

NGUYỄN VĂN LINH

General Secretary  
of the CPV Central Committee

# VIETNAM

## URGENT PROBLEMS

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE

*Hanoi — 1988*

**NGUYEN VAN LINH**  
**General Secretary of the Central Committee**  
**of the Communist Party of Vietnam**

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## FOREWORD

*The 6th National Party Congress, convened in December 1986, expressed the entire Vietnamese people's will for renewal. At the Congress Comrade Nguyen Van Linh was unanimously elected General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam.*

*At present, the problem of prime importance for Vietnam, especially in the socio-economic field, is whether there will be effective renewal. Only renewal, first and foremost renewal of thinking, of organization and of personnel, followed by renewal of all Party and State activities, can the Vietnamese revolution make fast and steady steps forwards.*

*As a veteran revolutionary invested with a new position involving heavy responsibilities, Comrade Nguyen Van Linh has written and spoken a great deal on the new spirit. He has frankly analysed the difficulties that the Vietnamese people are facing and expressed the great resolve of the entire Party and people of Vietnam to overcome them so as to build socialism successfully.*

*A number of his speeches and writings are collected in this book.*

June 1988

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE

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**NGUYEN VAN LINH**  
**GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF**  
**VIETNAM**

Comrade Nguyen Van Linh (or Nguyen Van Cuc by birth), whose family came from Hung Yen (now Hai Hung) province, was born on July 1, 1915 in Hanoi.

In the years 1929-30 he joined the Students' Union led by the Vietnam Revolutionary Youth Association, the forerunner of the Indochinese Communist Party.

On May 1, 1930 he was arrested while he was distributing anti-French leaflets; so he was sentenced to life imprisonment and deported to Con Dao (Poulo Condor) Island.

In 1936 thanks to the success of the Popular Front in France the French colonialist authorities were compelled to set him free. That year he was admitted into the Indochinese Communist Party and was sent to Hanoi and then to Haiphong to wage an agitation drive among working people.

In 1939 he was sent to Saigon and there he was elected to the Municipal Party Committee. By the

end of 1939 he was dispatched to Central Vietnam to make contact with the remaining Party bases in various provinces to re-establish a regional Party Committee there.

Early in 1941 he was arrested again at Vinh and was taken to Saigon where he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and sent to Con Dao for the second time.

After the success of the 1945 August Revolution he was dispatched to western provinces to carry out revolutionary activities and later directly led the resistance right in the heart of Saigon-Cholon region as Secretary of the Municipal Party Committee, and then Secretary of the Special Zone Party Committee.

In 1947 he was elected to the Regional Party Committee of South Vietnam, from 1949 he joined its Standing Committee and between 1957 and 1960 he was Acting Secretary of the Regional Party Committee of South Vietnam.

At the 3rd Party Congress (1960) he was elected to the Party Central Committee and was chosen as Deputy-Secretary then Secretary of the Party's Central Office of South Vietnam. After the complete liberation of South Vietnam he became Secretary of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee.

At the 4th Party Congress (December 1976) he was re-elected member of the Central Committee, which, in its turn, elected him a Politburo member and a member of the Secretariat. He successively

held the posts of head of the Party Central Committee's Commission for Socialist Transformation, head of its Commission for Mass Agitation and National United Front, and President of the Federation of Trade Unions. By the end of 1981, he became Secretary of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee again.

At the 5th Party Congress (March 1982) he was re-elected to the Party Central Committee. In June 1985 at its 8th plenum he was elected to the Politburo of the Party Central Committee. In June 1986 he was elected to the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee as its Standing member.

At the 6th Congress (December 1986) he was re-elected to the Party Central Committee and then General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

The congress has reached unanimity on the viewpoints and guidelines expressed in the Political Report and other documents presented by the Party Central Committee and has unanimously adopted a resolution of paramount importance on major policies with a view to improving the conditions, easing the country's difficulties and waste and advancing steadily.

The delegates from all the corners of the country and from all walks of life in party organizations and State bodies have come to the Congress with their

**CLOSING SPEECH AT THE 6TH NATIONAL  
CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF  
VIETNAM<sup>1</sup>**

*Comrades members of the Presidium,  
Distinguished guests,  
Comrades delegates,*

After several days of diligent and active work with a high sense of responsibility to the Party and people, today the 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam has come to fruition.

The congress has reached unanimity on the viewpoints and guidelines expressed in the Political Report and other documents presented by the Party Central Committee and has unanimously adopted a resolution of paramount importance on major policies with a view to improving the conditions, leading the country over difficulties and trials and advancing steadily.

The delegates from all the corners of the country, and from all walks of life in Party organization and State bodies have come to the Congress with their

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1. Delivered on 18 December 1986.

heart and mind to make a strong renovation in our Party's leadership work. The unanimity on the judicious decisions at the Congress enables us to happily affirm that our Congress has come up to our Party's and people's expectations.

The congress has elected its Central Committee which manifests the characters of continuity and inheritance, and is prepared to materialize the determination to renovate the Party's leadership work, in accordance with the reality of our revolution at present.

...Fully aware of the heavy responsibility entrusted by the Congress, on behalf of the newly-elected members of the Central Committee, we promise to unite and join our efforts with the entire Party and people successfully carry out the Congress resolutions.

*Dear comrades,*

From the rostrum of this Congress, the voices full of warm feelings of our brothers and friends in the world have resounded across our country. The delegates of fraternal parties have brought to our communists and people the unshakeable friendship, confidence and strong support of the great Soviet Union — the bulwark of world peace and revolution — of the fraternal neighbouring peoples of Laos and Kampuchea, of other countries in the socialist community, of the international

communist and workers' movements and of many other friends in the world. Also at this Congress, we would like to express once again the heartfelt gratitude, warm feelings and militant solidarity of our Party and people towards the fraternal parties and peoples, and friends all over the five continents.

... The 6th Party Congress marks a turning-point of momentous significance in the process of inheriting and renovating the Party's leadership politically, ideologically and organizationally. The success of this Congress will be a new source of strength and an extremely important basis to further enhance solidarity and unity within our Party and our people as a whole. However, the road ahead of us is still beset with difficulties and trials which our Party and people must make great efforts to overcome.

In the spirit of unity and renewal of the Congress, we are determined to devote all our might and main to carry out successfully the objectives set by the Congress, namely stabilizing the socio-economic situation in all fields, and continuing to lay the premises for the socialist industrialization of our country.

Looking to the year 1990, which will be marked by the 60th anniversary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the 45th National Day of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and the centenary of the

late President Ho Chi Minh's birthday, we are resolved to live up to the wish expressed in the sacred Testament of our beloved Uncle Ho:

"Our mountains, our rivers, our people will always be;

The US invaders defeated, we will rebuild our land ten times more beautiful."

No force whatsoever can hinder our advance.

With this firm confidence, I beg to declare our 6th National Party Congress closed.

In this great endeavour, the 6th National Congress of the CPV was an important landmark. ... The 6th Party Congress held in the last five years was a period full of trials for the Party and the people of Vietnam. The Vietnamese revolution took place in a domestic and international conjuncture marked by basic advantages but also with many difficulties and complexities.

The achievements recorded in the implementation of our two strategic tasks together with the strengthening of the solidarity and mutual cooperation with the Soviet Union, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of

Article published in the review "Progress of Peace and Solidarity", May 1983, pp. 18-22

**THE 6TH NATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE  
COMMUNIST PARTY OF VIETNAM — AN  
IMPORTANT STEP TO RENEWAL**

After defeating the US aggressors, completing the liberation of the Homeland and achieving national reunification, the Communist Party of Vietnam led the Vietnamese people into a new stage of the revolution: that of building socialism and defending the socialist Homeland.

In this great endeavour, the 6th National Congress of the CPV was an important landmark.

... The 6th Party Congress held that the past five years was a period full of trials for the Party and the people of Vietnam. The Vietnamese revolution took place in a domestic and international conjuncture marked by basic advantages but also with many difficulties and complexities.

... The achievements recorded in the implementation of our two strategic tasks, together with the strengthening of the solidarity and multiform cooperation with the Soviet Union, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of

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1. Article published in the review *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, May 1987, pp. 18-22.

**Fampuchea and other fraternal countries, and the development of the friendship and cooperation with national independent countries, with progressive and peace-loving forces in the world, all that has created new factors for the advance of the Vietnamese revolution.**

The 6th Party Congress clearly pointed out the necessity *"to face the truth, to correctly evaluate the truth, and to tell the truth."* While confirming the achievements recorded, the Congress also pointed out that the present socio-economic situation is facing acute difficulties: a slow increase of production; low effect of production and investment; great confusion in distribution and circulation of goods; slowness in reducing the big imbalances in economy, imbalances which in some respects have become more acute; sluggishness in strengthening the socialist relations of production; the working people's life is still beset with numerous difficulties; negative effects have occurred in many places and especially in some others they are greatly serious.

The Congress has made a straight forward analysis of the serious and protracted shortcomings and mistakes in the Party's leadership and the State's management. They are mistakes in major undertakings and policies, in strategic guidance, and in organizing their implementation. The main trend of those mistakes, especially those in economic policies, is wishful thinking, voluntarism, simplistic way of thinking and acting, and hastiness. It is the tendency to slacken socio-economic

management, not to carry out seriously the Party's lines and principles, not to firmly grasp and act upon the objective laws of development. They are manifestations of petty bourgeois thinking which is both "leftist" and "rightist". These mistakes and shortcomings in economic and social fields stem from shortcomings in the Party's ideological, organizational and cadre work. That is the ultimate cause.

From the reality of the past years, the Congress has drawn important lessons. First, in all its activities, the Party must be imbued with the thought of *"taking the people as the roots"* and must foster and give full play to the working people's right to collective mastery. Second, the Party must constantly proceed from reality, *observe and act upon objective laws*. Third, *the Party should know how to combine the forces of the nation with those of our time in the new conditions*. Fourth, *the Party must build itself up to the standard of a party in power leading the people to carry out the socialist revolution*.

Proceeding from an analysis of the domestic situation and the international conjuncture, the 6th Party Congress affirmed: *The Vietnamese revolution must go ahead with the two strategic tasks of successfully building socialism and firmly defending the socialist Homeland*. The task of building socialism is put ahead. We must do our best to carry out the overall objective of *the remaining years of the initial stage, namely to stabilize all aspects of the economic and social situation, and continue to build the premises necessary for the acceleration of the*

**socialist industrialization in the following stage.** This means that production must meet the needs of consumption and accumulation, and initially create a rational economic structure for the development of production, build and perfect in the first step the new production relations in accordance with the character and level of development of the productive forces, and to meet the needs of strengthening national defence and security.

To translate those tasks and objectives into reality, the Congress emphasized, it is of paramount importance to *renovate the economic and social policies*, so as to bring into full play the working people's role as masters of society and their zeal, bring about a seething mass movement to simultaneously carry out the three revolutions: revolution in production relations, scientific-technological revolution, and ideological-cultural revolution.

The guiding thought of economic plans and policies is to release all the existing productive capabilities, exploit all the potentialities of our country and put into effect international assistance so as to vigorously develop the productive forces together with building and consolidating the socialist production relations. The 6th Party Congress set the main socio-economic tasks for 1986-90:

**1. To work out and organize the implementation of three major programmes: grain and food-stuffs, consumer goods, and export commodities.**

These programmes concretize the steps and content of socialist industrialization in the initial stage of the period of transition to socialism.

In those programmes, agriculture holds the foremost position, being the basis for carrying out the other programmes. The building and development of heavy industry and the infrastructure are aimed first of all at serving the three above-mentioned programmes.

We estimate that by the end of the initial stage of the period of transition to socialism, the implementation of these three programmes will bring the following results:

— Meeting society's demand for food grain and for food reserve, and meeting in a stable way the demand for indispensable foodstuffs. The amount of food grain and foodstuffs actually consumed will be sufficient to generate labour force.

— Meeting the people's demands for essential consumer goods.

— Producing a number of main kinds of export goods, rapidly increasing the export turn-over to meet the major part of demands for import materials, machinery, equipment and necessary goods.

The three-target programmes are the main content of the 1986-90 plan. It is estimated that about 60 per cent of the state's investment will be concentrated on these programmes. We will strive to produce 22 or 23 million tonnes of grain by 1990, that is, during these five years, the average annual output will reach 20-20.5 million tonnes, 3-3.5 million tonnes more than in the previous five years. During the same period, the rate of average annual increase of consumer goods will be 13-15 per cent. The

volume of exports is expected to increase by 70 per cent compared with the previous five years, with agricultural produces, processed farm produce, light industry and handicraft and aquatic products, as the main goods.

A balance must be established between the objective, means and methods of the three programmes, which must be carried out in a synchronous way with regard to the organization of production, the application of science and technology, and economic policies.

These programmes set the line for a rational streamlining of the national economy, first of all to *rebuild the economic structure and to make a big readjustment of the accumulation structure* so as to effectively exploit the workforce, land and material-technical infrastructure at our disposal.

## **2. To constantly carry out the task of socialist transformation.**

In appropriate forms and steps, making the production relations tally with the level and character of the development of productive forces whose development is thus sped up. We should promote socialist economy in three respects — systems of ownership, of management and of distribution — so as to make the State-run economic sectors bring into full play their major role and, together with the collective economy, hold their decisive position in the national economy. With regard to the small commodity production economy and private capitalist economy (small capitalists) in some branches of production and servicing domains,

they are controlled according to the motto : " Use them for transformation, and transform them for better use ".

We must encourage the household economy and organize individual workhands into various forms of collective sectors. Forms of economic sectors are widely unified on the basis of mutual benefit and equality before law.

### **3. To renew the mechanism of economic management.**

We must resolutely abolish the bureaucratic centralized and state-subsidized management mechanism and synchronously establish the mechanism of planning on the basis of socialist economic cost-accounting and business transactions in conformity with the principle of democratic centralism. The new mechanism shall take planning as the core and make a judicious use of the commodity-money relationship, manage mainly by economic methods combined with educational and administrative measures, delegate managing power to various levels on the principle of democratic centralism and establish order and discipline in all fields of economic activity. The managerial apparatus shall be perfected, and the organizing and cadre work renewed so as to ensure a lighter, stronger and more efficient managerial apparatus. The contingent of managers must be sufficiently qualified to meet the requirements of managing the new mechanism.

We have to make correct and full use of economic levers in planning and economic management on the basis of a harmonious combination between the

interests of society, of the collective and of the working people. We should ensure the right to autonomy in production, business and finance of the grassroots economic units, the right to collective mastery of the labour collectives as well as the effectiveness of the unified and centralized management of the central bodies in problems of importance to our country, while ensuring the right of local levels to take the initiative in social and economic management in their localities.

**4. To bring into full play the driving force of science and technology.**

We should closely combine social and natural sciences and technologies, channel all scientific and technological activities into the implementation of socio-economic and national defence and security objectives, closely link science and technology with production and life. We should bring into full play the creative abilities of the contingent of scientific and technical workers while stepping up the mass movement to advance into the domain of science and technology.

**5. We should expand and heighten the effectiveness of external economic relations, bring our country's economy into wider and deeper participation in the international division of labour, first and foremost by broadening the division of labour and allround cooperation with the Soviet Union, Laos, Kampuchea and other countries in the socialist community; and heightening the effectiveness of economic relations with the Comecon member**

countries. We should widen economic relations with Third World countries, developed industrial countries, international organizations and foreign private organizations, on the principles of equality and mutual benefit.

In the whole area of external economic relations, export is considered the most important link where from import shall be increased to meet the essential needs of the national economy.

The 6th Party Congress has clearly pointed out that economic policies must be in accordance with social policies which aim at bringing into full play all human abilities and taking the task of serving the people as the highest goal of all activities. The human factor must be strongly promoted in the cause of building socialism and defending the Homeland.

One of the primary socio-economic tasks in the coming years is to provide jobs for the working people. At the same time, we should resolutely implement demographic planning so as to reduce the annual population growth rate from 2.3 per cent to 1.7 per cent by 1990. Social justice must be enforced, first by applying more and more widely the principle of distribution according to labour. We should build a style of life and work consistent with the law, ensure social security, rapidly restore order and discipline in all aspects of social life. As our economy is still meeting with numerous difficulties, our Party should constantly care for and satisfy the people's needs in education, culture and arts, protect and improve their health and step

by step promulgate socialist social insurance policies. Great attention must be paid to the building of "New Culture" families and the correct implementation of policies on classes and nationalities according to their importance in the Party's social policies.

In the implementation of the two strategic tasks of the Vietnamese revolution in the new period and the achievement of the socio-economic objectives in the initial stage, the CPV is aware that to bring into full play the people's right to collective mastery is one of the most important driving forces.

... The people's right to collective mastery must be institutionalized by law and organization, on the condition that democracy goes in pair with discipline, that rights and interests go in pair with responsibilities and obligations. From the reality of promoting the people's right to collective mastery, we can draw some conclusions that the principle of "letting the people know, discuss, work and control" must be a daily practice of the new society, which materializes the new system really controlled by the working people.

The working people shall exercise their right to collective mastery through the State, which is organized by and for the people, is an instrument to materialize the socialist democratic system. *Giving full play to socialist democracy and raising the effectiveness of management by the State* in conformity with law are in fact a single whole. We should

set up and put into effect a State management mechanism which reflects the working people's right to collective mastery at all levels.

... We should strengthen the State apparatus along the right line to make it fully capable of institutionalizing the Party's lines and decisions into laws and special policies, reduce the intermediary links and avoid deep interference in the business and production activities of economic units.

The working people's right to collective mastery must be exercised through their organizations. The 6th Party Congress has laid down the tasks to strengthen and promote the role of the Fatherland Front and other mass organizations, first of all the Trade Unions, the Communist Youth Union, the Women's Union, the Collective Peasants' Union, etc.

The 6th Party Congress has paid special attention to the building of the Party to really raise it to the level of a party in power with the heavy responsibility of leading the people to successfully implement the two strategic tasks. The Party must carry out a renewal in many respects : renewal of thinking, first of all economic thinking, renewal of the style of leadership.

... The Congress, also laid down the task of democratizing the cadre work, constantly evaluating, selecting and assigning tasks to cadres while training and fostering them through studies and practical activities so as to have a contingent of cadres sufficiently qualified morally and competent in leadership

and management. We should pay attention to rejuvenating the contingent of cadres and preparing successors.

We should seriously observe democratic centralism in Party life, raising the quality of Party work, pushing ahead criticism and self-criticism, bringing into full play democracy, maintaining order and restoring discipline in the Party and State machinery, going deep into the realities of life and keeping close contacts with the masses.

The Congress stressed that in thought and deed we should resolutely fight against opportunism in all forms, individualism, position-and interest-seeking, factionalism, embezzlement and the scramble for privileges and prerogatives. We must seriously criticize and deal severely with money-seeking thought and action, selfishness, violations of socialist property and the people's interests.

The Congress also emphasized that the Party should take care to maintain unity among the Party's leading bodies and enhance the cohesion of the entire Party. *Based on the principle of Bolshevik criticism and self-criticism*, this unity and oneness of mind within the Party must be preserved as the apple of the eye.

The Congress entrusted the Party Central Committee with speeding up the *elaboration of a Comprehensive Programme* for the whole socialist

revolution in the period of transition to socialism and this programme will be presented at the 7th Congress.

In external relations, the 6th Party Congress set the task of combining the strength of our nation with that of the epoch for the national cause and internationalist obligations. We should struggle for the firm maintenance of peace in Indochina, play a part in preserving peace in Southeast Asia, the Asian-Pacific region and the rest of the world, fight against the imperialists' policies of arms race and the danger of nuclear war, and take advantage of favourable international conditions for the cause of building socialism and defending the Homeland.

We, the Communists and people of Vietnam, always consider the strengthening of solidarity and allround cooperation with the Soviet Union the key-stone of our foreign policy. We express full support for the domestic and foreign policies adopted by the 27th CPSU Congress and will develop the relations of friendship and cooperation with other fraternal socialist countries, making contributions to the strengthening and promoting of the influence of the socialist community.

... The Communist Party and people of Vietnam are deeply conscious of the fact that developing and strengthening the special relationship between Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea, unity, mutual respect for independence and sovereignty, allround cooperation and mutual assistance in national con-

struction and defence, constitute a law governing the existence and development of all the three fraternal nations. Our Party plays an active role in strengthening the unity in the communists' and international workers' movements on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, promoting cooperation among fraternal parties in the struggle for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.

We wholeheartedly and constantly support the struggle movement for national liberation of all nations, against imperialism, colonialism and apartheid. We fully approve the noble objectives of the Non-Aligned Movement and try our best to make a worthy contribution to the new step of development of the Movement.

We express our strong support for the heroic struggle of the working class and people in developed capitalist countries against oppression and exploitation by monopoly capitalism, for peace, democracy, employment and improvement of their living standard.

We stand for peaceful co-existence among countries with different political and social systems, support the tireless efforts of the Soviet Union to eliminate nuclear weapons, establish a comprehensive system of international security in military, political, economic and social fields.

We highly appreciate and fully support the Soviet Union's overall plan for peace in Asia and the Pacific as propounded by Comrade M.S. Gorbachev

at Vladivostok as well as the plan aimed at turning the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace as declared in the Indian-Soviet Joint Communiqué of November 1986.

The Vietnamese people will unceasingly try their best to develop the relations of friendship and cooperation among countries in Southeast Asia, establish relations of peaceful co-existence and build Southeast Asia into a zone of peace, stability and cooperation.

In the spirit of equality and of ensuring each other's independence and sovereignty and of mutual respect, the government and people of Vietnam are ready to negotiate with China at any time, any level and any place to solve the problems of relation between the two countries, normalize the relations and restore friendship between the two countries in the interests of the two peoples and of peace in Southeast Asia and the rest of the world.

Loyal to Marxism-Leninism, imbued with the revolutionary thoughts and sentiments of the great President Ho Chi Minh, the Communist Party and the entire people of Vietnam continue to hold high the banners of peace, national independence and socialism, closely combining genuine patriotism with proletarian internationalism and striving to fulfil our internationalist duties towards the people of the world. The Vietnamese communists are determined to be worthy of their foremost position in this glorious revolutionary cause.



## **RENOVATION OF THINKING AND WORK STYLE<sup>1</sup>**

... As you know, the 4th Congress of our Party set the political and economic line for the whole period of transition to socialism. That line, however, was not yet concretized to suit our immediate stage of development. At the 5th Congress, we began to concretize that line, making it more suitable to the characteristics of the initial stage. However, in actual leadership, we still acted according to old concepts, thus repeating old mistakes and shortcomings. There were erroneous concepts of the transitional period and its initial stage, the steps of national industrialization, the structure of investments in capital construction, the transformation of production relations, the mechanism of economic management, the circulation and distribution of goods, the implementation of the proletarian dictatorship and the promotion of the people's right to mastery of society. These subjective shortcomings further complicated our inherent difficulties.

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1. Address made at Nguyen Ai Quoc Higher Party School, 6 May 1987.

We have so far obtained remarkable achievements. However, they are still far below our potentials and capabilities. Conservative and bureaucratic ways of thinking and working are among the major causes that led to stagnation and complications in production and circulation and distribution of goods which, in turn, created more difficulties to the people's life and increasing negative manifestations. This situation is unacceptable. It must be changed thoroughly with all strong measures in the fields of ideology, personnel and work style.

We must look squarely at the truth, and must admit that our subjective errors are serious and protracted. We must therefore have the courage to make strong and thorough-going self-criticism so as to achieve renovation. Otherwise, we will fall into a state of prolonged stagnation with real disasters — disasters not inherent in our system but stemming from our mistakes.

... Rapid and vigorous renovation is today a common trend of our time. In socialist countries, renovation is taking place in a profound and comprehensive manner. It is a process of self-perfection aimed at manifesting the vitality and superiority of socialism over capitalism in all fields of peaceful emulation. The 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union identified renovation with renovation. We not only cannot stay out of that process but, on the contrary have to contribute to it and, at the same time, grasp the renovations of our time.

Only a correct and profound understanding can lead to correct and effective actions. Renovation in

life therefore must begin with renovation in thinking, that is, to enhance the ability to grasp objective laws of social development, think in line with those laws, apply those laws to the specific conditions of the country, create new ideas, and find effective measures.

... At present, renovation of thinking and work style must aim at *releasing existing production potentialities*. Latent potentials in terms of manpower, land, natural resources, machinery, equipment and capital, remain rather big in all areas of our control, at State-run and collective economic units, in other economic sectors and in our joint ventures at home and abroad, especially with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. We must vigorously renovate our old thinking and work style which have restrained and hampered the development of production. This means we have to quickly renew our managerial mechanism along with adopting a series of relevant policies. We all know that the bureaucratically centralized State-subsidized mechanism has not yet been abolished. The new mechanism has not yet been uniformly established and many obsolete policies and regimes have not yet been changed. "We have only established the main orientation for the new mechanism. As for its content, form, concrete steps, and methods, there remain many outstanding problems which have not been appropriately tackled, both in theory and practice." Those are problems which the renovation in thinking and work style must focus its strength. We cannot hastily try to

solve all problems at once. Neither can we reconcile ourselves to attitudes of conservatism or half-heartedness.

- We must move cautiously, step by step. But we also must be resolved and take the offensive, and be determined to do whatever we can to change the managerial mechanism from that of State-subsidized bureaucratic centralism to that of socialist cost-accounting. That is really a profound revolution in the whole society as well as in every individual. Examples in life, though not yet universal, have pointed to us new ways of thinking and working. Models of efficient production and business are emerging in increasing number, embodying aspects of universal laws and principles of strategic significance to the whole country's production and business. Along with the study of the experiences in building socialism of fraternal socialist countries, the lessons drawn from our studies of advanced models in the country will give us a profound and comprehensive understanding of the specific contents of our renovation work, so as to reach timely and definite conclusions to help our concrete works. Regrettably, this work has so far been progressing at an intolerably slow pace.

- It is necessary to make theoretical preparations for renovation in all fields of social life. Theoretical discoveries must be the premises and basic condition, serving as the basis for renovation in practical activities, since, as Lenin put it, without revolutionary theory, there is no revolutionary movement. With a correct theoretical basis, we can work out concrete

mechanisms for our management, make policies and take measures which suit and meet the requirements of life. And then through tests at pilot units in various branches and localities, we can select elements which conform to laws and are accepted by life and apply them on a large scale. A new and correct thinking will take shape in life, institutionalized by the State and translated into the masses' daily activities which, in turn, feed theoretical activities with full and diversified vitality, adjusting their direction and bringing them to a new height. Only those theories which develop according to that strict procedure can attain a promising future and correctly perform their social functions. And only by obeying that procedure can practical activities avoid empiricism, spontaneity, and be spared of going roundabout and high costs.

I think that from now on, the making of major decisions of the Party and State must go along that line. Conscientious activities and mastery over social development have no other alternative. That line is vital to the renovation in thinking and work style. Along that line, we will carry out the major tasks set by the 6th Party Congress, including the three major economic programmes, the renovation of the mechanism of economic management, the streamlining of goods circulation and distribution, and the working out of the socio-economic strategy and the Programme for the Transitional Period in our country. All efforts to renovate thinking and work style that are not freed from wishful thinking, speculation and old modes of activity will end up in failure.

At present, almost no problem in any field can be solved without renovation of thinking and work style. As you all know, the Second Plenum of the Party Central Committee has adopted a resolution on "solving urgent problems of goods circulation and distribution". The process of elaborating that resolution was not smooth sailing for partisans of the old thinking and work style on one side, and advocates of the new thinking and work style on the other. Some comrades held that in any circumstances, production remains the root, and the crux of any solution therefore should be direct production. Obviously, those comrades did not see the positive effects of circulation and distribution on production, and the fact that it is the "input" and "output" of production that are one of the major obstacles to production at present. Moreover, other elements of distribution and circulation such as wages, bonuses and profits are also intrinsic problems of the production process itself. We have to struggle to put an end to concepts and practices which tackle prices, wages and money by purely professional calculations without taking into consideration the very important problems of mechanism, policy and organization. The new thinking bases all solutions to the problems of goods circulation and distribution on socialist cost-accounting, considers planning as the centre and operates in accordance with the principle of democratic centralism. On the contrary, the old thinking has not yet completely broken with the mechanism of bureaucratic centralism based on State subsidies. The coming

into being and prevalence of the new is thus a process in which conditions for the application of the new are ripening. Hastiness and the wish to skip necessary transitional steps are erroneous and bring harmful effects. Acknowledging the necessary steps of transition in the process of renovation is not a "middle-of-the-road" approach between two extremes. It is the only right approach conforming the law governing the emergence of the new. Such an acknowledgement, does not mean that we should take a passive attitude toward renovation and allow the process of renovation to drag on indefinitely. At the same time, we should not indulge in the simplistic concept that renovation can be achieved at a stroke and rapidly. We must fully see how hard and complex it is. On the other hand, life itself which is constantly moving, always makes new requirements, compelling us to change our old thinking and work style which are no longer suitable. We therefore must take the initiative, using all our strength to help create the necessary conditions so as to bring an early renovation to all fields of our social life.

A correct method of thinking does not tolerate exaggeration, over-emphasis on one aspect of things and slighting of the other aspect, overlooking the fact that everything is the unification of two opposite aspects, such as planning and market, centralism and democracy, the central authorities and the localities, etc. In theory and practice in our country at present, however, discordant tunes are often heard concerning these problems. Some people in the name of the new thinking even deny the fundamental principles of

Marxism-Leninism. For instance, while blaming our present economic planning for being bureaucratically centralized, inflexible and imposed from above — which is true — they propose to change that situation by applying uniformly and indiscriminately the principles of “letting all production bases decide which items they will produce, provided they are accepted on the market,” and “letting producers decide the prices of their own products.” The problem then is different. Such a proposition would erase the principled demarcation line between capitalism and socialism. It would even cause socialism to shrink back compared with capitalism since in certain cases, a capitalist state does intervene with administrative and economic measures in the setting of wages, prices and markets of private producers. We should bear in mind that changing the methods of planning is not denying the planning itself. As Lenin pointed out, “The New Economic Policy *does not change* the State’s unified economic plan *nor go beyond* its limits, but it does change the *measures* for its implementation.”<sup>1</sup> Of course, under the socialist system producers are not ruled out from the pricing process. They are allowed to produce and market non-staple products according to demands. With regard to other products, State pricing authorities should widely and exhaustively consult producers, and avoid subjective and inconsiderate impositions.

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1. V.I. Lenin, *Selected works* (in Vietnamese) Progress Publishing House, Moscow, 1979, vol. 54, p. 131.

We are fully aware that renovation is a particularly difficult affair. Judging the way of thinking and working alone, we can see that renovation is not at all an easy and quick work. The old thinking and work style have been prevailing for many years, deeply rooted in the minds of all people and organizations like a chronic disease, in some respects, they have even been institutionalized. No wonder therefore that renovation of thinking and work style will run into the great inertia of old concepts, of the terrible conservative character of a work style, which have become an ingrained habit difficult to change, particularly since they are associated with highly individualistic and self-seeking people. To fight victoriously against these old concepts, and work style, we need revolutionary courage, perseverance and science-based proceeding. We also need vigilance since the old exists right in each of us and is apt to revive in seemingly new forms. We must clearly see what needs renovating and what just needs cementing, upgrading. To talk of renovation of thinking does not at all mean to deny the theoretical achievements and correct views of our Party and reject the universal laws of socialist revolution. Instead we must continue to upgrade and develop those achievements.

All renovations depend, first of all, on renovation in the personnel work. We have cadres of many generations who have been trained in the long revolutionary struggle. That fact provides us an extremely precious foundation and starting point. However, that alone is no longer sufficient. The present period of the revolution has new demands, requiring us to

make basic and profound changes in the training and employment of our cadres. Experience has shown that cadres are the most decisive link to translate line and policies into realities.

... The 6th Party Congress affirmed that the basic criterion whereby to judge the cadres' qualities and abilities is the "effectiveness in the performance of political tasks,"<sup>1</sup> which, in the present conjuncture, include the renovation of thinking and work style so as to make them meet the need of releasing production capabilities, ensuring effective production and business, and arousing the people's spirit of initiative and collective mastery of society. Those cadres who do not meet those requirements must be retrained or replaced. We must not base our personnel renovation only on the forms (ages, academic degrees, social background, etc.) but chiefly on the tasks to be fulfilled rapidly and effectively.

The current renovation requires us, cadres, to study without let-up, study hard, very hard and by all means if we want to fulfil our tasks. Cadres who are lazy in study and in thinking, who work in a haphazard way, relying only on old and out-dated experiences, can be of no use to our present renovation and even hamper and obstruct it. Experiences in our country and elsewhere in the world have shown that

1. Documents of the 6th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Su That Publishing House, Hanot, 1987, p. 132.

those cadres who cannot catch up with ever higher standards can easily become skeptics or opposed to renovation.

The intellectual standard, no matter how important it may be, is only one of the qualifications required of a cadre. Revolutionary quality is an extremely fundamental factor. Boundless loyalty to the ideal of communism and the working class; spirit of revolutionary offensive and tireless struggle to build socialism fruitfully; close attachment and dedication to the working people; respect for and fostering of the working people's right to mastery of society; honesty, the spirit of daring to struggle and make self-criticism; a healthy way of life likely to set examples for other people... Without all these things, a cadre, no matter how highly educated he may be, would be of no use for the revolution. It should be noted that these qualities must be judged mainly through the results of the tasks assigned.

It is unacceptable for us to have in our ranks cadres with high positions and power who have become bureaucrats, who place their selfish interests above all, go after fame and profits, are hypocrites and opportunists, lie to their superiors and deceive their subordinates, oppress the people, and lead a luxurious life through illegal means. For a long time now, we have failed to deal with this problem in a serious and resolute manner. For the purity of the Party, the efficiency of the State machinery, and the peo-

ple's right to mastery of society, we must sufficiently take timely and more effective steps of renovation to solve this problem.

We are now tackling extremely difficult tasks, which require a deep and precise insight into complex matters of life. Such an insight depends, first of all, on our Party's theoretical and ideological activities. There must be higher requirements toward middle- and high-ranking cadres in raising their theoretical standard and their capacity for scientific thinking. A low theoretical standard will lead to empiricism and unsteady perception. It will prompt our cadres to use their own experiences which are either leftist- or rightist-oriented or which may go from one extreme to another, and thus deprive cadres of the ability to distinguish the right and the wrong in performing a task. Some people stubbornly defend what has been proved wrong and inversely, reject what has been proved right. Why comes it that barely a few months after the 6th Party Congress a number of branches, localities and units invested as much as six or seven billion *dong* in extra-plan projects such as meeting halls, office premises, stadiums, and so on? We cannot tolerate the attitude of paying lip service to the Congress resolution while acting otherwise in the name of the so-called "self-procured capital". Here, aside from other reasons, there is the question of low theoretical standard which prevented those comrades from understanding the essence and the principled character of the ideas and policies adopted at the national Party Congress, and it

has led to such haphazard and unprincipled acts as mentioned above. We should understand the ideas of the congress not merely through words but understand those ideas and their theoretical and practical bases in order to be able to apply them voluntarily, conscientiously and with a spirit of initiative and of daring to think and daring to do. Several months have passed since the congress yet not a few of our cadres are still waiting passively, not knowing how to develop the works it had laid down. Clearly the failure to fully understand the congress's views is one of the main causes of this passive attitude.

*Dear comrades,*

A fundamental point of the renovation of thinking is the renovation of theoretical thinking. How do we, middle-and high-ranking cadres of the Party, think of our theoretical standard and take care of the Party's theoretical and ideological work? This also is a domain full of problems which require urgent, even the most urgent, renovation. Frankly speaking, our Party's leadership in this field over the recent years has been fraught with shortcomings. We have not paid adequate attention to conducting research on big scientific projects, coordinating the efforts of research institutions of social and natural sciences and technology, and mobilizing research workers for the building of Party lines and policies. Great research potentials which can contribute useful opinions are still left out of the decision-making

process of the Party and State. In the coming period, we should take measures to correct this state of things.

With regard to our theoretical researchers, we should admit that there are serious shortcomings in their work which must be quickly corrected if we want our theoretical research to become a leading force for the revolution. It is rather common that not a few of our theoretical institutions only base their work on the theories and principles already expressed in books. Still too little has been done in studying and raising problems of practical life.

In fact, our researches tend to overestimate strong points and achievements and underestimate or overlook mistakes and errors. In many cases, we just try to appeal to our people to uphold their confidence and morality, without helping them to use reason. We have also just turned around daily and, more often trivial things, without opening our perspective to the whole country and the world so as to absorb the knowledge and wisdom of our time. The harmful effects of such a practice in our conduct of practical work are great and really dangerous to our revolutionary cause. The general inertia and conservatism in our country is due partly to those in our theoretical and ideological work.

... To help our theoretical standard meet the new requirements of revolution, each leading cadre, in whatever field he works, should strive to upgrade his theoretical knowledge, considering it a regular and urgent task. It is impossible for us to understand the new views in the Party's new policy as well

as the new developments in the reality of our revolution if we only content ourselves with old theoretical knowledge.

To make study fruitful, all cadres, particularly those in leading positions, should pay special attention to building for themselves a science-based method of learning. Each should build for oneself a sense of creative study and for conscientious "digesting" of accumulated knowledge. Anyway, the final goal of theoretical studies is to build for oneself a methodology so that, with basic theoretical knowledge, one can make objective analyses of the situation and work out correct policies...

The higher our theoretical standard, the greater our capability for practical conduct should be. I should remind you that studying is a life-long affair. It is never sufficient to just study at school. Each cadre must have a plan and save time for study so as to continue to upgrade his standard, in line with the motto "study, study more, study for ever." Comrades who have not been trained systematically must go through basic training, and then retraining. They must also do self-training through research and practical work...

*Dear comrades,*

The Party schools and the various theoretical research organs have a very big role to play in the renovation of thinking and work style, of organiza-

tion and personnel. Any delay on this front will adversely affect the ideological work and the entire development of our society.

I wish and I am confident that in the light of the Resolution of the 6th Party Congress, the aggregate force of the institutions on the ideological front, including the Nguyen Ai Quoc Higher Party School, will move forward rapidly so as to meet the new and higher requirements of the revolution at present and in the coming period.

Thank you!

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## **SOME PRESSING PROBLEMS ON THE DISTRIBUTION AND CIRCULATION OF GOODS**

will move forward rapidly so as to meet the new

and higher requirements of the revolution and in the coming period.

*Dear comrades,*

After days of intensive work the 2nd plenum of the Party Central Committee (6th Congress) has achieved a remarkable success. I said "a remarkable success" in the very sense of the words. It is the assessment by the Political Bureau and the Presidium as well as the general impression of all of us here. With regard to such a complicated and important problem as that of distribution and circulation of goods, especially when our approaches to it have been divided so far, we find it really encouraging to have reached unanimity not only on the standpoints and principles but also on the guidelines and important measures dealt with in the resolution of this plenum.

The success of the plenum is due to the following main reasons:

First of all, we are guided by the 6th Congress's major standpoints on mapping out the economic

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1. Closing speech delivered at the 2nd plenum of the Party Central Committee.

structure, transforming and making use of various economic sectors, renovating the mechanism of economic management, renewing our viewpoints on distribution and circulation, which lay the basis for our orientation to think and find out correct solutions.

Secondly, the shortcomings and mistakes in our tackling of prices, wages and money in the previous years, especially at the end of 1985 have given us bitter lessons. These past errors can bring about an active significance when we are able to draw from them appropriate conclusions, so as to avoid the ways to dire straits, and to pave new and clear ways for our steady advances. It should be added that on the macroscopic sphere of the national economy, we have recently solved the problem of distribution and circulation not in conformity with the objective laws and our country's specific conditions, and in a hasty and impetuous manner. However, on the microscopic sphere, we have had quite a few typical models which can be multiplied and spread all over the country. This plenum of the Central Committee has paid to a considerable extent attention to the promising "young buds" that can be regarded as the factors that help us to find out practical solutions to the problem of distribution and circulation.

Thirdly, at this plenum we have embarked upon the renewal of our working way in line with the spirit of the 6th Congress. First of all, we have observed the principle of democratic centralism.

The decisive factor for the success of the plenum is that the Political Bureau has picked out the most suitable topic for our session. There were different opinions on this question before and right at the session. Some said that the topic should be on the problem of production; others suggested choosing the urgent economic problem in general. In implementation of the resolution of the 6th Party Congress and in the light of the real situation, the Political Bureau decided to choose the urgent problems relating to the distribution and circulation of goods the topic of our session. This decision was approved by all the members of the Party Central Committee. In its draft programme sent to the members of the Party Central Committee, the Political Bureau had presented various projects and solutions to the most important questions to ask for the Central Committee's opinions. These varied approaches and views have initiated lively discussions and aroused our thinking for the optimum guideline. Suggestions and ideas contributed by PCC members at this plenum are diversified, abundant, frank and motivated by a high sense of responsibility. The Political Bureau and the Presidium showed a high respect for these suggestions which were gathered daily by the monitoring group of the session and communicated to all participants.

The initial draft has been supplemented by many judicious and logical suggestions after intensive discussions among the Political Bureau and the Presidium. The session adopted by unanimous vote the

resolution in accordance with the principle of democratic centralism. There has been absolutely no subjectism nor imposition. The decision of the Party Central Committee is the highest command that the entire Party has to act upon. I think that that is a new style which must be observed and improved, I hope that this style will become a routine in the Party and administration at all levels as well as in the mass organizations, public offices, and collective units at all levels and services.

*Dear comrades,*

Our plenum has decided on questions of immediate and long-term importance in the distribution and circulation of goods. The impact of the decisions will not be limited to questions of pure distribution and circulation but also relate to the process of reproduction in general and particularly, direct production, which is the most vital issue. As K. Marx put it: "Distribution and circulation are the prerequisite and condition, and at the same time the result of production." Therefore when we have taken the first step in solving the problem of distribution and circulation it means we have removed the obstacles to the "input" and "output" of production.

In the field of distribution and circulation, we have not stopped at the settlement of such questions as defining the quantity, the relations between

the price levels, price rates, wages, budget and money, but also paid due attention to solving very important issues concerning the policies, mechanism and organization.

Experience has shown that if these aspects are neglected or underestimated, we will not be able to address the problem of distribution and circulation of goods in its capacity as an efficient economic lever in production. The linchpin of all these policies is a correct handling of the different economic interests in order to create a motive for production and business in agriculture, industry and trade, in the financial and monetary system. In a country of small-scale agriculture like ours which was moreover devastated through prolonged wars and where food remains a vital problem of the daily life, we must, as Lenin said, build a large-scale socialist industry starting from agriculture and peasants. We must have a correct policy to encourage the enthusiasm of peasants in production and strengthen the worker-peasant alliance in the new situation.

The lowering of the rate of exchange between fertilizer and rice, the stabilization of agricultural taxes and of the contract quotas for a number of years, the policy of equality, price parity and really mutual agreement in the relations with peasants — aside from the mandatory tax contribution — as presented in the Party resolution demonstrate the Leninist principled viewpoint mentioned above. In industry, the interests of production

are reflected in the policy of making the wholesale prices of the State-owned trading corporations equal to the retail prices minus commercial rebates, in the determination to bring the real wages of workers and public employees back to its level in September 1985, and in the full accounting of wages in the production cost. The bank deposits will have an appropriate interest rate.

Besides, the State interest will be properly respected. A new thing in the resolution is the recognition and the requirement of serious implementation of the principle that the amount of State materials and goods given to peasants is tantamount to that of agricultural produces delivered by peasants to the State. Similarly, in industry we have to make a sufficient and accurate calculations of the "input" and "output" of production *in a gradual process*. In this situation, this is the best way to ensure the interests of the State and of the working people. The limit is that the "output" must not cause great upheavals and rocketing prices as at present. The 2nd plenum of the CPV Central Committee, with the contribution of all the participants, has found concrete economic measures to ensure the harmony of interests of all sides. In fact, only on the ground of the common interests can those of each side be ensured. There are the interests of the State in the ones of peasants and workers and vice versa. A tilt on either side will harm both.

The policies and measures relating to the distribution and circulation of commodities adopted by

the resolution of the 2nd plenum are deeply imbued with the Party's guideline on the abolition of the system of bureaucratic centralism based on State subsidies and a gradual shift to socialist economic accounting. This is an imperative demand of the economy in our country. From the lively realities of the past years we are now convinced there will be no way to get out of the impasse so long as we continue with the outmoded mechanism and way of thinking which have proved utterly irrelevant. The shift represents the most important foundation of the resolution we have just adopted.

This shift is most manifest in the commodity-money relations: the State's selling of agricultural tools to and buying of paddy from peasants according to the principle of mutual agreement and price parity both inside and outside the economic contracts, or its sale of materials to the industrial and small industrial and handicraft sectors at reasonable prices; the removal of barriers to the flow of commodities; the reduction of the government subsidies, the payment of salaries to workers and public employees mostly in cash, and the gradual restoration of real salary; the shift to money transaction in banking operations, etc.

In fact the mere expansion of the flow of commodities and the removal of artificial barriers to this flow have had big and instant impacts in many localities, especially in Ho Chi Minh City. According to the reports to the Party Secretariat

the amount of rice delivered by peasants in the Mekong Delta provinces to the city has risen to hundreds of tonnes a day, helping to bring down the price of one kilogram of rice by more than five *dong*, and accordingly to reduce the rice sold by the State at the State-owned food stores. That is a direct effect of the free rice market whose important role in the regularization of the supply-demand relations cannot be overlooked. Likewise, the prices of a number of other commodities have also dropped, leading to a noticeable lessening of the shortage of many essential goods.

It is evident that when our economic decisions are consistent with the objective law of the commodity-money relations, they will immediately arouse great potentials.

The key to the question of cost-accounting and business transaction is that we have to control the great source of wealth lent by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. If we still attach to the system of exchanging goods on the basis of State-subsidy system as we have done so far, we cannot expect good results. This source must be on the one hand kept away from losses, and on the other, used on the basis of cost-accounting and business transaction in each production and business unit as well as on the whole of the national economy, with active amortization, thus reducing losses considerably and eventually the State does not have to subsidize but gains profit.

This is a resolute struggle not only on the ideological plane but also in the domain of concrete economic management, from planning, mechanism and policy to machinery, staff and organization. All these levers must be set in motion vigorously and simultaneously. At the organizational level in particular, we should quickly streamline the supply-purchase system of materials and commodities along the line of reducing the intermediary services and directly supplying goods to the consumers as soon as possible. At the same time, we must settle the question of redundant staff in the administrative sector, including the administrative sector within the productive sector through the package allocation of wage funds and creating favourable material conditions for the redundant staff to be re-assigned to jobs useful to society both in the productive and service industries. Moreover, we must early establish business organizations based on independent accounting from the food companies to the trading companies of the home and foreign trade ministries, the supply ministry, the State bank and the transport and communications service.

In that spirit and by concretizing it in each of our practical deeds, we can certainly achieve four reductions: reduction of the rate of inflation, reduction of the tempo of price hikes, reduction of the budget deficit, and reduction of difficulties in the life of wage-earners, the army, the police, the pensioner, and the working people in the urban areas in general. To achieve this objective is the principal

condition to release the productive force, gradually reduce the imbalance in the commodity-money relations, thus gradually stabilizing the socio-economic situation, and carrying into effect Lenin's teaching that it was high time for the administration to put a quick end to the magician's trick of issuing bank-notes ad libitum for expenditure.

*Dear comrades,*

The fight for putting forward a resolution is difficult, but the process of struggle for implementing it and translating it into the reality of life seems even more difficult. It relates to the organization for guiding its implementation. What is most decisive is that every member of the Party Central Committee must think, speak and work in accordance with the resolution and with unity from high levels down to grassroots levels, from inside the Party to the broad masses. It is our strength. We should make a pervasive explanation of the standpoints and content of this resolution among cadres, Party members and the people in general according to the watchword: "Let the people know, discuss, implement and control the policies". This should be applied to every job, especially to the field of distribution and circulation which proves to be complicated and difficult. Only by so doing can "the people believe in the Party, and the Party has confidence in the people," thus creating a seething revolutionary movement among the

masses. We should make it quite clear for the people that the resolution of this plenum marks an important step forward; however, it cannot change the whole situation overnight. There are no miracles that can turn the situation from bad and difficult throughout so many years into good at once. We have to tackle it step by step, advancing to stabilize the situation in a couple of years. With the support of the people, cadres and Party members on the one hand, and a correct line on the other we can solve all problems, no matter how difficult they are.

We should realize that the implementation of the resolution of the 2nd plenum is not plain sailing at all. We have to struggle against conservatism, sluggishness and reluctance to renewal, while watching out for the will to do things hastily, impetuously without weighing the step to be taken. Another no less dangerous thing is such an extremist attitude as making light of the planning character in the commodity-money relationship; tending to the spontaneous market and underrating the consolidation and strengthening of the organized market; fixing prices at one's will; neglecting the State's role of guiding and controlling. Theoretically, no one opposes the combination between democracy and centralism, between the central government and local authorities. But these aspects are in fact often found separable and even poles apart. To achieve a fruitful implementation of the resolution, we must maintain our struggle

against bureaucratic centralism, compulsion alienation from the lively realities of the masses, forced and rigid decisions. At the same time, we should criticize the erroneous tendencies of laissez-faire, lack of the sense of organization and discipline that may weaken the unified and centralized leadership.

In our State, we should never accept the partial or parochial interests which are harmful to the national interests. At the same time, we should avoid doing things detrimental to the accumulation capacity of localities in the name of the central government, thus paralysing their initiative and creativeness. As a result the common interests of both the central government and local authorities become more and more aggravated.

On the other hand, the struggle to implement the resolution of this plenum must necessarily be associated with the movement to purify the Party and the State apparatus and to fight the negative manifestations in social life. The Political Bureau will soon issue a resolution on this question. We need to deal harshly with those who, in whatever position, go counter to the Party's resolution or become corrupt or degenerate. We must duly punish any speculators and smugglers. All means of mass media such as newspapers and the radio and television must motivate the public to actively take part in this fight, condemn any violations of the Party and State policies, as well as all breaches of law. The judiciary organs of the State must prosecute

and bring to court for trial in time all the perpetrators with a view to maintaining the State's regulations and laws.

The supervisory organs of the people which represent the people's right to mastery must be very active in detecting, denouncing and handling within the area of their competence, all unlawful acts and wrongdoings in the State apparatus and defend the people's legitimate rights.

After this plenum, the Party's Secretariat and the Standing Committee of the Council of Ministers must quickly organize the implementation of the plenum's resolution. In the spirit of concentrated guidance as in a military campaign we should closely follow the evolution and detect in time any deviations and mistakes, take necessary complementary measures, and review their implementation in each step. It is important that we should institutionalize the Party's resolution, on the State plane, and turn them into concrete policies and regulations as soon as possible.

As you all know, our plenum only dealt with some major guidelines. There are a lot of things to do so as to concretize these guidelines. The Political Bureau, the Secretariat and the Standing Committee of the Council of Ministers will guide the work to be done, especially the completion of the concrete measures. However, localities and branches should not wait until everything is decided by the central government to embark upon the implementation of the resolution, but should base themselves on the

spirit of the resolution to do whatever they can, and report to and ask for instructions from their superiors any cases that are beyond their power.

**Dear comrades,**

The objectives, orientation and main guidelines on the pressing problems relating to distribution and circulation of goods have been decided on with full consensus at this plenum. With its great energy and determination and deep awareness of its responsibility to the entire Party and people, the Party Central Committee will make every effort to put the resolution into effect, to gain successes right from the onset, thus bringing about confidence and encouragement on the whole and meeting the people's expectations.

I would like to conclude my speech here and announce the closure of the 2nd plenum of the Party Central Committee.

## **RENOVATING ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT<sup>1</sup>**

...It is imperative now to renovate the mechanism of economic management, the most important constituent part of the Party's activity in economic leadership, which now covers four vast, inter-related areas—1. The conduct of three major economic programmes, i.e. the production of food, of consumer goods, and of goods for exports, 2. The conduct of socialist transformations, 3. The renovation of the mechanism of economic management, and 4. Renovation in organization and personnel.

Renovation of economic management, to be successful, must be geared completely to the other tasks.

What we badly need now is not only adequate material and technical bases for socialism and balanced sources for production and welfare. We are also in great need of a suitable mechanism of economic management to run the entire national economy, each production unit, and each business

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1. Excerpts from the address to the Third Plenary of the Sixth Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam, 20-28 August 1987.

in the most effective manner. The creation of a new economic management mechanism will be essential to a rational, effective utilization of existing material and technical bases which, in turn, will help tap new, balanced sources for the national economy in service of the three major economic programmes.

...The basic point in renovating economic management is that it must be carried out both at the grassroots and regarding state management.

Grassroots economic units are cells of the national economy. Day in day out, they help create material wealth for society. They provide for the labouring people while contributing to local and state funds. The kingpin of economic management renovation at these units must, therefore, ensure their autonomy which, as a result, will closely relate rights to liabilities, interests to obligations, and will bring about great dynamism in production and business.

On the other hand, all these units operate within a single national economy under the baton of a single conductor — the state of proletarian dictatorship.

This is a contradiction and also a unity. The point is to find a suitable mechanism which can ensure both autonomy for the grassroots and centralism for the national economy as a whole. This is a great problem in the practice of socialist economic management. This is also a very important

objective for renovation of economic management in other socialist countries and in our country at present.

...From this angle, we can see that renovation of grassroots management is a starter for restructuring economic management at higher levels of the State, and not vice versa.

A number of the comrades hold that grassroots economy comprises state-run industrial and agricultural units and collective units engaged in agriculture, handicrafts and cottage industry. They also include the individual, capitalist, state-private and family sectors.

In principle, this view can be regarded as rational in a certain way, and a management mechanism for agricultural units must be instituted immediately in service of Programme Number One, which is the production of food, and of agricultural and rural development as a whole. The point, however, is not whether or not these themes are pressing. The point is how far we are prepared. Indeed, we cannot expect, if we do not want to be too general, to arrive at an overall plan for all these forms of grassroots economy. Such a plan will require thorough study of the whole situation, of all the causes and problems. Only on the basis of such a study can correct, concrete steps be taken to move grassroots economic units ahead. It is no easy job to evaluate all the problems that face agriculture and the countryside today, most particularly the system of end-product contracts signed

directly with producers and the problem of how to perfect contract forms and post-contract management. The situation is no less complex in handicrafts and cottage industry.

At this plenum we can do no more than dealing with the grassroots form of the state sector and further examining problems in the state-owned industry. This approach is practical. For many years now, a number of grassroots industrial enterprises have worked out methods that are quite novel, dynamic and effective and that may provide us with a basis for complementing, perfecting and upgrading the new management mechanism.

Other comrades maintain that we would sound too restrictive if we only mentioned the state sector since it represents only a small portion of the five-sector economy. They are right, but only in form. It must be realized that the state-owned industrial and construction departments constitute the most important forces which control the country's economic lifelines although they employ only a little more than 1 million of the 30 million working people in the whole country and account for only 35% of the GNP and 24% of the national incomes. There are also grassroots state-run units which engage in domestic and foreign trade, transport, services and other activities. That we have so many difficulties in our economy now is accounted for by the insufficiency of state-run units. Once the managerial mechanism is renovated, these units will become strong and will exert a beneficial effect on the entire economy. They will be the leading force

in the conduct of joint ventures, in binding the different sectors together and in facilitating the conduct of the three major economic programmes. So, this is a question of quality rather than of quantity.

There is still another approach. A number of the comrades are of the view that before discussing in earnest the various forms of grassroots economy, we should explain common points for the new managerial mechanism which will show the main direction and serve as the foundation for the institution of particular mechanism. What can we say about that? I think that as far as methods are concerned, the problem can be approached from two directions. First, we shall begin with generalities and proceed to particulars. Second, we shall reverse the course. If we take the first course, I think we must have a fairly firm grasp of generalities. And to do this we must study the concretes and must be able to generalise them.

Otherwise, our findings will be vague and cannot be of any use in practical guidance. Moreover autonomy in the state sector is not the same as autonomy in the collective sector; it is even more different from autonomy in the private and capitalist sectors. In point of fact, autonomy can be regarded as completely irrelevant in the case of the two later sectors because, as a matter of fact, all means of productions are owned by the producers who are also responsible for organization, management and distribution. A soloist has only himself

to rely on. What the state can do for him is to take him in the right direction and have him under control, through appropriate policies.

It has been proved in both theory and practice that for nature and society to change qualitatively from one state to another, there must be necessary transitional periods. No change to a higher state is possible without ample material preparations. A task must always be conceived together with means necessary for its conduct. In many respects, our country now still lacks the premises and conditions for a management system entirely new in quality, perfect, and uniform. The reasons :

1. The economy is marked by serious imbalances, with a huge gap between supply and demand and without the normal conditions for reproduction, even simple reproduction. Social production has not been properly reorganized. Distribution and circulation is chaotic, inflation is still at a high rate, and efficiency in production and trade remains unpredictable.

2. As yet, we have not been able to formulate a programme for socialist construction or a strategy for socio-economic development, and have laid down only the general lines for a new economic structure. In this case, it is impossible to "place the plough in front of the buffalo". We cannot work out and

carry into effect a regular strategy for qualitatively new economic management without completing the other jobs.

3. The system of bureaucratic centralism and subsidization that governed all activities for many years and that can still be felt quite heavily, cannot be removed overnight.

4. We are not ready yet, in organization, personnel experience and knowledge, for thorough renovation.

So, what we need now is an economic management strategy that suits the present socio-economic situation, a very unstable situation in which old forms are still deeply rooted while new forms are just beginning to take shape. In other words, what we have now is an economy in a transitional stage with a transitional management mechanism in which old and new forms exist side by side. This can be seen not only in the whole economy, but also at each stage, in each economic unit, and in each person engaged in economic activities.

Even in the Soviet Union, a complete restructuring of the management mechanism is a long-term objective. Between now and then there must be a number of years for transitional steps to be effected in certain respects, like restructuring of pricing, of the trade in materials and equipment, and so on.

What must be made clear is that such a transition is necessary for further advance along the path of full socialist cost-accounting business, for overcoming bureaucratic centralism and subsidization,

for broader autonomy in production and trade at grassroots levels, for correct democratic centralism in a planned economy. How far this could be achieved depends on available subjective and objective conditions. Nothing new can happen as long as the general attitude remains one of wait and see. So, we must all pitch in to assist the birth of new things. It has been planned that a number of enterprises, first of all joint Vietnamese-Soviet enterprises and enterprises specializing in consumer goods whose material and technical supplies and outlets are relatively stable, will switch over to socialist cost-accounting at the beginning of 1988. In 1989, more will do that, and by 1990 the new management mechanism will have been instituted in the main in all economic units and all state apparatuses. For the time being, good implementation of the Resolution of the Second Plenum of the Central Committee will help in an important way in renovating the overall mechanism of management.

With this realization we can say that it is impossible to gear right away the whole economy full socialist cost-accounting. A number of grassroots units may be able to correctly calculate production costs without adversely affecting the price ceiling or causing prices to soar beyond the reach of consumers. But this cannot be said of all other units at the grassroots. We need time to reorganize production, improve management and technical innovations and streamline organization. This calls for

a resolute struggle for changes against the ingrained habit of dependence on bureaucratic subsidization which treats the state simply as a "wet nurse" and which makes consumers bear all the consequences of irresponsible management.

Nor can we replace at once state-assigned quotas (whose number, however, has decreased considerably) just with contracts offered by the state or other consumer bodies to bidders with specific economic and technical norms, or with economic levers. Of course, we do not mean to say that application of such forms would be a departure from socialist principles of economic management. But as yet we cannot resort to these forms because they require premises and conditions which, for the moment, are unavailable. That is why these new forms of management are applied experimentally only where conditions permit.

Another recommendation, which is not in line with reality, calls for immediate "commercialization" of materials and technical equipment. Now that materials and equipment are seriously in short supply (supply to state enterprises meets only about 50% of demand) we must stick to priority distribution. Still, there is room now for improvement in this field. We can, for instance, stop the practice of supplying materials and technical equipment at too low prices, which often leads to waste or to resales for profit. So, prices will be set on a preferential basis. They may be full or subsidized to a certain extent depending on the

categories to which buyers belong. But the ultimate aim is no subsidization at all. The state will also sell certain kinds of materials and equipment, particularly surpluses, to other sectors of the economy, to meet part of their demand.

A number of the comrades recommend uniform prices for all kinds of goods. In this way, they say, the currency will have a unique standard. Otherwise, it would be impossible to curb inflation. Theoretically, this is true. Yet, under present circumstances, it would be idealistic. In any country where supply falls too short of demand and where there is a high rate of inflation, materials and goods must be sold in limited quantities and at stable prices. This is not the best way, but it must be done. But there is a difference, though. We know better now. We have reduced to a minimum the number of two-price goods, and we are trying not to leave too big a gap between state prices and market prices while making adjustments in view of the present rate of inflation. Anyway, this is only a temporary measure for the transitional period in which two-price systems exist side by side. When the time is ripe we shall have uniform prices.

I take this occasion to say a few words about learning from foreign experiences. It is very necessary to learn from the fraternal countries, since we are late-comers with very little experience in socialist construction in general and in economic management in particular. The point is how to go about it. First, we must carefully study the new

forms in use in those countries so as to well understand them in both theory and practice. Second, we must carefully study our own economic, technical and social conditions for judicious application.

Because of the great economic and social importance of economic units at the grassroots, we attach great attention of economic management at this level. So, within our power, we must see to it that such units have every condition to exercise autonomy in production and trade on the basis of self-financing for self-development, with profits both for themselves and for the state.

The first breakthrough in production and circulation in our national economy was marked by the Resolution of the 6th Plenum of the 4th Central Committee in 1980. But the policies and measures prescribed by that resolution were incomplete and unsystematic. Moreover, they were not institutionalized in time. As a result, state enterprises remained handicapped. The biggest problem was that although materials and equipment were in short supply and most of the equipment was left idle and workers were under-employed, paid with only 70% of their wages, enterprises had great difficulty in procurement because of rigid regulations and bureaucratic

procedures. On the other hand, small capitalist and private businesses, particularly trading businesses, had a good time because of slack control.

Then, thanks to Directive 100 of the Party Secretariat on contracts for end products (January 1981) and Decisions 25 and 26CP by the Government, agricultural and industrial units in the state sector gained certain freedom to act with initiative. They no longer had to wait passively for state allotments but could meet part of their need for materials and equipment through joint ventures and exchanges within the country and through direct export-import, and were allowed to pay higher for supplies obtained from non-governmental sources and to add the difference in price to production costs. As a result, a number of enterprises were able to restore production, more material wealth was created for society, more money flowed into state funds, and more people were employed. That situation also gave rise to undesirable things. Unfortunately, to fight these negative manifestations, we acted rashly and bureaucratically. For instance we forced enterprises to cover by themselves any excess in price for supplies obtained from sources other than the state and we set too low a ceiling for wages and bonuses. The only thing those policies did was to widen the gap between planning and the market and further cripple grassroots enterprises. The vicious circle began all over again. Meanwhile, unaffected by state regulations, small capitalist and private enterprises developed at will with virtual monopoly on many kinds of goods. It was quite

common for both the state sector and the collective sector to be led by the private sector. That was the paradox of "the chick beating the rooster". Such a strange situation did exist and still exists today.

After many years of trial and error, for which we had to pay very dearly, we finally found, with the Draft Resolution 306 of the Political Bureau in April 1986, the beginning of a right course to develop production and trade through greater autonomy at the grassroots. Limited as it was, the resolution took note of the fact that grassroots units were operating better thanks to steps which used to be generally regarded as illegal.

A brief review of the emergence of the new mechanism leads to the following remarks :

1. The birth of this mechanism was not an easy one. The course leading to it was full of difficulties, full of twists and turns, and there was much reluctance about it. So the lesson we can learn for what we are going to do is that we must act with consistency and determination and must not allow anyone to reverse the trend for a restructured management mechanism, which recognizes grassroots autonomy in production and trade. Regardless of temporary shortcomings, we must not reject or violate the principle of full democratization at the grassroots, and must, at the same time maintain correct centralism at the top.

2. It is important enough to have arrived at this Plenum Resolution. Yet, for the document to prove

itself in life, we must pay great attention while guiding its institution. We must see to it that state legislations are not contradictory to the spirit of the resolution, and must ensure uniformity and timeliness. This is the central task, and we must make every effort to carry it out, however difficult and complicated it may be.

So, in my opinion, this is what we should bear in mind for future activity.

The focus of the present Plenum Resolution is the guarantee of autonomy for state-run units at the grassroots as socialist producers. I only wish to draw your attention to the following points :

For a factory to really be autonomous economically, I think it is essential for this factory to be in full control of technical inputs and materials. At present, most factories are supplied, in different degrees, by two sources, government and non-government. Now, what is required of governmental suppliers is that they must inform customers beforehand of what they can do and must, before the beginning of an annual plan, deliver part of what has been agreed upon, and homogeneity must be ensured right with the first consignment. Non-governmental supplies that come from abroad can be obtained through the medium of state or local export-import bodies. Big enterprises, with permission of the state, can also get supplies directly from foreign partners. Regarding locally available supplies, regulations must be enforced to avoid undue restriction on procurement and also to

prevent a chaotic situation on the market. Anyway, the principle is to encourage enterprises to tap new sources to meet their needs.

Recognition of the need for materials and technical inputs obtained on the side necessarily entails recognition of market prices (as determined by the state) and of their inclusion in production costs. The state must, therefore, see to it that enterprises are not effected by their self-catering effort. On the other hand, it must make sure that prices will not get out of control as a result of this effort.

As they come from two main sources, materials and technical inputs are priced differently. But a product coming from a single factory cannot have different prices. This point must be discussed so that unanimity can be reached. I wonder if we should base ourselves on the mean value of these supplies ?

Grassroots autonomy is impossible without an appropriate mechanism to encourage legitimate interests. In this sense, a judicious calculation of profits will be very important. The percentage method based on specific costs is not conducive to efficiency, since high costs will automatically bring higher profits. A new method should be based on this principle : the subtraction of costs and contributions from sales. In this way, the more factories cut costs, the more they can earn. This will generate competitiveness because enterprises must strictly apply cost-accounting and must operate at a higher tempo. This will satisfactorily serve state, collective

and individual interests. So, I recommend further discussion for a more rational, more scientific method of profit reckoning.

Another important aspect of grassroots autonomy is financial autonomy. In general, enterprises must be able to finance themselves, cover their pay sheets and make profit for enlarged reproduction and for contributions to the state. This must be carried out at any cost. To help enterprises in this regard, the state will allow them to keep the whole depreciation charge and will assign them with fixed contribution quotas for a number of years. The state will also allow enterprises to obtain capital from different sources and give them greater scope in the use of capital assets. Moreover, autonomy in planning, procurement, sales, labour and wages will be guaranteed. But I want to stress that these rights are only conditions necessary for better operation. They do not automatically lead to higher efficiency. To be really effective, it is most decisive for enterprises to bring about drastic changes in production, on which depends everything — output, profits, worker's well-being, further development and contributions to the state. Enterprises must act with full initiative and great dynamism. They must be able to organize production rationally, reduce the number of intermediate links and jobs, introduce new techniques and processes, and be thrifty in the use of money, materials and energy. The aim is more goods, of better quality and at

lower costs, which is our highest hope and objective. Yet, we cannot feel assured in this respect : state enterprises are moving too slowly.

The cause can partly be attributed to central authorities' slowness in replacing the old mechanism of management with a new one, and their failure to provide enterprises with necessary material conditions. A government steering committee, which has recently supervised layout calculations at a number of enterprises, notes that not much headway has been made in the organization and management of actual production. In most cases, expenditures (prescribed according to old rates) were simply added and included in productions costs. This accounted for the fact that not a few enterprises were making "false profits" while taking "real losses". Meanwhile, others were making a lot of money, not by raising productivity but by engaging in illegal transactions. The state now demands that enterprises be honest in cost-accounting and in progress reporting. There is nothing to rejoice in the fact that some enterprises are cheating in book-keeping, that much of the information they send out is untrue.

... Enterprise autonomy cannot be separated from collective mastery. The Draft Resolution, in a relatively clear-cut manner, defines the rights and liabilities of the various parts of a grassroots economic unit, and gives greater powers to the chief. To ensure collective mastery, it is most important

to enhance the role of party committees, of directors, trade unions and the communist youth organizations.

Enterprise autonomy also depends on a very important matter — renovation of state economic management. The main point here is a clear-cut distinction between direct management of production and trade by grassroots economic units on the one hand and economic management by the state on the other. Realization of this distinction will enable the state to concentrate on key areas in the national economy rather than interfere with day-to-day activities at enterprises. This, moreover, will create the best climate for production and trade. The more firmly the state controls key areas of the economy, the more room it will give economic units to operate, all the while keeping them in the orbit of a planned economy. We have already covered some of the main points about this problem. Yet, there are many other points to deal with in a concrete way, like the capacity, duties, powers, organization and mode of operation of the Council of Ministers, of the various ministries and mixed committees, of specialized departments, and of the administration at provincial, municipal and other levels. It is also necessary to decide what level are grassroots units directly accountable to. Also, all matters relating to budget management must be made clear. It is true that all these problems cannot be settled at one sitting of the Central Committee. What is

good is that we have succeeded in raising them for discussion and are determined to carry out renovation along the agreed line.

Finally, the success of renovation of economic management depends on the quality of economic personnel, who play a very decisive role, but who are small in number and weak in qualification. Many are unqualified in morality of in class stand. This is not because we do not have the right people. It is because we do not have the right methods to get the right people, and because we lack planning in training and recruiting. So this, too, is an area that requires our immediate attention. And, before we can do anything in this regard, we must arm ourselves with a correct approach to decide what exactly is required of personnel and what must be done in personnel work.

## DEEP AND ALLROUND RENOVATION IN ALL FIELDS OF ACTIVITY<sup>1</sup>

*Dear deputies to the National Assembly,  
Dear comrades and friends,*

The most outstanding political event in our country recently was the successful general elections to the 8th Legislature of the National Assembly and the People's Councils at all levels. The elections took place in line with the spirit of renewal advocated by the 6th Party Congress, which was more open-hearted and democratic than the previous ones and in which the people's right to mastery in choosing their representatives to the country's supreme organ of power was respected.

Present at this session today are 496 members of the 8th Legislature of the National Assembly, who represent the people's will and aspirations and who have the great honour and heavy responsibility for deciding problems of paramount importance concerning the cause of renewal and the destiny of the nation.

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1. Speech delivered at the first session of the 8th Legislature of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, June 1987.

... The 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam marked a step of important renewal in the Party's leadership in all aspects of social life. New viewpoints and undertakings decided by the Congress will show us the way to overcome difficulties, and gradually stabilizing the country's socio-economic situation. The determination to follow such a correct orientation has been so far manifested in our Party and State's great deeds since the Congress.

In the first period after the Congress, the Party and State focused their attention on streamlining the State apparatus and placing leading cadres in central and local organs. With the election to the 8th Legislature of the National Assembly and its first session, the State apparatus was further strengthened. We are deeply aware that we shall fail to implement any undertakings and policies unless we are determined to restructure the organization of the State apparatus and the cadre work.

... At the 2nd Plenum of the Party Central Committee held in early April, one of the important tasks set by the 6th Congress was fulfilled, that was to find a way to solve pressing problems in the distribution and circulation of goods. This is a domain of vital importance, the settlement of which is longed for by the people. The foremost guiding idea here is that restructuring the management mechanism and policies and organizing the distribution and circulation of goods must go in pair with the correct application of economic law, taking planning as the centrepiece, extending the

use of the commodity-money relations, shifting to socialist cost-accounting and business transaction, in close association with the renovation of other aspects in the mechanism of economic management. At the Plenum, three categories of policies were examined and initially settled: Policies on prices and on the circulation of materials and goods; policies and measures for salaries and for the well-being of workers, public employees and members of the armed forces; policies and measures on finance and bank. The objective set forth is to exercise "four reductions": reduction of inflation rate; reduction of soaring prices; reduction of budget deficit; and reduction of difficulties in the life of wage-earners, members of the armed forces and the working people in general. The red thread which goes through these policies is to *treat the economic interests correctly* so as to create the driving force of production and enterprise in agriculture, industry, commerce, finance and currency.

The Resolution of the 2nd Plenum of the Party Central Committee is correct and suited to the real situation. The process of implementing it, however, was not smooth, partly because the adverse climate this year had affected agricultural production. On the other hand it was due to our weak management. An important point at present is to strengthen the work of education, concretize the resolutions into undertakings and measures,

and require that all echelons, branches, economic organizations and people as a whole observe them strictly.

In streamlining the structure of production and investment, we have decided to suspend or defer the construction of many big projects in order to concentrate manpower and property on projects directly serving the three major economic programmes set by the 6th Congress.

Grasping the Party's viewpoints and undertakings, all branches and localities have actively worked out decisions and carried out solutions to urgent problems within the framework of their authorized activities.

Reality has shown that it is not easy to find out correct orientations and undertakings for solving socio-economic problems. Neither is it easy to guide and organize the implementation of policies, to create realistic conditions for the triumph of the new and the right over the backward and the wrong. Following the Congress we recorded a number of great achievements which have had a definite impact. We should continue to speed up the process of renewal in line with the correct orientations worked out by the 6th Congress. For the time being, the Party and State are concentrating on seeking a comprehensive solution to improve the mechanism of economic management and continue to work out measures for putting the three major economic programmes into effect.

**Dear delegates,**

I am glad to report to the National Assembly at this solemn session about the fine result of the official friendship visit to the Soviet Union from 17 to 22 May by a high-ranking representation of our Party.

The visit took place just in the year celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, at a time when the Communist parties and peoples of Vietnam and the Soviet Union are determined to carry out renovation and restructuring in the light of the Resolution of the 6th CPV Congress and the Resolution of the 27th CPSU Congress, and in the context of the world and regional situation undergoing great changes in favour of the struggle for peace and socialism.

The visit took place in an atmosphere of sincerity, mutual understanding, confidence and support. The two parties reached high unanimity on key matters of international and domestic policies. Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev and other Soviet leaders fully sympathized with, highly valued and supported the correct and realistic line of the 6th CPV Congress and the resolution of the 2nd Plenum of the Party Central Committee (the 6th Congress).

They also noted with joy that our Party Central Committee, with dynamism and dispatch, is solving the country's economic problems and other pressing matters along a correct line. They expressed their sympathy with and deep impression on the way we put forward the question of carrying out the

campaign to purify and heighten the militant power of the Party organizations and State bodies, and make social relations wholesome. The CPSU not only expressed their sympathy with but also showed us their determination to contribute to our successful implementation of the resolution of the 6th Congress.

The fine and big results of the visit were clearly manifested in the content of the joint declaration, in new treaties and agreements signed by representatives of the two Parties and States. I would like to stress that the Soviet Union is unanimously in support of our Party's undertakings — to resolutely shift the economic relations of loan and trade to the production relations of cooperation and mutual benefit in various fields: agriculture, consumer goods, mechanical engineering, electronics, mining, chemical industry, etc.

... However, to translate these results into reality we must make the greatest efforts in organizing the implementation of policies.

Let us renovate our thinking, restructure the organizing and cadre work, build a new style of life and work, raise our sense of responsibility, and fulfil our commitments in economic relations with the Soviet Union. Let us resolutely do away with the state of relying on others which still prevails among cadres at various echelons and branches and even among the people.

The two sides also reached high unanimity on all international problems and on the orientations for solving them with a view to defending peace,

increasing the strength of each country as well as of the whole socialist community, thus contributing to making the international and regional situations untroubled.

We affirmed the full support of the Communist Party and people of Vietnam for the Soviet Union's new and important initiatives for peace aimed at easing tension, driving back the threat of nuclear war and consolidating peace and security in the whole world. Vietnam and the Soviet Union will strive to realize the idea to make the Asian-Pacific region one of peace, stability, good neighbourhood and cooperation on the basis of joint efforts by countries in the region. We affirmed our wish to solve the Kampuchea problem by political means and to normalize our relations with the People's Republic of China.

The leadership of the Soviet Union was unanimous in supporting our undertakings...

*Dear delegates,*

In the spirit of comprehensive renovation advocated by the 6th Party Congress, the 8th Legislature of the National Assembly has also decided to carry out a far-reaching renovation of its work with the aim of successfully fulfilling its glorious mission entrusted by the people.

... The most significant point to raise the effect of management by the socialist state, first by the National Assembly, the State Council, and

the People's Councils at all levels, is the wide and full exercise of socialist democracy. This is the key point in the renewal of political as well as economic thinking in our country at present. Socialism has two strong points which did not exist in previous forms of society. First, the character of high-level organization and centralism created by the public ownership on means of production. Second, the working people, who are freed and become the real masters of society and country, are a great source of manpower to defend and build the Homeland. If we exploit these two sources of power simultaneously we will become invincible. In the dialectical unity of these two aspects, it is necessary to recognize that the working masses are the main basis and deep source creating the strength of our system and the essential factor guaranteeing, preserving and promoting the fruits of our revolution.

... Formerly when power was not yet in our hands, following the Party's correct political line which was suited to their interests and supported by them, our people, under the Party's leadership and organization, successfully carried out the August Revolution and set up the first worker-peasant State in Southeast Asia. During the great war of resistance against the US imperialists in the past years, President Ho Chi Minh often said: "Things a hundred times easy cannot be done without the people's help. Things ten thousand times difficult can be done with the people's assistance." These words became an invincible

weapon of the people's war, helping us regain independence and freedom, reunify the country, and make our cause successful, to the great admiration by the world.

In the new historical conditions when there is a unified government to manage the whole country to fulfil the two strategic tasks of defending and building the socialist Homeland, the lesson that "the people are the roots" raised in the resolution of the 6th Party Congress not only retains its value but also has a special significance.

... The truth that "the people are the roots" seems to be very simple and obvious. But reality shows that this is not so simple. The reason is that when we are in power, not a few of our cadres prefer to exert their authority and give orders rather than to persuade, discuss with and motivate people to do things. There are even people who regard democratization as an obstacle to the implementation of centralism and a curb to power. If democracy is construed as separated from centralism and their dialectical unity is not recognized, then the result is bureaucratic and perfunctory centralism. We can enumerate many painful cases of violation of the people's right to mastery in Party organizations and State administrations at all levels, and in all people-elected bodies. Every day I myself receive a lot of written complaints coming from far and near, in which I am sure there are cases of cadres who, taking advantage of their high positions and great power, overused

their authority to bully people and defend their privileges and prerogatives. These cadres paid no attention to public criticism and people's sincere advice. It is a pity that the examination and treatment of these cases are too slow, and many of them have been passed over.

Our system is that of the working people, "by the people and for the people." That is why President Ho Chi Minh said: "Everyone of us, from the President of the Republic to rank-and-file cadres, should be worthy of our role as loyal servants to the people." Should we stand aloof from and above the people, each of us would be nothing, and our system would only be "a clay-footed giant." Delegates to the National Assembly and the People's Councils at all levels — those directly elected by the people — should more than anyone else raise the voice of the people truthfully and straightforwardly, and have the courage to defend their legitimate interests. It is certain that each citizen had taken careful consideration before dropping their ballots into the boxes, as it is often said: "Try before you trust." I know that before the election day, all delegates met their electors, listened to their opinions and made a lot of promises. But is it sure that all of our elected delegates remember their promises and keep their words? I also know clearly that in the previous legislatures of the National Assembly there were elected delegates who did not meet their electors even for once during their term of office and they resorted to lots of

reasons for their absence. But people said, "How difficult it is for the masters to meet their servants."

The people's delegates at all levels must bear in mind that they are a bridge between the masses of electors and the authorities at all levels, that they should contribute to building a stable two-way link between the electors and the people-elected bodies. Such a tie helps the delegates to know the electors' desires and constructive opinions in order to report them to the higher levels, and at the same time to answer or report to the people about the Party's and State's new undertakings and policies. It is always interesting to meet the people in the form of dialogues. The people's direct opinions are candid and not distorted. They help the delegates to think over, analyse and make proposals to the higher levels, thus contributing to building and perfecting the Party's and State's policies and undertakings.

... I think that the forum of the National Assembly and the People's Councils at all levels should be used better along the line of attaching importance to the essence and effectiveness. It is at this forum that the delegates should really echo the people's voices on matters of importance towards the whole country as well as localities, and not only in proposing undertakings, policies and measures for organizing the implementation, but also in making remarks on the government's work and making proposals on personnel. The opinions expressed by delegates to the National Assembly and the People's

Councils must be seriously studied and answered by concerned offices and if they are correct they must be seriously implemented. All important matters coming within the State's jurisdiction must be brought before the National Assembly and the State Council which should conduct really democratic debates before working out official resolutions. They absolutely should not place the people-elected bodies before already decided problems so that they are left with no alternative than just passively adopt them by show of hands.

*Dear delegates,*

Another important matter worthy of concern is to *raise the role of the National Assembly as the legislative body and the supervisor in the observance of law.*

The Communist Party of Vietnam is a party in power. It performs its leadership over the whole society by working out major guidelines and undertakings, controlling the government's work and making proposals to the people-elected bodies on the appointment of qualified cadres to key positions of the State apparatus. The State's duty is to institutionalize the Party's guidelines and undertakings into appropriate laws, policies and rules, to work out plans for socio-economic development and to organize the effective implementation of State plans on the basis of the function of socio-economic and administrative management stipula-

ted by the Constitution. In such a whole work of the socialist State, the National Assembly holds a special position as the legislative body and the supervisor acting on the basis of the Party's guidelines and undertakings and reflects the people's will and aspirations.

The motto "the Party leads, the working people are the master, and the State manages" can only be exercised through law and guaranteed by law. A progressive, disciplined and orderly society is mainly directed by law not only as a coercive force but also as an active means of education. At the same time this society demands that all citizens, regardless of positions and functions, live and work in conformity with law. However, for the time being our country still does not have enough laws. Even with the laws already promulgated, many people pay little attention to studying them. The observance of law is not strict. The popularization and education of law receive little attention. These are some of the many reasons leading to the fact that the number of law-breaking cases is not reduced, social order is not firmly maintained, and social security is not guaranteed. When a citizen does not understand law, he can break it unconsciously and has no conditions to fulfil his right to mastery in controlling the State offices' implementation of law. On the other hand, if the struggle against negative effects in society is to gain good results, it must rely on the people. Answering the question why there were so many law-breakers in Russia

when the country did not run short of laws, Lenin said, "Only when it is supported by the masses themselves can such a struggle (the one against negative effects) become successful."

It is certain that the people's understanding of law will give them a more powerful means to carry out fruitfully the struggle against negative effects. The working people use law as a means of struggle to defend socialist democracy. Only by so doing can our democracy be increasingly perfected and the danger of degeneration of cadres be stopped short.

The lack of respect for law is due to various causes. Ours is a country of aged-old small-scale production. Relations between man and man in villages are mainly ruled by social customs and public opinions, and even differ from one locality to another. The feudal state promulgated many laws, but for the people, in quite a few cases, "the King's law comes after the village's practices." In colonial society, the rules of the state aimed at defending the privileges and prerogatives of a minority of colonialists and feudalists, which were opposed to the masses' interests. Part of the people who had a prejudice against the rule of the old regime now had the same view towards law in general, even that of the socialist state. A number of cadres holding high posts with tremendous power, influenced by the vestiges of feudal ideology or ruled by individualism, place their interests above all, stand over and above the laws of the State, and even connive with law-breakers. Those law-breaking phenomena,

which are overlooked or not severely meted out also lead to and nurture the psychology of underrating law.

... The requirements concerning law put forward by the Congress are closely linked to the task of the 8th Legislature of the National Assembly. We already have the Constitution, the fundamental code of law of the socialist State. Recently, a number of other important laws were promulgated. In comparison with other legislatures of the National Assembly the previous 7th Legislature succeeded in taking the legislative activity of the National Assembly a step forward. It is worthy of note that the National Assembly has adopted laws on the organization of the State apparatus, the Penal Code, the Law on Marriage and Family, etc. The State Council also adopted a number of decrees-laws. However, compared with the requirements for building a complete and homogenous system of laws, we still lack quite a few, especially economic laws. We have not yet mentioned the replacement and renovation of out-of-date regulations, especially those maintaining the system of bureaucratic centralism based on State subsidies. These are very urgent tasks. Many of our activities are not carried out in good time, or their performance is often careless. This is mainly due to our lack of juridical standards and regulations. For instance, our Party and State undertake to widen foreign economic relations, but so long as the law on foreign investment in our country is not completed, the implementation

of this undertaking remains limited. Likewise, when we actively put into motion the new mechanism of economic management, with the grassroots economic units as the centrepiece, if the law on enterprises is not elaborated the enterprises' activities will not be fully guaranteed juridically.

I said these things in the hope that our National Assembly would pay much more attention to its legislative work. Is it the right time for us to renew juridical thinking at the same time with the renewal of economic thinking, restructure the planning of the law-making work, and establish a more expeditious law-making process, thus overcoming the state of prolonged inertia?

Together with laws, such important problems as State plans and major policies presented by the Council of Ministers to the National Assembly for adoption should reflect the opinions of the deputies to the National Assembly more fully and exactly. This problem is a concern of many. To really manifest the National Assembly's mind and will, it is necessary to create conditions for each deputy as well as the Standing Committees of the National Assembly to have time to make careful studies, not only of documents but also of reality and to collect the opinions of broad strata of the people. The deputies should be supplied with necessary and serious information concerning the topic by all offices. Important problems must be made public through mass media to reach every citizen and arouse people's criticism. By so doing, the deputies

will certainly get more diversified and thought-giving data to make well-grounded proposals. After that, of course it is necessary to hold really overt and heated debates. What causes worry does not lie in the differences of views during the debates, but in the outward unity which will lead to different ways of implementation. The resolutions based on the consensus of the majority of deputies to the National Assembly are State laws and supreme orders which executive bodies must observe. No organizations and individuals whatever their positions and no matter in whose names they may act, are allowed to delay the implementation or change the National Assembly's decisions. Power must be closely associated with and guaranteed by effectiveness.

Although the drafting and adoption of laws as well as major policies are important, they are only the beginning of our work. The most difficult thing is how to bring them into life, to turn them into practical daily activities of broad masses. The role of the National Assembly here is control and supervision, from the implementation by the Council of Ministers, the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Organ of Control and other State bodies to the masses' practical daily activities. Through this, the National Assembly will amend and perfect the already promulgated documents of State laws and find out difficulties and obstacles in the process of implementation in order to make proposals to the authorities at all levels which will take measures to solve problems. It is also in supervising the implementation of policies that the National Assembly,

relying on the people, will evaluate the State bodies' works, the leading cadres' capacity and qualifications and will bring law-breakers to light and demand the juridical bodies to severely punish them, including those holding high posts with great power. As the people's highest representative body, the National Assembly has the full right to question and criticize the Council of Ministers, revoke its unworthy members, and bring to book individuals and collectives who have made so serious mistakes that they must be punished.

The problem raised is how those rights of the National Assembly are exercised. Facts have proved, through the previous legislatures of the National Assembly, that not at all times and under all circumstances the voice of the people's highest representatives is respected. A number of people willingly give their verbal approval but they actually do nothing accordingly, or their deeds do not match their words. Not rare also are cases of written petitions — sent by a National Assembly deputy to an office or a leading official to request the elucidation or treatment of a case — being "kept intact" among a pile of files year after year without a reply.

An end must be put to this state of things. We can no longer maintain formalism and bureaucracy right in the country's supreme organ of power. The National Assembly should be our country's most typical body in terms of effectiveness of power and

essence of socialist democracy. Such a change will surely set an example for the People's Councils at all levels as well as other organizations.

... Whether the National Assembly can perform its function as stipulated by the Constitution or not depends on whether or not each deputy to the National Assembly fulfils his or her responsibility and makes worthy contributions. Greater power, heavier responsibility. I think that the noble spiritual value of the title "people's representative" lies in the fact that the National Assembly deputies keep close contacts with the people, speak their voices, represent their legitimate interests and aspirations. The opinions of the National Assembly deputies must be the crystallization of the correct and sincere thoughts and desires of the people whom they represent. Although we represent different social strata and different localities, there is unity of thought and action among us for the overall interests of our entire people and of socialism.

**ART AND CULTURAL WORKERS SHOULD  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE PARTY'S  
RENOVATION WORK<sup>1</sup>**

*Comrades,*

It has been a privilege for me to attend this seminar in the last two days and listen to many comrades. I welcome all your opinions for they are straightforward, varied, diversified and profound. Perhaps, you have pondered over them for a long time. I would say that in these last two days, you have spoken your hearts out.

Your opinions touched on many aspects, but in the final analysis, they concur on the following points.

First, the role of culture and arts : For many years now, our Party has under-estimated the role of culture and arts, of artists and cultural activists in social life. This is a matter which many of you have dealt with in one way or another, and to which you have cited many concrete and vivid examples.

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1. Summary of Nguyen Van Linh's talk at an informal meeting with artists and cultural activists in Hanoi, 6-7 Oct. 1987.

Second, you all have remarked that in leading art and cultural activities, a number of Party cadres have shown a lack of democracy.

Third, there are many incorrect points and unjustices in the organizational mechanism, management, policies and regimes toward culture, literature and arts. These shortcomings are one of the causes of the many difficulties and shortages in your present life. Art and cultural workers are producers who make high grade products for society. But, over the past years, your brainwork has not even earned you enough for recreating your working power.

Those are the main points in your opinions. I would say that they also are the main causes of the poor promotion of the capabilities of artists, cultural activists and intellectuals. I feel that for more than ten years now (since the country was reunified and embarked on socialist construction on a national scale) our art and cultural achievements have been poor — allow me to use this word — compared with those we obtained during the two previous wars of resistance. At that time, you contributed a lot, obtained many successes and produced many excellent works. But such is not the case in the past ten years, and that's why I said it's poor. Through your opinions, I understand better why your contribution is still little in this stage of the revolution. Recently, some good works were warmly welcomed by readers. However, they could be counted on the fingers of a hand. There should have been a lot more.

The problem for us now is that in the light of the renovation spirit advocated by the 6th Party Congress, we have to find out the causes of the poverty in our arts, literature and culture.

There is no denying that we have obtained certain successes in the socio-economic field. However, we have also committed quite a few errors. The life of our people, especially of our honest working people, should not have been so poor as it is now, had it not been for the mistakes and errors we have committed. As you all know, the Party Central Committee is striving to correct them. But to do that, we have to find out the causes. Only by correcting the mistakes can we effect renovation. Renovation is a profound and thorough-going revolution. It involves renovation in thinking, policies, organization, personnel and other respects. Those leaders who are conservative, commit errors, and balk at real renovation cannot lead.

You've been talking a lot about "untying", which you said is necessary to develop all capabilities in your field of work. But, how should we "untie"? I think that first of all the Party should untie in the fields of organization, policies, rules and regulations, and regimes. Listening to you, I learned with surprise that even in your domain, there is also a mechanism of bureaucratic administrative management based on State subsidies. In the coming period, we have to correct them all, and make regulations aimed at ensuring the development of your work. The Party and State should quickly get down to this business.

On the other hand, however, I think that in your domain, you have to do things by yourselves. This morning, when one of you was speaking, I put in, "you should save yourselves before God comes to your rescue" and I meant it. You have demanded that in your domain, work should not be imposed the way a train is placed on its tracks, and that you want to be free to take care of your work. If we should promote democracy for producers in economic field, I don't see why you should not exercise your right to mastery in your domain.

I've heard that writers and artists are still subjected to much restriction and sanction, and that what you dread most is often something that hangs somewhere above your heads. You fear it even more than you fear censorship. You fear that rumours would spread around charging that what you've written is not in line with the Party's views or goes against the Party's line and policies, and the like... Having heard about your worries I feel deep sympathy for you. It was for that reason that this morning, I burst out : "You should save yourselves before God comes to your rescue". We should be strict to ourselves. But when you are convinced that you are right, that you write in a constructive spirit, you must stick to your guns, you must firmly defend the truth, you must have courage.

I think that you should not bend your pen in any circumstance whatsoever. If you are not yet ready to write, you'd better make further study of reality and accumulate more from life than just

swim with the tide. In the field of arts and literature, artists must be brave, have a pure heart and never flinch. You should always remember these words of Uncle Ho: "Now, in poetry there should be steel." Steel here, I think, is the revolutionary spirit.

I want to make some suggestions:

You should courageously overcome difficulties. In the past, revolutionary literature and arts had to overcome many difficulties and hardships in the condition of clandestine activities. In the wars of resistance, our literature and arts were highly combative and rendered effective services to the cause of national liberation. At that time, you had an atmosphere favourable for your artistic creation. The Party's leadership also created favourable conditions for you to contribute your talents. In war time, no one would forbid you to speak out against the enemy or the cowardly defeatists. It was then also clear whom you praise: our heroic combatants, our heroic people.

Nowadays, it is very difficult to praise as well as to criticize. The bad and the negative lie right within the people's ranks, among the high and mighty in the Party and State apparatuses. In the past we had a pretty simplistic view: that socialism could only have good things. Such a concept is utopic and naive. I myself once had the same thought, too. But now that we are in the period of transition to socialism, with people coming over from the old regimes, bringing with them bad habits:

and other legacies, including their erroneous views and incompetence, it is really difficult to have a clear outlook. The line between the right and the wrong at times is not clear enough.

The point is that we must arm ourselves with a sensitive and science-based approach. In creating art and literary works, we also need courage to raise problems of life and society. History will judge whether you are right or wrong. What is wrong must be corrected.

I have a hunch that once one holds power and begins to build socialism, one tends to think that everything is going just fine. In our art and literary creation, we often tend to praise, to make things "rosy". Naturally, it is nice to buy "roses". And whoever writes about bad people and malpractices are thus labelled "blackeners". In my opinion, while praising good people and deeds, you should expose bad examples and practices so as to arouse wide contempt for them. In doing so, you do not condemn the system but just those people and deeds that run counter to the lofty ideals of socialism.

You should expose and strongly criticize bureaucratism, repression against the masses, stealing of public property, speculation, parasitism, enjoying other people's manual and brain labour, bad customs, superstition, degradation and corruption. We should see to it that the entire society will scorn bad things, shun away from them and eliminate them. Beside that work, you should also create in your work characters who are genuine and

appealing, symbolizing the genuine working people who are working hard, manually and mentally, braving all difficulties, shortages and evil temptations, to build socialism and defend the homeland, and make active contributions to the cause of renovation advocated by the Party.

Ours is a Party in power. Its law of existence and development is to rely on the people, to "take the people as the roots". During its struggle for power, the Party kept close contacts with the masses. Now that it holds power, it may easily lose touch with the people, oppress them, and steal from them. It may also contract the disease of bureaucratism in its economic and ideological leadership. These mistakes must be criticized and strongly condemned. It is difficult to write works that sting certain "bureaucrats", or people in power. You must be brave, trying to find the right ways to do so. You may borrow stories of the past to deal with the present, to force those bad people to look over their shoulders. In the past, many works were shelved simply because of their stings, and their authors got into troubles, even had hard times. But, should that be a reason for us to bend our pens to suit the "taste" of those bad people? I think the artists who choose to do so have already lost all their revolutionary quality.

You must stay firm in the school of socialist realism. There are people who claim themselves to belong to this school, but in fact they dare not write the truth or criticize and condemn the bad

to foster the new-type people. As genuine artists you should maintain the honesty of your pens, the purity of your thoughts.

As I am not a specialist in literature and arts, I cannot discuss much about your work. But as a lover of literature and arts, I fully agree with the idea that fighters on the cultural and art front need not only sharp knives to remove the bad, but also the "ferment" to shape up the new in social life. Artists must have a sensitive insight to discover new elements. That is to guarantee the role of literature and arts as a predecessor in the cultural life of society. At this meeting, many of you have mentioned the *heraldic character* of literature and arts. Obviously with their perception, artists can through their works foretell the good and bad things, the future death of what today is still full of vitality, and the future emergence of what is still in the making. Such forecasts are badly needed.

You are the engineers of the soul. You must contribute to building the new-type people from those who today are still full of shortcomings and even of bad things. You should watch out, so as not to let yourselves fall into idealism and voluntarism and always describe the new people as if they were all saints. You must also see the weak points of a person before you can make him a new-type man.

However, it is not our wish that socialist realism fails to help orient our people toward the bright future and to give them the confidence that we can

overcome all present difficulties. The audiences must not see only the dark side in our works. They must also see the light as well because light helps them jump over darkness.

I can see in your opinions that you already have all the things I've just mentioned. But you still fear some "ghosts". The resolution of the 6th Party Congress has opened the door for renovation for you. However, things are still far from being sailing. We have not yet got to the smooth asphalted road, but are still driving on a bumpy and winding road. I am not a writer or an artist or a journalist, but of late I got the itch to write the "Things which Must Be Done Immediately". Many people have acclaimed and responded to them. But there are also those who contend: "Why should we smear our system?" and "It seems that the article is kind of a trick to unleash a 'cultural revolution'" and so on. I think that it is necessary to drive darkness away, just as a farmer has to weed his field for the rice to grow up. Good people and deeds will emerge if bad ones are got rid of. The difficult point is to have the courage to expose the bad. That's why I feel sympathetic to you all.

Finally, I would like to repeat that the 6th Party Congress has opened the door for you. In the immediate future, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat of the Party will issue a Resolution on Arts and Culture on the basis of the programme drafted by the Party Central Committee's Commission for Arts and Culture.

As a Vietnamese saying goes, "food keeps morale on its feet". I think that it is also necessary to solve all problems related to life and management in order to help your branch to move forward.

We are confident that in the coming period, our Party and State will adopt correct and suitable policies for your branch. I also believe that all restraints will be removed, and then your branch will be like a free bird, soaring into the blue sky. Our literature and arts will thus obtain fine and diversified achievements.

I wish you the best of health, perseverance and courage in your work. I wish to enjoy your interesting works which are close to this new stage of our revolution.

**LET THE YOUNG GENERATION MAKE  
A WORTHY CONTRIBUTION TO THE  
RENEWAL OF THE COUNTRY<sup>1</sup>**

*Dear comrades,*

Today I am happy to attend the 5th Congress of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, the Congress of the Vietnamese youth for the implementation of the 6th Party Congress Resolution.

... The 5th Congress of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union is being held at a time of great significance. We are at the end of 1987, the first year of implementation of the Resolution of the 6th Party Congress. The year 1988 is drawing near. It is the principal year of decisive significance in the successful realization of the objectives set by the 6th Party Congress.

... The Party Central Committee, with its full confidence in and love for the youth, puts high hopes in this Congress. We hope that all of you, comrades delegates, will hold open and democratic

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1. Speech delivered at the 5th Congress of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, 27 November 1987.

discussions in order to set correct tasks and working methods to push forward the youth movement and the Union's work, so that the youth may play a worthy part in carrying out the Resolution of the 6th Party Congress.

... Our first revolutionary young generation under the leadership of the Party, trained and guided by Uncle Ho, did not submit to the cruel oppression and exploitation by the feudalists and colonialists, did not refuse sacrifices, did not mind prisons and guillotines, actively took part in the struggle against the enemy. They soon understood the revolutionary ideal: saving the people and the country, liberating the nation and the working class, building a society without exploitation of man by man, where people enjoy equality and happiness. By choosing the proper ideal which is in harmony with the indispensable trend of our time and with the aspiration of the working people, the youth's energy and will are greatly multiplied. The youth became the strong and big impulsive force in the national struggle led by our Party, successfully carried out the August Revolution and overthrew the colonial and feudal yoke, established the first worker-peasant state in Southeast Asia. Many advanced young people at that time became outstanding revolutionaries who won the people's confidence and respect. Today, these people, though no longer young, still possess a strong revolutionary will and energy, and have great confidence in the bright future of the nation. They have set shining examples for us.

During the two wars of resistance against the imperialists, patriotism and revolutionary heroism were fully developed among the young generation. Millions of young people enthusiastically and bravely took up arms to save the country.

After 1975, our country was reunified, the whole nation started the construction of socialism, but peace was not yet established in the entire country. Tens of thousands of young people have joined the army. Despite all hardships, they have been brave and determined in the fight to defend the homeland and maintain security and to fulfil well their honourable internationalist duties.

In the fields of production, study and work, despite many difficulties and the lack of material and technical facilities, our young generation has brought its role into play. Quite a few young people and units have set good examples in doing difficult jobs in enterprises, cooperatives and offices; in their willingness to work in the State-run key projects or to widen new economic zones; in their intensive scientific and technical research; in their efforts to make discoveries, innovations and inventions; in their active participation in education, culture and arts.

By carrying out revolutionary activities, our young people have grown up. Many typical examples of revolutionary heroism of the young generation of Vietnam have emerged in various fields...

**Dear comrades,**

While praising the contributions of the youth and the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, in the spirit of facing the truth and the sense of responsibility of communist youth, we should admit that the Youth Union and its work still have many shortcomings.

It can be said that in this new stage of revolution a strong youth movement is still absent in many fields of activity. The Union's political role and its influence are not yet visible in many domains. It is important to have good young people and good young collectives. But even more important is to rely on this dynamic core to set in motion an active youth movement. So long as the Youth Union fails to create a seething movement of revolutionary action among the youth, its influence on society cannot be said to be far-flung. This situation is closely related to the qualities shown by the Union members and organizations, particularly at the grassroots.

I am sure that you feel your hearts ache when knowing that not a few of your comrades and friends are living and acting in an erroneous way and have lost all faith. For a young man or woman, to assert a correct reason to live and to find the right ideal is to assert the right way to live. In the past, with the ideal of national liberation and communism, many young people knew how to lead a worthy life, to overcome

all trials and sacrifices, and to make a great contribution to the cause of winning national independence and reunification. It is a pity that, at present, a number of young people who are not inspired by the noble revolutionary ideal, have indulged in a selfish life, craved for money, and only want to share the fruits of others' labour. Here and there a number of young men shirk their sacred citizen's duties such as joining the army or working. A number indulge in boozing and loitering. Others while away their time by frequenting pagodas and churches to forget their sorrows and the difficulties of life. A number of young people have degenerated and fallen into debauchery, causing sorrow to their parents and society as a whole.

Dear comrades, this state of things is really a hotbed for the enemy to sow crimes and turn those degenerated young people into efficient weapons against their compatriots.

I must add that there are other phenomena which, though not so serious as those I mentioned above, are inconsistent with the qualities of the new youth. They are sluggishness in work and study, disturbance of public order, an unruly and insolent attitude, and the use of vulgar language and manners. These negative effects happen every day in families, at public places, offices, factories, schools, and even in the streets. Should we keep silence over or ignore such things? Is it true that this state of things should be traced back to the difficulties in our economic life?

We should carefully analyse the causes of the situation in order to find out an orientation and method to solve it.

At this forum, I must say that our Party and State have committed errors towards the youth. It is probably not exaggeration to say that a number of Party and State bodies only spend the youth's strength but are not aware of their active role and the strategic importance of the agitation, education and organization work among the youth. They only care for the youth when they need their strength. After that, their role is fallen into oblivion, no one cares for their deep feelings and aspirations, no education for them, and their legitimate and wholesome requirements are not satisfied. There are Party cadres who do not respect or believe in the youth's abilities of organization and creativeness. They often interfere in the Youth Union's activities, turn the Union from an active and creative political organization into a passive one. This state of things, together with the existence of a number of bad Party members, has had a negative educational impact on the youth. A number of advanced cadres and members of the Union have gradually got tired. A part of the youth consider their work as a burden, as a result, their creative capacity has been lost and enthusiasm has been worn down.

To overcome these shortcomings and to enhance the effects of the youth's activities and education, first of all, there must be a renewal of the leadership over the youth work by all Party organs. The

Party and State organs should have practical and concrete methods to help the Union enhance its dynamism and creativeness in its work. To care for the legitimate demands of the youth is first to provide them with jobs, conditions to study, live and recreate. For the youth, special attention should be paid to a harmonious combination of duties and rights. On one side, unconditional dedication is required from the youth. On the other, if possible, the youth's minimum and legitimate requirements should be satisfied. There should not be constant refusals under the pretext of difficult objective circumstances.

The Party's leadership over the Union should be constantly and clearly shown in the political orientation and the modes of actions for the Youth Union, in the exemplary work, in the quality and the positive life style of each Party member. Our Party, which is in power, is carrying out the youth work by means of political and social systems in which the Party and State's policies toward the youth play an important part. I have heard many Youth Union members and cadres complain that some regulations and policies concerning the youth are outdated and unfair. As a result, they do not encourage them to make progress. This is true. The Party Central Committee shall have to think over this matter and try to make a change.

At this solemn Congress of the Youth Union, I earnestly call on all State organs, people's organizations, cultural and social activists and educators:

who have so far concerned themselves with the youth and the Union, to give stronger support to the youth and the Youth Union in response to the new demands of the revolution. It is not only an urgent demand of the youth, but also the future of the nation. The present younger generation are the people to whom we entrust the destiny of our country and the future of our nation.

I also hope that parents, brothers and sisters take further care of the family, which has a direct and deep impact on the formation of the personality, qualities and talents of the young. Each Vietnamese family should be a good nursery preparing good seeds for society. The exemplariness and educational power of the family should be geared to form among the younger generation a wholesome and pure way of life, the respect for reason, the spirit of acting to the call of reason, the love of labour and for one's family, one's kinfolk and the working people. At the same time, the close coordination between the family, the school, the mass organization and society as a whole is always an essential condition to train the younger generation into a new, socialist type of people.

*Dear comrades,*

While saying that the education of the youth is a responsibility of the entire Party and whole society, our Party demands a great deal from the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, — the role

of political vanguard of our youth. Over the past years, in spite of its efforts and successes, the Union has not yet fully played its role in educating, organizing and mobilizing the youth's strength, abilities and talents. The forms and methods used to motivate the youth are outdated and show a poor content, while the revolutionary situation and tasks have undergone lots of changes and the youth has made new progress and has new requirements. These shortcomings must be overcome so that the Union can fulfil the task entrusted to it by the Party and the people.

... An important task of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union is, I think, to fully play its political role and act as a pole of attraction in order to gather all the young into revolutionary organizations and forms of social activity suited to them. Through these organizations and forms of social activity, it must educate the youth in revolutionary ideals and care for their legitimate interests.

According to the report of the Youth Union Central Committee, only 30% of the youth are members of the Union. Thus non-members still account for a very large proportion of the youth. In recent years, under the Youth Union's leadership, the Vietnam Youth Federation has striven to rally this force. Its activities in some provinces and cities, from time to time, widely responded to by the youth, have created seething movements useful for the youth. However, because the youth has failed to help a number of provincial and municipal organizations to turn to account their experience in order

to preserve and further promote their achievements, these movements have come to a standstill. In other localities, the content and forms of its activities are poor and not suited to the rights and interests of the youth. As a result, a sizable part of the youth has not yet been mobilized by the Union to push forward the youth movement. This also means that the Union's leadership still leaves much to be desired.

This is a serious problem to which the Party Central Committee pays very great attention. Whenever and wherever young people feel lonely and disoriented in the country's ebullient life, there and then bad elements and the enemy will seek to involve them in their wicked schemes. That is why individual members and cells of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union must seek to approach them, not to lecture or preach them, but to talk to them as sincere and reliable friends and help them dispel worries, overcome difficulties, and do things useful to society and themselves, thus retrieving their optimism and faith in life. Too little of this has been done and with too poor results. It is my hope that at this Congress you will find an answer to these problems.

The Union also has a heavy responsibility to look after and educate young children. No one else has the abilities and conditions to fulfil this task better than the Union. To each city ward and rural commune, to each school, public office and enterprise, the Union must send exemplary young people who love children and have good methods to take care

of them. Acting together with the family, the school and society, the Union will create favourable conditions for them to work and play, and train them into good children and able pupils worthy of being Uncle Ho's beloved nephews and nieces.

To become a nucleus to attract and rally the youth, to educate the young children, the Union must first of all be strong, and its members and cadres must be exemplary. In the spirit of self-criticism and criticism, we should frankly admit that the Union's organization and activities still fall short of the youth's requirements.

The report of the Union's Central Committee says that 150,000 opinions and suggestions have in all been contributed by Union members and other young people to the Congress. Besides those on Party's and State's policies toward the youth are urgent demands for a qualitative upgrading of the Union's organization and of its members. This far 30% of the youth have joined the Union, but one may ask how many of them have been hastily admitted just to qualify for college admittance or for studying and working abroad? Surely, honest and genuine communist young people must be ashamed of this situation and condemn it. I earnestly propose that the Union's Executive Committees and responsible organs of the Party and the State put an early end to this state of things... We should not allow opportunistic elements to use the Youth Union as a ladder for their personal advancement. Union ranks, both cadres and members, must be checked at all echelons, in enterprises, cooperatives, public offices, hospitals

and army units in order to find out the errors committed and correct them. At present, the problem of quality of Youth Union members should be our prime concern. I know that many of them have a low political, moral and professional standard. In quite a few cases, whole Union cells are weak. The youth's activities are not only irregular but also poor in content, not practical and not sufficiently effective. In a number of key branches and economic units, young people outnumber the rest of the personnel. Yet the Youth Union's activities cannot attract or encourage them to increase productivity, quality and effect of production and business. In the armed forces, young people and Youth Union members constitute the great majority. Together with many brilliant examples in training and fighting, there are also quite a few people of low quality and even negative deeds. That is why in my opinion, the Union should attach great importance to raising its members' quality, instead of only caring for numerical development.

To fulfil its tasks, the Youth Union must have a contingent of good cadres. This question has been raised in the report of the Union's Central Committee. I would like to stress that good cadre work should be done at all levels. This will create favourable conditions for the training, fostering and use of cadres, thereby overcoming the state of experiential promotion and assignment of cadres. Another point is that cadres should renovate their work style. They should approach the youth, listen to their opinions, seek to know their preoccupations,

and persuade them. Only by so doing can the Union play its role as the core to rally and educate the young. Regrettably the Union's apparatus and cadres in many places are affected by red tape and bureaucratism and stand aloof from the masses. It is one of the reasons why the youth activities in many units are heavy, tedious and not attractive. Instead of going to the grassroots, talking and discussing with the young and solving practical problems, not a few cadres only like to hold big meetings, make empty speeches, do perfunctory things, and make dishonest reports to higher echelons.

I hope that in the present trend of renovation of thinking, personnel and work style, the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union will vigorously renovate its work so as to make its activity ever more practical and fruitful.

*Dear comrades,*

Since the 6th Party Congress the spirit of renovation with regard to all aspects of social life has stimulated our entire Party and people. The campaign to purify Party organizations and the State apparatus, increase their militant strength, and make social relations healthier is meeting with warm response. However, many negative deeds and bad phenomena still occur. Therefore, while fostering a lofty ideal and a good attitude regarding work and study as well as a civilized life style, the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union should actively struggle against

negative phenomena. In this connection a number of young collectives and individuals have of late set good examples of honesty and uprightness by struggling resolutely against degenerate elements who stand aloof from the masses, are arrogant, bully good people and indulge in corruption and theft of State and people's property, etc. In some places, the youth make up the core and the vanguard in the struggle against negative phenomena. This must be commended.

From now on, we must step up that struggle by launching a vast and powerful movement among the entire people to struggle for what is right and for social justice. Embezzlers, thieves, parasites, hoarders, traffickers, hooligans and ruffians must be duly punished. Irresponsible bureaucrats, scoundrels, liars, sycophants and unruly elements... must be severely criticized and sanctioned. To step up the struggle against negative phenomena is an important measure to foster a life and work style consistent with law to restore public order and discipline in Party and State activities as well as in social life. Let light repel darkness and spread to all the corners of our people's life. The youth should march in the van in the movement to multiply good acts and good people.

In the agitation to purify social relations, the Union plays an active and positive part with the spirit of mastery over society. We should fight for the enforcement of strict working rules in each unit and everywhere, to foster the spirit of thrift,

of increasing labour productivity and efficiency, and to ensure equality in duties and rights among all members of society.

Of course, we cannot within a short time turn bad into good, weak into strong. However, in each domain, in each place and with each individual, we must know how to win success, even small ones, provided they are visible and verifiable, so as to keep moving forward. This is no child's play. It requires efforts from the entire society, from many organizations and the adoption of a great variety of measures. In the struggle to fulfil this complex and far-reaching task, the Youth Union holds a central position.

## **THE RUSSIAN OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION<sup>1</sup>**

The Russian October Revolution is the greatest event in the history of mankind. With the October Revolution, socialism showed a vivid reality in a country, which had won glorious victory over fascism, and has developed into a powerful system in the world, thus changing the face of our planet. The revolutionary upheavals taken place over the past seventy years in the Soviet Union and the rest of the world are law-governed results of the evolution initiated by the October Revolution.

The light of the October Revolution has been piercing through mist after mist, crossing mountains and rivers, reaching every corner of the earth, and illuminating the road of self-liberation of the working class and peoples all over the world.

Thanks to the October Revolution, the Vietnamese revolution has won repeated victories and made increasing progress over the past fifty-seven years.

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<sup>1</sup> 1. Article published in the *Review of Communism* (Special Issue) on the 70th anniversary of the Russian October Revolution.

The light of the October Revolution came to Vietnam early in the 20th century when the Vietnamese patriotic movement was undergoing a far-flung crisis in its lines and policies, and when such bourgeois-democratic patriots as Phan Boi Chau and Phan Chu Trinh were taking the wrong path for national salvation. Having read Lenin's "First Draft Programme on the National and Colonial Questions", Comrade Ho Chi Minh, who was then living in France, was the first Vietnamese to be aware of this truth: "To save one's country and liberate one's nation, there is no other way than that of the proletarian revolution."<sup>1</sup> Since then Marxism-Leninism has come to Vietnam and, together with the workers' drive and the patriotic movement, gave birth to the Communist Party of Vietnam, making a turning-point of decisive significance of the revolution in Vietnam and the three Indochinese countries as a whole.

The founding of the Communist Party of Vietnam in 1930 and the subsequent revolutionary movements led to the victory of our August Revolution in 1945, and the founding of the first worker-peasant state in Southeast Asia. After that, the anti-French war of resistance won victory in 1954, completing the democratic national revolution in one half of the country, and the victory over US imperialism in

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1. Ho Chi Minh, *Forever Following the Path Charted by the Great Lenin*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1970, p. 51.

1975 led the whole country to reunification and socialism. Those important milestones demonstrate that the Vietnamese revolution has gloriously succeeded the October Revolution. The Vietnamese people are proud of being ranked among the nations that have made many feats of arms and that continue to hold high the invincible banner of the October Revolution.

*The October Revolution is a splendid model of renewal of thinking and of creativeness.* Marx and Engels, the founders of scientific socialism, propounded their theory in the 19th century on the basis of the practical and spiritual achievements obtained until then by mankind. However, the beginning of the 20th century witnessed far-reaching changes, the most important of them was the evolution of capitalism into imperialism. Meanwhile, the revolutionary movements and forces also had become far greater than in the previous century. In face of that situation, Lenin applied Marx's theory as a creative methodology to analyse new phenomena of capitalism, and to enunciate theoretical points on imperialism. He also developed and perfected the Marxist theory on proletarian revolution, made a creative application of it to various stages of the Russian revolution, thus leading to the historic victory of the October Revolution.

Later on, the successful termination of the bloody civil war, the elaboration of the New Economic Policy aimed at getting the country out of a deep economic and political crisis, and the working out

of a comprehensive programme for socialist construction in the Soviet Union were outstanding imaginative contributions made by Lenin and the glorious Bolshevik party to dialectical thinking.

*The 27th Congress of the CPSU has continued and brought into play the spirit of renovation and creativeness of Lenin and the October Revolution.*

Proceeding from the actual objective situation at home and in the world, the Congress has formulated new concepts, creatively developed Marxism-Leninism in all the most important fields, illuminated the road forward of our time and of socialism. Therefore, we have a better knowledge of our time, of the present and future path to socialism together with its objective laws.

The 27th Congress and the Plenums of the CPSU Central Committee in January and June 1987 gave prominence to the renovation of theoretical thinking. The CPSU has made a serious criticism of the empiricism in the previous theoretical studies, which accounted for the lag of theory behind the reality of life. The CPSU considers theoretical backwardness the deep cause of all the difficulties, stagnation, and other phenomena alien to socialism in the Soviet Union's economy and society in the past. Today, the Soviet Union is confronted by a task of paramount importance: leading Soviet society to a stage of new qualitative development. The great dimension and the complexity of the task require a new and profound assessment of the whole system of philosophy, socialist political economics and scientific communism. The most important point is to apply dialectics whose

nucleus, as pointed out by Lenin, is "the unity of contradictions", in order to analyse the new and main tendencies in the movement and evolution of our epoch and of Soviet society. When analysing these tendencies, it is necessary to be aware that inner contradictions are the origins and motive force of the development and movement of those tendencies, even in socialist society.

On the basis of this new analysis, effective measures and forms for implementing the new tasks can be found. Creativity is necessary to diversify and concretize the principles and viewpoints of Marxism-Leninism, so that theory does not consist of only explanations of accepted concepts, or is formed on the basis of existing models, but is a reliable source of answers to the realities of life, always holds an advanced position to guide and promote social development.

The most outstanding achievement of the Soviet Union in the renovation of theoretical thinking is to have formulated new theoretical viewpoints on the turning-point character of the present historical stage in the world and in Soviet society; on the dialectics of our time with its tendencies and contradictions; on the motive forces of social progress; on the acceleration of economic development in Soviet society as a characteristic of the objective law of motion of socialism; and on the dialectics of the period of transition to communism. All of them are the answers to the challenges of our time, to the crucial problems of Soviet society and of the socialist community as a whole.

New thinking and new judgement of values are fully expressed in the re-assessment and critical analysis of domestic situations. That analysis has a good basis, reflects the truth squarely and openly, without distortion, concealment or exaggeration. Renovation also manifests itself in the theory on the acceleration strategy, in the objectives and tasks aiming at bringing into full play the excellence of socialism, in determining the priority tasks in politics, economy, society, spiritual and moral life. Among those renewed values, priority is given to man. The allround and harmonious development of man is the number-one objective. This is the most fundamental characteristic of progress in socialist society.

The restructuring initiated by the 27th CPSU Congress not only constitutes the decisive factor for the qualitative development of the Soviet economy, but also has a profound epoch-making significance. *The restructuring undertaken in the Soviet Union is an allround and thorough-going revolution.* With the depth of reality in all spheres, the experience drawn from the renovation in the Soviet Union will certainly have, to varying degrees, a theoretical and practical impact on socialism the world over. In view of its character and scale, the restructuring in the Soviet Union is in fact quite a new cause, with a great influence on the process of the world revolution. The revolutionary character of the programme of acceleration for a new qualitative development of society will bear upon the world situation and the

settlement of the major contradictions of our time. This will inevitably affect the situation in each country.

*The renovation of thinking of the CPSU finds its deepest expression in the diversification of Lenin's viewpoints in our time, its essential problems, the interrelation and the cause-and-effect relations among the component elements of the essence of our time.* This serves as the basis for the law-governed evolution of various forces. The CPSU has made a completely new analysis according to the class stand and to a science based approach of various kinds of contradictions in the world, and has put forward measures to solve those contradictions. It has also dealt with the historic role of socialism, its achievements, its supremacy and its prospects, international relations and the real possibility to prevent the danger of nuclear war which is directedly threatening mankind.

This can be explained by the fact that the world has now entered into a new stage. The qualitative leap in the stormy development of science and technology and of the productive forces has given man tremendous power in either building or exterminating society. The CPSU is the first to expose that bitter truth. Moreover, on the political plane, the world is now complicated, diversified, dynamic, and full of opposite tendencies and contradictions. On the whole it is a world of complexities for us to choose.

The above features of the world situation compel man to have a new outlook on them. This is also the first time in history that Lenin's party proposed a new approach to the problems of war and peace. This political thinking on the external plane has its practical and theoretical foundations and bases itself on the aspiration of billions of people, therefore it is the most popular programme, winning worldwide sympathy. The Soviet Union and socialism have enjoyed growing prestige, and have been upholding the banner of peace.

*Highly inspired by the 27th CPSU Congress and the restructuring in the Soviet Union, the 6th CPV Congress has brought into play the sense of renovation, applied the critical spirit of the Marxist tenet in order to squarely face the truth, correctly assess the truth and speak out the truth. It has also made a deep analysis of the country's overall situation, summed up the experience of success and failure into great lessons, determined the strategic task of the period of transition and the tasks and objectives for the remaining years of the initial stage of this period.*

The above-mentioned decisions manifested our Party's firm determination to undertake a comprehensive renovation in all spheres of society, in an effort to create a new turning-point and improve the situation for the country to advance steadily to socialism, and overcoming all hardships and

difficulties. This will for renovation meets the pressing demands of the revolutionary reality in Vietnam, is in accordance with the trend of rapid and vigorous changes of our time, marks an important turning-point of the Vietnamese revolution, and opens new vistas for our country.

Experience of the CPSU has shown that renovation in thinking and society will result *first of all from the renovation of theoretical thinking.*

Any renovation in social life must be prepared theoretically. The more careful the preparations are, the more successful the renovation will be. While basing ourselves on the perception of reality in our country's specific historic background, our renovation consists in finding solutions suited to the level of development in Vietnam, to the trend of development in the world, in other words, solutions suited to the Vietnamese reality in its present stage of development. Vietnam which is a country developing from small-scale production and bypassing the stage of capitalist development, has quite a specific and vivid reality. In face of this reality, we must carry out renovation in theoretical thinking, and base ourselves on the general features of reality, and on principled viewpoints to work out appropriate policies and solutions. Through experiments and widespread applications, theoretical thinking will be institutionalized and take shape in social life, and

will become a routine activity of the masses. This is a law-governed process which all major decisions of our Party and State must abide by.

The 6th CPV Congress has had a deeper assessment of our socio-economic characteristics, and has pointed out the difficulties and hardships and the duration of the period of transition in Vietnam. Its most striking feature is that it has advanced from a small-scale production system, bypassing the stage of capitalist development. This production, moreover, has been unbalanced and worn out in many spheres as a result of three decades of war. The congress has also made it clear that ours is an economy with several sectors. Those characteristics have a decisive effect on the tasks, content and form of the socialist revolution in Vietnam. Our errors due to wishful thinking or hastiness result chiefly from our underrating and superficial study of those characteristics.

Abiding by Lenin's theses, it is imperative for our country's period of transition to go through various stages, each with its specific historic tasks. The principal task of the initial stage we are going through is to stabilize in the main the socio-economic situation and create the necessary foundations for large-scale industrialization in the next stage.

The period of transition in Vietnam lies within the framework of the period of transition to socialism from capitalism on a world scale, beginning with the October Revolution. Therefore, the two most

important factors of our time have been exerting a direct and far-reaching effect on our transitional period. First of all, it is the unprecedented growth of the socialist forces in the world, with the Soviet Union and the socialist community as their core, which decide the evolution of human society. Second, the development by leaps and bounds of the scientific-technological revolution since the mid-70s has been speeding up the economic development of all countries. As the economic and technological relations among countries have constantly widened, the development of each country depends, to a great extent, on its own role in international relations.

Those factors have a deep impact on our country's lines of internal and external policies, economy and politics, for "only on the basis of the knowledge of the main characteristics of an epoch can we figure out the specific characteristics of this or that country."<sup>1</sup>

On the economic plane, the CPV said emphatically that the renovation in thinking should be directed at defining proper social and economic policies with a view to promoting the initiative and creative spirit of the working people, releasing productive capabilities, turning to full account the country's potentialities, widening the relations of international economic

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1. V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works* (in Vietnamese), Progress Publishing House, Moscow, 1980, Vol. 26, p. 174.

cooperation, first of all with the Soviet Union and the socialist community, thus boosting production and stabilizing social life.

Together with streamlining the economic structure along the line of focusing on the three major economic programmes, we must renew the economic management, do away with bureaucratic centralism and State subsidies, which hold back our development. The new structure should work on the principle of socialist cost accounting and business transactions, with planning as the core, and on the principle of democratic centralism. While concentrating on planning, it should attach importance to the use of the commodity-money relations. These two factors are not opposite but organically bound to each other, being each other's premise and means of operation.

With regard to the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the 6th Congress laid emphatically that the far-reaching sphere and the complexity of the comprehensive socio-economic renovation in Vietnam require the strengthening of the Party's leading capability and militant capacity. Therefore, it is necessary to define in a scientific and concrete way, and institutionalize the Party's leading role as a party in power in its relationship with the State, other organizations and the masses, in all fields of economy, politics, law, culture and society. We should perfect the system of democratic centralism, put into practice democratization, criticism and

self-criticism in the Party, building up the work style and qualities of members of the party in power in Vietnam.

An urgent requirement of the renovation at present is to renovate the organizing and personnel work. "Cadres decide everything." This watchword appeared for the first time in the Soviet Union and has been of great significance to our leading work. Renewal of organizing and personnel work is the kingpin in our nationwide revolutionary renovation.

Realities show that the organizational and personnel work is very complex and difficult. This is a science, the most complex science whose subject is man. However, we will not be powerless. We cannot fulfil this task unless we attach importance to the agitation work among the masses, democratization and openness in the personnel work. It is necessary to change the view from which cadres are evaluated. The foremost quality of cadres at present is the working efficiency which is obtained on the basis of the new thinking and work style suited to the general requirement of renovation. The most pressing work which is also the weakest point in our personnel work today is the planning of the training and fostering of State employees, including leading and managerial cadres at all levels and in all branches, specialists and professional cadres in all fields. It should be affirmed that we have a large contingent of cadres who have matured through two

wars of resistance and in the socialist construction. The most important thing now is to have rational plans and rules for selection of cadres.

One of the major undertakings manifesting our Party's will for renovation is the big movement starting from late 1987 aiming at purifying the Party and increasing its militant capacity; purifying the State and raising the efficacy of State management; curbing and doing away with negative effects; making social relations healthy, and achieving social justice. In the form of "Things Which Must Be Done Immediately" the overt struggle against negative effects and for social justice over the past several months has brought back confidence and hope to tens of millions of people, opening up fine prospects and providing favourable conditions for the carrying out of the above-mentioned movement.

*The full consensus between the CPV and the CPSU on the key questions of internal and international policies, which was expressed during the visit to the Soviet Union by the CPV's high-ranking delegation from 17 to 22 May 1987, the successful and great results recorded in the joint statement and the new agreements, mark a new qualitative development of great importance in the allround cooperation between Vietnam and the Soviet Union.*

The new stage of the Vietnam-Soviet cooperation, first of all in economic relations, meets the requirement of restructuring and renovation set forth by the 27th CPSU Congress and the 6th CPV Congress, and is in line with the renovation trend of our epoch.

The CPSU's leadership, headed by Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev, expressed its confidence that the 6th CPV Congress will open up a completely new vista and bring about a new and allround development to the country. The CPSU not only appreciated and fully supported the realistic and correct line for renovation laid down by the 6th CPV Congress, but also expressed its determination to contribute to its successful implementation.

The new development in the Vietnam-Soviet cooperation manifests the CPV's viewpoint that the Soviet Union's cooperation and assistance are the core of the external economic strategy of Vietnam, and an important factor in building socialism and defending the Vietnamese homeland.

It should be stressed that to carry out those important changes, the Vietnamese people and cadres have to make tremendous efforts in organizing their materialization. The spirit of mutually beneficial cooperation and the principle of socialist cost accounting and business transactions are aimed at binding the responsibilities and interests of the two sides. It is therefore imperative to get rid of the tendency to passive reliance and dependence which is still rampant among quite a few cadres and people. We should severely criticize and quickly change the irresponsible and wanton attitude in carrying out commitments, and in the wasteful and inefficient use of materials, equipment, machines and projects supplied as aid by the Soviet Union.

We should hurry up with the study and reconstruction of the mechanisms of cooperation in the new spirit.

The CPV and the CPSU have fully shared their views on the Asian-Pacific region and are resolved to turn it into a region of peace, stability, good neighbourliness, mutual confidence and understanding according to the principles of peaceful co-existence.

Vietnam is a country lying on the Pacific coast. Whatever happens in the region has also a direct impact on her life. The Vietnamese share with other peoples in the region the deep anxiety about and anger for the US imperialists and pro-US reactionary forces in face of their schemes and actions aimed to deprive this large and populous region of peace and stability.

The United States' reactionary political thinking aimed at bringing the world under its sway through the policies of using violence and arms race in its losing posture is the core of its strategy toward Asia and the Pacific. It is in fact the strategy of gathering old and new pro-US forces in the region, in order to carry out its plans of expansion and aggression.

However together with the new qualitative development of the post-Vietnam situation in the world, together with the ever-growing might of socialism

and the peace forces, there have appeared since the mid-70s, in Asia and the Pacific the possibility and premises for building a system of security and cooperation for the whole region.

In this context, the CPV deems it necessary to mobilize all forces of independence, democracy and social progress into a deep and broad movement of struggling for peace, security, development and cooperation in Asia and the Pacific, so as to reach a comprehensive solution. It includes supporting the people's movements and the policies of non-nuclear countries, settling conflicts by political means, respecting the right to self-determination of nations, establishing a region of good neighbourliness and peaceful co-existence, and turning Asia and the Pacific into a region of peace and stability.

The Soviet Union and the Asian socialist countries such as Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea, Mongolia, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, have put forward peace initiatives aimed to help solve regional problems. Many countries in the South Pacific region have put forward the initiative of making this part of the world a nuclear-free region. Especially, the comprehensive plan for peace in Asia and the Pacific put forward by Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev at Vladivostok, the Indian-Soviet joint communiqué in New Dehli on the principles of

building a nuclear-free world, the joint communiqués reached in July 1987 by the communist and workers' parties in Asia and the Pacific aimed at turning it into a nuclear-free and peaceful region, and the Soviet Union's recent statement expressing its readiness to remove all its medium-range missiles, including those in its Asian territories on condition that the US will do the same, all that has had worldwide repercussions and has been warmly welcomed and supported everywhere.

We are looking forward to an early and reasonable political settlement to the Kampuchea issue on the basis of ensuring lasting peace, independence and sovereignty of Kampuchea and preparing the revolutionary gains of the Kampuchean people. This is an important factor helping to restore peace and stability in Indochina, Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

Vietnam, like the Soviet Union, persists in its undertaking to normalize relations with the People's Republic of China, considering this a prerequisite for bringing stability to the region.

The October Revolution — restructuring in the Soviet Union — renovation in Vietnam. This is a cause-and-effect relationship as well as an objective process of continuation, expressing the same fundamental aim for the people's happiness, for socialism and lasting peace on earth.



**FOR PEACE AND PROGRESS  
ON OUR PLANET<sup>1</sup>**

*Esteemed Comrade General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev,*

*Esteemed leaders of parties, countries and progressive and peace organizations,*

We fully agree with Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev's analysis of the world trend of development and the way to settle the urgent problems confronting mankind. The 20th century has gone through two world wars. Over the past 40 years, all nations have been constantly facing the danger of nuclear war of extermination, but at present there is a practical possibility for struggling to eliminate nuclear weapons and preserve world peace.

We fully support all efforts to establish a comprehensive system of security in the world as proposed by the Soviet Union. A comprehensive global

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1. Speech delivered at the meeting of the representatives of 178 parties, movements and organizations in the world, on the 70th anniversary of the Russian October Revolution, Moscow, 4-5 November 1987.

security system must go together with the establishment of a new world economic order. Together with the system of security and cooperation in Europe, the establishment of such a system in Asia and the Pacific has a very important significance to the allround system of security in the world. Asia and the Pacific are the world's largest and most densely populated region, it was oppressed by colonialism and imperialism for centuries and was the first target of the US atomic bomb attack. Over the past 40 years, the longest local wars continually took place in Asia where the biggest amount of bombs in the world was used, and the biggest of them was the one conducted by the US in Vietnam. The struggle of the Asian peoples over the past 40 years has brought about great changes in favour of peace, national independence and socialism. Defeated in the local wars and in the setting up of the Baghdad and SEATO military blocs, the imperialist forces have deployed a new strategy in the Asian-Pacific region, gathering reactionary forces to oppose the forces of socialism, national independence, democracy and peace, maintaining tension in an attempt to defend their interests in this region. This struggle will become very grim and complicated. However, after 40 years of ruthless struggle, there appears the possibility of rallying the largest forces in the Asian-Pacific region and building a system of security and cooperation for the whole region. Since

the 70s the Soviet Union, together with peace and revolutionary forces in Asia, has speeded up the struggle against the collusion between the imperialist and reactionary forces in this region. The victory of the revolutions in Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea and the US defeat in Indochina have created a new situation in Southeast Asia. After 40 years of protracted local wars, all the nations in Asia and the Pacific have an urgent demand for peace to develop their economies. The general trend toward peaceful co-existence among countries and the trend of peaceful settlement of regional conflicts have become stronger than the trend of confrontation and tension.

The well-known declaration by Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev in Vladivostok has been warmly welcomed by the nations in Asia and the Pacific. A lasting peace in Asia and the Pacific can only be achieved with the concerted efforts of all peoples and nations. Vietnam highly appreciates and fully supports the New Delhi Statement on a nuclear-free world, and non-use of violence in international relations. We support the constructive peace initiatives of the People's Republic of Mongolia, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and hail the establishment of a nuclear-free region in the South Pacific and Southeast Asia as well as the great efforts made by the Republic of India and by Indonesia aimed at speeding up the dialogues for peace in the region. Vietnam fully supports the

tireless activities of fraternal and progressive parties, peace-loving forces, mass organizations and movements which have gathered into the broadest front for peace, security, development and cooperation in the region. All the above-mentioned activities, together with the efforts made by the forces of peace and progress in Europe and the rest of the world constitute the decisive factor for establishing an allround system of peace and security in the world.

Over the past 40 years, Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea have gone through three wars, the biggest one being the anti-US war. After the US defeat in Vietnam, the peoples in the three Indochinese countries should have been able to enjoy peace and the Southeast Asian countries should have been able to co-exist in peace. But once more, the peoples in the Southeast Asian countries have to face the policy of interference, imposition and threat of the imperialist and reactionary forces. Through grim struggle, the tireless efforts of the three Indochinese countries, the Soviet Union and peace forces are creating the possibility of breaking the deadlock which has lasted for eight years now, opening up a process of negotiation to settle the Kampuchea problem and that of peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

Combining actions with other countries and peoples in the struggle for peace and development in the Asian-Pacific region in particular and in the world

in general Vietnam, together with Laos and Kampuchea, has ceaselessly striven for an early peaceful settlement to the Kampuchea problem on the basis of ensuring the independence and sovereignty of Kampuchea, ensuring peace and stability in South-east Asia and the Asian-Pacific region. We fully sympathize with and support the policy of national concord proclaimed on 27 August 1987 and the five-point statement on 8 October 1987 by the People's Republic of Kampuchea on a peaceful settlement of the conflict there.

The improvement of Soviet-Chinese relations is a step toward reducing tension in the Asian-Pacific region. In the long-term interests of Vietnam and China, for the sake of peace, national independence and socialism in the Asian-Pacific region and in the world, Vietnam wishes to normalize relations with the People's Republic of China.

We express our solidarity with and strong support for the struggles of the peace and progressive forces in other regions, for the struggles of the peoples of Nicaragua, El Salvador, Panama and Chile, of the peoples of Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and of the peoples in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, for peace, against imperialism, Zionism and apartheid.

On this occasion, we wish to express our heart-felt thanks for the strong support and great and noble assistance given by the Communist Party of the

Soviet Union and other fraternal parties and the peace and progressive forces in the world to the Vietnamese people's struggle and national construction.

We firmly believe that this meeting of great historic significance will be a new motive force for speeding up the struggle for our common ideals, namely, peace and progress on our planet.

Thank you.

United States and other imperialist powers and the  
peace and progress of the world in the hands of the  
Vietnamese people's revolution and national liberation

that

We firmly believe that the meeting of great  
ideals and interests will be a new positive force for  
the struggle for our common ideals  
towards peace and progress on our planet.

Thank you