and into the families of their members. Various localities have built nine provincial cemeteries, 52 district cemeteries, 334 village and subward cemeteries, and 38 commemorative monuments. As a token of their gratitude, they have also built 4,163 houses—with a total area of 142,890 square meters and at a cost of 12,489 million dong—for the families of fallen soldiers, seriously handicapped war invalids, Army heroes, and families credited with services to the revolution.

Various localities have set up national defense funds and social welfare funds totaling more than 2 billion dong and 11,102.6 tonnes of paddy. Quang Nam-Danang Province in particular has established these funds even at the district and town levels with a total of 1.2 billion dong. Concerning the setting up of national defense funds, many things still remain to be done, but realities have showed that in the conditions of a market economy, appropriate measures must be adopted to consolidate national defense and ensure the fulfillment of strategic tasks. The management and registration of retired officers and servicemen demobilized for health reason, who number more than 110,000, have been satisfactorily carried out. On the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the Vietnam People's Army (22 December), get-togethers were held for 29,784 comrades at a cost of 424,883,890 dong, while the budget provided by the upper echelon for the purpose amounted to only 2 million dong.

It can be said that these love-and-gratitude-inspired deeds of the party organizations, administration, and people in the 5th Military Region reflect the fine nature of the socialist regime. They have not only contributed to strengthening the relations between the people and our party and state and the people's faith in them, but have also upheld the positive character of the Armed Forces and made contributions of practical significance to the consolidation of national defense and the maintenance of sociopolitical security.

These results are due first of all to the fact that we have a correct mechanism and that we have been able to bring into full play the leadership of the party committee echelons and the direct managerial role of the administration, the aggregate strength of all echelons, and the staff role of military organs. I would like to cite just a few examples to show the tremendous efforts of the Army and people in the 5th Military Region in the past. That was the mobilization of capital, raw materials, materials, and manpower to build defense zones comprising hundreds of projects and using thousands cubic meters of concrete worth up to 16 billion dong, while the

defense budget of the military region could defray only about 52 percent of the cost. That was the building of more than 600 km of roads at a cost of about 60 billion dong, 75 percent of which were covered by the local budgets.

In implementing the Army welfare policy, the important thing is to know how to exploit the enthusiasm and the sense of responsibility of the people and various economic organizations and units. For example, the Khanh Hoa Tobacco Corporation drew 139.5 million dong from its welfare fund to build 19 "houses of gratitude" and establish 19 savings books for seriously handicapped war invalids in the locality concerned. Thirty other economic establishments also dipped into their coffer to build 30 "houses of gratitude" and establish 31 savings books for the same purpose. Obviously, these were highly admirable deeds that should be developed so that the people can join the party, the state, and the Army in resolving at an early date an acute, pressing social problem.

However, in the 5th Military Region, at present there remain many problems that must be studied and resolved. These are how to heighten the sense of responsibility of all people in developing national defense potential and building the people's war disposition; how to remove some snags in the implementation of social policies and policies concerning the Armed Forces; and how to organize the militia and self-defense forces in the conditions of a multisector economy operating in accordance with the market mechanism. There are also thorny problems concerning the management, education, building, and training of mobilization-ready reserve forces.

In addition, there remain numerous unsolved problems concerning the Army welfare policy: About 30,000 graves of servicemen have not been regrouped yet and many cases of death notification and war invalids status still need to be further verified and resolved. The number of retired officers and soldiers keep growing. An initial survey of only 8,357 comrades already revealed that more than 35 percent of them faced difficult living conditions and about 5 percent faced particularly difficult living conditions and needed financial assistance, and so forth. In my opinion, this is a difficult problem that can be resolved only if all society shows a collective sense of responsibility. Not only the retired military personnel but even the cadres and soldiers on active duty in the military region in general also face many difficulties in their material and intellectual life. Realities in the military region have showed that, along with the shift to the market mechanism, there is also a great need for an all-people national defense mechanism tailored to that switch to ensure that the national defense requirements are met. In view of the situation of the 5th Military Region, which is suffering not only from the very serious consequences of the past war but also from the numerous difficulties caused by harsh natural conditions, concrete plans should be worked out to simultaneously bring into full play the potential of various localities in the region and to obtain the assistance of the central echelon and other localities.

Equipped with a profound understanding of the various party resolutions, the 5th Military Region Armed Forces highly develop their independent and self-reliant spirit, ceaselessly uphold their revolutionary vigilance, actively strive to contribute to heightening the quality the overall of the

Armed Forces and the strength of the all-people national defense, stand ready to fight in defense of the territorial integrity, the people, the party, and the socialist regime against all schemes of "peaceful evolution" and subversive rebellions of the enemy. They act in coordination with the public security service, the border defense forces, and the people of various nationalities to maintain political security and public order and safety in the military region and stand ready to fulfill their tasks in the new situation. At the same time, they strongly push forward economic work to practically improve troops' living conditions and contribute to increasing the Armed Forces' fighting strength and developing the national economy.

In the immediate future, the 5th Military Region will work together with the local administration at all levels to reexamine the plans to build and develop national defense potential in the defense zone disposition and will closely coordinate with various localities to maintain public order and security and to promptly check and smash all enemy acts of sabotage.

Development of the Commodity Economy in the Central Highlands

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 7, Jul 92 pp 45-47

[Article by Son Thanh, not translated]

Ba Ria-Vung Tau Awakens Its Potential

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 7, Jul 92 pp 48-50

[Article by Nhi Le, not translated]

The Cultural Model of Hai Hau Through the Test of Time

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 7, Jul 92 pp 51-54

[Article by Vo Dang Thien, not translated]

Ideological Life

Hand-Carried Letters

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 7, Jul 92 p 55

[Article by Nguyen Trong Thu, not translated]

Book Review

'Opportunities' Are Not That Easy To 'Seize'

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 7, Jul 92 pp 56-59

[Article by Vu Hien, not translated]

From Foreign Publications

Socialism: The Premature Obituaries

00000000 Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese
No 7, Jul 92 pp 60-62

[Article not translated]

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