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# HỒ CHÍ MINH THOUGHT

**Will Light Our Path Forever**



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**PRESIDENT HỒ CHÍ MINH**  
(1890-1969)

## CONTENTS

Foreword	1
President Hồ Chí Minh, the image of the nation	3
PHẠM VĂN ĐỒNG	
President Hồ Chí Minh, the founder, teacher and leader of our Party	29
TRƯỜNG CHINH	
Last tribute of the Central Committee of the Vietnam Workers' Party	33
President Hồ Chí Minh, the great leader of our Party and nation	40
LÊ DUẨN	
Uncle Hồ, the finest Vietnamese	45
LÊ DUẨN	
President Hồ Chí Minh - the talented leader and great teacher of the Vietnamese Revolution	48
TRƯỜNG CHINH	
Hồ Chí Minh - His cause	68
PHẠM VĂN ĐỒNG	

We shall forever follow the path chosen  
by President Hồ Chí Minh 85

NGUYỄN VĂN LINH

The world is still changing,  
but Hồ Chí Minh thought will live forever 101

VÕ NGUYỄN GIÁP

Hồ Chí Minh thought in the renovation cause 114

ĐỖ MUỖI

Hồ Chí Minh thought lights up the path of our Party  
and people to the 21st century 129

LÊ KHẢ PHIÊU

Annex I. Basic chronology of President Hồ Chí Minh's  
life and activity 149

Annex II. Declaration of Independence of  
the Democratic Republic of Vietnam 153

Annex III. Hồ Chí Minh's Testament 157

## FOREWORD

President Hồ Chí Minh is the first Vietnamese to have accepted and diffused Marxism-Leninism in Vietnam. Creatively applying Marxist-Leninist fundamentals to the reality of Vietnamese society, he found a correct revolutionary line for the Vietnamese nation: It is necessary to carry out first a national people's democratic revolution to overthrow the colonialist and feudal regime, to regain national independence, to give land to tillers, and then to advance to socialism.

Implementing this revolutionary line, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam and President Hồ Chí Minh, the Vietnamese people have gloriously succeeded in their national people's democratic revolution, reunified the country and brought it into the period of transition to socialism.

The glorious history of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Vietnamese revolution is closely linked to the name and cause of President Hồ Chí Minh. His thought and practical experience constitute a valuable heritage for us.

The Vietnamese revolution has entered a new stage. Yet, Hồ Chí Minh thought will light forever the path to be covered by our Party and people to reach the target of making our people wealthy, our country powerful and our society equitable, democratic and civilized.

This book introduces some excerpts from the writings or speeches by the close comrades and pupils of President Hồ Chí Minh, who were or are high-ranking leaders of our Party and State. The excerpts arranged in chronological order give readers an insight into the President's thought and great deeds for the Vietnamese revolution.\*

## PRESIDENT HỒ CHÍ MINH, THE IMAGE OF THE NATION\*

*Phạm Văn Đồng\*\**

### His life

In daily life, President Hồ is a very simple and honest man. A great man, a really great man is always simple and honest. A mannered man always lacks capability; his play acting is for deceiving people and future generations. King Nghieu, King Thuan, Jesus Christ were simple and honest men. Lenin, Sun Yat Sen and Mahatma Gandhi were also simple and honest men. So are great scientists and great writers. On the contrary, Hitler was a perfidious man. Besides Hitler, Mussolini was but a clown.

Looking at some photos of President Hồ, some persons say that his eyes have two pupils each and believe that because of that he is a genie. How can there be such an incredible story! President Hồ's eyes are like those of other men but they can see much more clearly than those of other men. The President knows how to look at things; he can see what other men cannot see: present and future things, great and small things.

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\* Excerpt from Phạm Văn Đồng's book *Our Fatherland, Our People, Our Cause and the Artist*, written in 1948. Literary Publishing House, 1983, Hanoi (Fifth edition).

\*\* Phạm Văn Đồng (1906-2000), Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam from 1955 to 1996. He lived and worked beside President Hồ Chí Minh for 30 years from 1940 to 1969.

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\* All the footnotes in the book belong to the editor.

President Hồ is a Vietnamese, more Vietnamese than any other Vietnamese. After nearly thirty years of traveling to all parts of the world, he still preserves the manner, the language, the sentiments of a Vietnamese. His language is rich and witty like that of a Vietnamese peasant; he makes good use of proverbs and likes comparisons. He composes poetry generally in the form of folk songs because folk songs are specifically Vietnamese in the same way that the Trường Sơn Range, the Restored Sword Lake, the Đồng Tháp Mười (the Plain of Reeds) are specifically Vietnamese<sup>(1)</sup>. Having lived tens of years far from his native land, he does not forget the smell and taste of Vietnamese particular aliments such as pickled aubergines, pickled vegetables, soya bean sauce with chilly that he ate daily. After his return to the country, on New Year's Day, he does not forget to make congratulations to his neighbors<sup>(2)</sup> and to give presents (sweets and cakes) to children.

The cost is only a few cents but the gift is carefully and neatly wrapped in rose paper. That is his way of living. As Chairman of the Resistance Government, when he calls on the people, his words are moving and impressive to Vietnamese minds and hearts: "The ancestral tablets should be covered with red brocade; People of the same country should love one another."

We know how simple is the way of life of President Hồ. In the Resistance Zone<sup>(3)</sup>, he lived with the personnel of his Office; he worked and studied like other persons. At moments of food shortage or inclement weather, food rations were a little reduced

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(1) Names of places commonly known and beloved by the Vietnamese.

(2) Vietnamese custom commonly observed at the beginning of the lunar new year.

(3) Before the August 1945 Revolution. When the anti-French resistance war broke out in late 1946, Hồ Chí Minh and the Government came back to the Resistance Zone and stayed here to lead the resistance until its victory in 1954. This article was written during this period.

and he gladly shared the difficulties with others. However he had one privilege: Lộc, our dear, skilled cook, always reserved a bowl of rice water for him at each meal, from the border in Cao Bằng to Tân Trào, before going down to Hanoi. In Hanoi, the President had his working office and his reception room and often he hosted grand banquets but normally he took the two meals of each day with his staff.

He likes walking, bathing in a river, smoking cigarettes, and sometimes taking a cup of medicinal liquor at meals. Previously, he could easily cover 50 km a day. When in Kunming,<sup>(1)</sup> he made a tour around the city every morning. When in Liuzhou<sup>(2)</sup>, on a winter morning, general Trương Phát Khuê riding on horse back saw him bathing in the river and was amazed that a man of South East Asia could put up with such cold. In Cao Bằng<sup>(3)</sup>, his office is arranged in a grotto. A large stream of limpid water flows from the grotto, in the shade of forest trees. President Hồ works all day on the bank of the stream with his typewriter "Hermes Baby," which he has always used since 1938, even after his return to Hanoi.

Living in the mountain and forest region, President Hồ never eats his fill, never has siesta. In the morning, he does physical exercises, in the afternoon he gardens; when necessary he goes to fetch firewood for the villagers. Throughout the time of his living in the high region of Bắc Bộ before the August 1945 Revolution, he frequently held an ovoid stone firmly to strengthen the sinew of his hands. He seldom uses medicine, except when he cannot overcome illness. In Hanoi, Dr. (Tôn Thất) Tùng and Dr. Cẩn looked after his health, but he rarely bothered them. When in France, Dr. Cửu was requested to live

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(1) and (2) Names of places in China.

(3) Northern border province of Vietnam adjoining China, a base of the resistance.



with him, but later Cửu did more office work than physician's labour. Living conditions in the resistance base are very hard. One year, the rainy season lasts several months, and President Hồ inhabits a narrow and humid grotto into which insects swarm at night. At the time, popular bases are still weak, therefore though his refuge is a grotto, safety is still precarious and he often has to leave it and be on constant alert. At the moment of alarm, one must go to a safer place with all of one's belongings. President Hồ is not well then, but when there is warning of enemy arrival, only a few minutes later he is standing ready before his staff members, the typewriter in hand.

On the very first day of his arrival in France, the simple way of living of President Hồ deeply moved the Vietnamese residents. One day, in Bearitz, delegates of Vietnamese residents called on him, highly excited and happy. The visitors were numerous, there were not enough seats in the reception room. President Hồ simply sat on the floor and invited everybody to do like him and talked. This attitude is not that of a President of Government but that of an old father thoughtfully and familiarly inquiring about his children in foreign land, after so many years of separation.

President Hồ, though simple, is very courteous in a delicate and noble way. All foreigners who have opportunity to talk with him praise his delicacy and noble manners, which they believe to be characteristic of Oriental people. In the resistance base or in his office, he usually wears clothes of indigo color and keeps his food minimal. In Hanoi, he put on khaki clothes and canvas shoes. Going to France, he wore leather shoes and a woolen suit with a high collar. In Paris, sometimes he had to receive guests at mealtime. At breakfast he met with close friends; at lunch, ordinary guests; and at dinner, special guests. Though the receptions lasted at times three hours, he remained hospitable and cordial throughout.

President Hồ is always lively because innately he has the optimism of those who are determined to fight and to win today and determined to bring about a fine life for the nation tomorrow. At friendly meals or tea parties with high-ranking members of the Government, he is cheerful and talkative, makes poetry, and jokes. One day, when he suddenly came to a night jubilee at the Hanoi Opera House, children gather around him. However, a moment later, he lightly walked away, and it was not known where. He likes flowers and is told that in Russia as well as in Europe and America, flowers are air-transported from remote places to adorn the daily life of big cities. However in the garden of the Presidential Palace, flowers cede more and more space to potatoes and corn. Near Kunming, there is the Xishan mountain, a famous spot of scenic beauty. One day we wanted to go and see. President Hồ said: "We shall go when it is convenient; we are revolutionaries and not tourists."

President Hồ's life is one of hardship, work and struggle. The leader of a nation having lost its country cannot have a different life. He must put up with hardship, work and struggle to secure happiness in the future. Some people fear that with such a severe life, there remains no place for sentiment. But President Hồ often says: "A revolutionary is a very sentimental man, and because of his great sentimentality, he becomes a revolutionary". President Hồ is called the "old father of the nation." He has deep affection and pity for the people, which moves everybody's heart. In the period of underground activity, the minute of silence in memory of a dead revolutionary always made him cry. At the National Assembly, he shed tears and embraced Nguyễn Văn Tạo after hearing the latter's pathetic speech about Nam Bộ (South of Vietnam).

An old adage says: "When there is some subject for anxiety, we must be anxious before others; when there is enjoyment, we

must enjoy after others.” President Hồ expresses the idea more simply and more pathetically: “One day of my compatriots’ suffering makes me lose my appetite and unable to sleep.”

These words reveal his state of mind and his kinship feelings for all members of the great Vietnamese family.

For the President, a man of simplicity and honesty, words are matched with action, and words are expressed only when action is taken. He is simple and honest in living, in character, in speech and in writing. He is also simple and honest in his political lines. What do the Vietnamese people want? They want national unification, independence, abundant life, education, and less gloomy lives. That is why President Hồ’s policy is: to be united in the resistance war, to increase production, to develop popular education, and to adopt a new way of life. The Vietnamese people are determined to advance more and more energetically on the vital path behind President Hồ.

President Hồ embodies the Vietnamese people and each Vietnamese finds himself in President Hồ.

The strength of President Hồ and the Vietnamese people lies in this cohesion and unity.

### **The image of the nation**

The great cause of President Hồ over the past 35 years<sup>(1)</sup> consists in leading the Vietnamese nation to cohesion and unity, in a determination to fight against the mortal enemies of the nation.

The current sacred resistance war strengthens and enhances to the utmost this militant solidarity.

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(1) Hồ Chí Minh left Vietnam to seek a way for national salvation in 1911.

To bring about the cohesion of the whole people is a great step in recovering the national independence of Vietnam. This is the decisive factor of the success of the current resistance war and the success of future national construction. Reviewing the history of the past 80 years when our country was lost, we see that immediately after French troops invaded our territory, our people stood up against them while the royal Court surrendered to them. The King surrendered to the aggressors to serve them but the people continued to fight by every means as strongly as they could wherever they were strong enough. There was no one-mindedness in the country and among the people; even in the ranks of the resisters there was no one-mindedness. This situation prevailed during the period of the royalists’ resistance, before the 1914-1918 imperialist war. When President Hồ began his activities and started to lead the Vietnamese revolutionary movement, he strove to unite and organize the popular forces for fighting. Gradually he managed to unite and to organize all the people to win victory.

President Hồ has succeeded in this great work because he symbolizes Vietnam and the Vietnamese people.

The highest aspiration of the people is his aspiration, the rationale of his life, and the motivation of his activities. His lines and policies are aimed at realizing that aspiration: securing independence for the country, and freedom and happiness for the people. These lines and policies have won the people’s full support and confidence. President Hồ’s prestige primarily lies in this fact. The relationship between President Hồ and the Vietnamese people is, however, closer and warmer: it is a sentimental relation composed of the mutual affection and love between him and his people.

Like other countries in the world, Vietnam has the rich and the poor, different political parties, religions, and ethnic groups;

however in present-day Vietnam, the Vietnam of President Hồ fighting for independence, there is no conflict between political parties, religions, ethnic groups, i.e. no internal contradictions that might be used by the enemy for divisive purposes to create an internecine war. Such achievements are obtained not only because President Hồ's lines and policies meet national aspirations and his path is the only one vital for the nation to face the danger of being destroyed. These achievements are also due to the President's immense tolerance that wins over everyone and unites everyone for fighting.

The Vietnamese masses, old and young, male and female, have great respect and love for President Hồ. The intelligentsia, the national capitalists, the great personalities, and the religious dignitaries all have confidence in him. He is a very close friend of Huỳnh Thúc Kháng<sup>(1)</sup> and the Uncle of all Vietnamese children. The people of Nam Bộ call him their old father with the deepest feelings of their heart. The people of high regions in the south of Central Vietnam believe that he is very familiar and close to them, as if he remained day and night at their side to bless them.

With regard to those who have gone the wrong way, his heart is broad. He advocates leniency and says we should gladly welcome them like our sons, who, because of circumstances, have gone astray. Jesus Christ said: "Meeting a repenting sinner or criminal, God is gladder than meeting ninety nine religious people". President Hồ is convinced that every Vietnamese is

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(1) Huỳnh Thúc Kháng (1876-1947) is a patriotic scholar. After the August 1945 Revolution, he was invited by President Hồ Chí Minh to be Minister of Home Affairs. Then he became Vice President of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. In 1946 he was acting President of the State when Hồ Chí Minh had gone to France for negotiations.

patriotic and wants the country to be unified and independent. We should cleverly blow on the smoldering fire to make it a blazing flame.

President Hồ not only calls for national cohesion, he constantly practises this objective. Moreover he symbolizes this cohesion, he is this cohesion.

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\*   \*

Solidarity is for the purpose of struggle. President Hồ unites the whole nation to mobilize all the fighting forces of the Vietnamese people, without which independence cannot be secured.

The Vietnamese people have shown strong fighting spirit. Their history of eighty years of enslavement is the history of eighty years of struggle. It is a grandiose epic that will remain forever in the mind of every Vietnamese. But the more heroic and brave is the struggle, the clearer and more painful the shortcomings, such as the lack of appropriate policies, of organization, and methods, appear. After the 1914-1918 imperialist war, under President Hồ's leadership, the struggle of the nation was gradually aimed at the right target. It became well organized and provided with good methods. Additionally, it gradually expanded through the August 1945 Revolution, until the current long-term resistance war to include the whole country and the whole people.

The Vietnamese people have fought for one thousand days and are willing to fight for a long time more. For us fighting is like our daily meals. Therefore we do not find it strange that a small and weak nation, economically and culturally backward, subjected to foreign domination for eighty years, dares stand up against an imperialist power that has several times lorded over the world; and that the more it fights, the stronger it becomes and the nearer it comes to victory.

Then what are the secret reasons of the success of the Vietnamese struggle?

The reason is the fighting spirit of the nation that has been enhanced, trained and guided by President Hồ.

Vietnam's present sacred resistance war sets in relief the fighting spirit of the whole nation. The central actors are the Vietnamese workers and peasants, who shoulder the lead of the resistance. Beside them are the various strata of the population with different social positions, characters, and ideologies. But they are motivated by the same spirit of sacrifice and struggle, the same confidence in the Fatherland, the Government, and President Hồ.

President Hồ often says: "In this resistance war, our people must use our spirit to overcome material factors, that is to say to overcome many years of suffering, difficulties and obstacles. In other words, to use pointed sticks to oppose tanks, to carry out long-term war when food is insufficient and clothes are not enough."

This is the secret reason for the success of this marvelous war.

This sacred resistance war proves President Hồ's talented leadership and the Vietnamese people's intelligence and maturity. They can choose the best moment for advance or withdrawal, for being flexible or rigid. They can use smaller and weaker forces to oppose bigger and stronger ones. They can develop smaller and weaker forces into bigger and stronger ones. Finally, they are determined and confident in winning final victory.

This resistance war is the final round of the incessant struggle between our people and the French colonialists for nearly a

century now. It has mobilized the strength and spirit of our whole people; it is a marvelous achievement of President Hồ and the Vietnamese people.

President Hồ can enhance the fighting capabilities of the whole people because he inherits the legacy of all the past national liberation wars. He represents Vietnam and the oppressed but indomitable Vietnamese people. His policies and political lines constitute a great river to which all small streams and rivulets flow, no matter where and when they take sources. Streams flow into rivers but they should meet rivers, otherwise they could dry up. Meeting rivers, they disappear, follow the same direction, the same current as the rivers, and are of the same color as the sky and the land around. The struggle for national liberation of Vietnam, since King Tự Đức's surrender to the French colonialists, has gradually become the struggle for national independence, for the people's freedom and happiness, under the leadership of President Hồ.

In this gradual development, each portion of the path, each step taken has its significance and is a factor leading to today's achievements. Some people say that the royalists stood for the monarchy. They called for loyalty to the King and claimed that the latter represented the country. However, since that time, the royal throne has drifted away from the current situation. Kings no longer exist. That is why President Hồ calls for loyalty to the country. He keeps the word "loyalty", just as he gives a broader meaning to the words "piety" and "devotion." He nurtures the traditional customs of industry, thriftiness, integrity, and righteousness. He advises us to learn these fine customs and encourages us to learn the heroism of many royalist fighters, such as Nguyễn Thiện Thuật, Phan Đình Phùng, and Hoàng Hoa Thám.

President Hồ's strength is great because it is deeply rooted in the history of national revolution over the past nearly 100 years and in all the past of our nation.

Austerity, hard work, and struggle are the characteristics of President Hồ's life and also the characteristics of our nation's life throughout history. Our forefathers had great vitality and fighting spirit to be able to overcome the innumerable natural obstacles to their existence and to vanquish the enemies who trod our land under foot and massacred our people. The history of Vietnam is that of the building up of our land from lower basin of the Red River to that of the Mekong River. It is the history of the building up of the nation through nearly one thousand years of northern domination, particularly through the Đinh, Lê, Lý, Trần, Lê dynasties<sup>(1)</sup> down to the disloyal Nguyễn dynasty<sup>(2)</sup>. Now the country is not yet solid and at peace, and our adversary is using force and perfidious maneuvers to partition our country and to enslave our people. President Hồ is the continuator of the will and cause of Trung Vương, Trần Hưng Đạo, Lê Lợi, Nguyễn Quang Trung, and Phan Đình Phùng<sup>(3)</sup> in fulfilling the mission of our nation.

That is why the strength of the Vietnamese people and of President Hồ at present is the strength that comes from an age-old process of development. We feel that strength flares up in our mind and pushes us to combat. We listen to the call of our forefathers in the voice of President Hồ: "Lê Lợi fought for ten years, Trần Hưng Đạo for five years."

President Hồ leads the national defense and construction in accordance with the development trend of Vietnam as well as with the evolutionary trend of the world.

(1) The feudal dynasties of Vietnam from the 10th to the 19th centuries.

(2) The last feudal dynasty of Vietnam (1802-1945).

(3) Names of national heroes of Vietnam.

Vietnam is part of the world. Over the past two hundred years, the world has experienced a few gigantic revolutions that shook the foundations of States and societies and enabled the democratic movement to expand to the five continents. This movement is an invincible force. Following it, one will survive; opposing it, one will be led to extinction. The Vietnamese revolution, after World War I, followed the advance of this democratic movement. The current resistance war of Vietnam testifies to the close relationship between the democratic movement in Vietnam and the mighty democratic movement of the world after World War II.

President Hồ often says: "Our resistance war will be victorious because it is a just cause approved and supported by the people of the world."

Our national liberation revolution, our democratic republican system will succeed for the fundamental reason that the path of the Vietnamese people and the political lines of President Hồ are in accordance with the evolutionary trend of mankind.

Leading Vietnam in accordance with that evolutionary trend is the great cause of President Hồ.

In brief, President Hồ has put to avail all the strength and talent of the Vietnamese people and applied the progressive doctrine of the civilized world to unite the entire people in the lasting resistance war for national unification and independence, for the realization of the democratic republican regime. This is the cause pursued by President Hồ, by the Vietnamese nation, and by every Vietnamese now and in the future.

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The French reactionary colonialists allege that President Hồ is a communist dictator. Communism is the radiant future of

mankind. But in present-day Vietnam, only lunatics stand for the immediate installation of Communism, at variance with the economic and social conditions of Vietnam, and contrary to the desire of the Vietnamese people. And the allegation that President Hồ is a dictator is not only an untruth but also a stupidity. In his letter to the Vietnamese youths, President Hồ wrote: "Hereunder are a few ideas for you to discuss". President Hồ is democratic. He defends the interests of all Vietnamese, the human rights, the citizen rights and the property rights of all Vietnamese, of religious and non-religious people, and of the population of the middle and high regions.

President Hồ is democratic because the national defense and construction of Vietnam require the joint efforts of all the Vietnamese. Democracy is required to remove the yoke of colonialism, feudalism, the obsolete practices and rites of past generations, the woes of famine and illiteracy and the four qualities and three dependences<sup>(1)</sup> that shackled women. Democratization is aimed at making all Vietnamese politically conscious, intelligent, talented and able to decide the fate of the country and their own destiny. As a result, they can use their capability to serve the country and themselves. Let us carefully listen to the appeal of President Hồ: he remembers everyone: scholars, peasants, workers, traders, soldiers, the old, the young, males, females, inhabitants of the middle region, people of the high region, the religious and non-religious, combatants at the front, and villagers in rear areas. Reviewing the brilliant achievements obtained, he does not forget the contribution of anyone; calling people to carry out new tasks, he clearly assigns the tasks to everyone.

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(1) A woman's qualities are reflected in her work (*công*), appearance (*dung*), language (*ngôn*), and virtue (*hạnh*). Her dependence or obedience consists in the fact that at home, when unmarried, she must obey her father; married she must obey her husband; when the husband dies, she must obey her son.

For President Hồ, democracy is not an arid doctrine. It is the vital sap changing the Vietnamese, the Vietnamese nation, and the Vietnamese land. Let's read the letter addressed by painter Diệp Minh Châu to "the Old Father":

*"Respectfully to my Father,*

*"For two years now, confident in you, responding to your call, I have enthusiastically joined the National Guards of War Zone VII, bringing with me my art. The August Revolution under your leadership has liberated my art. Today in the great Independence Day festivities in Nam Bộ, I have listened to your Declaration of Independence; your pathetic and vigorous call, the song "Long live Hồ Chí Minh," performed by the children's organization of Nam Bộ, have deeply moved me. I have cut my arm and with my blood of youth, I have drawn your portrait with three children representing Central, South, and North Vietnam, inclining their heads to your straggled beard. I have painted on the silk captured by our troops during the Cây Giồng battle in July 1947. Seeing my bleeding, my friends hurriedly came to bandage my wound; they were concerned for me. I told them: "My blood is infused by you; it comes from my people. I am not so rash to waste it; my whole body has been already entrusted to you, my Father."*

*"I respectfully send my drawing in blood to you, my Father, to express my gratitude to you for having liberated my art, and to manifest that my body and soul have been imbued with the victory and the fighting spirit of the national revolution."*

In present-day Vietnam, can any one know how many Diệp Minh Châu-like people there are in various branches of activity?

On the celebration of the 1,000th day of resistance, the headquarters of War Zone V extolled the gallant feat of hero Ngô Mây in these terms: "Ngô Mây, 27 years old, was a member of the

“determined-to-die-for-nation” troops of Regiment 120. He volunteered to carry a bomb to blast away the gate of the enemy post of Thường An, as planned in the attack against the French garrison. The order to postpone the attack came. He regretted it and day after day he wiped the bomb, waiting for another opportunity. On December 11, 1947, in the Suối Voi battle, he volunteered to carry the bomb to destroy an enemy tank. When the tank came, a mine was exploded. The French soldiers got out of the armored vehicle to fight with our troops. Ngô Mây waited for the moment when the enemy was concentrated at one place and then he jumped out with the bomb and detonated it. The enemy around him was all killed. His own body was also destroyed, and only his two legs were left. In his letter to his mother, he had written: “I shall die most happily. Mamma should not have any regret”.

In the ranks of the national guards and the militia, can any one know how many Ngô Mây-like persons there are?

The people remaining in Hanoi before December 19, 1946, knew stories about the strange intelligence of children. In this resistance war, children have recorded many outstanding exploits. They are the generation that will build the new Vietnam in future.

President Hồ often says: “We are not afraid of the lack of men of talent. Anyone motivated by patriotism, devotion, and sacrifice can achieve great work”. If great work cannot be done, we will do small jobs, provided that we give our utmost effort in our work. Our service to the country and to President Hồ are equally valuable.

The patriotic emulation movement launched by President Hồ in early 1948 is the most comprehensive and effective method to mobilize all the energy and intelligence of the nation for national defense and construction.

A foreign journalist asked President Hồ: “What party do you belong to?” He answered: “Mine is the Party of Vietnam”.

The Party of Vietnam is the Party of all of us. Any Vietnamese servant of the country and people belongs to that Party. Only those who exclude themselves from the great family of Vietnam, who are resigned to serve the enemy in undermining the Government’s resistance war and national construction, are not members of that Party. If so they will have no place in present day Vietnam.

### **To learn from President Hồ**

President Hồ is the image of present-day Vietnam, and the image of the Vietnamese people in the past and the future.

President Hồ has gathered all the quintessence of the Vietnamese nation. He has also gathered the quintessence of the present-day civilized world and progressive mankind. He once lived in Russia; he studied the October Revolution and Marxism. A greater part of his activities abroad was in China. He had great sympathy for Sun Yat Sen, for the Chinese revolution and people. He understood the U.S.A, and he often praised the national liberation revolution of the U.S. people. He was a long-standing and sentimental friend of France and the French people, and the great French Revolution of 1789. But through President Hồ, the quintessence of the world has been Vietnamized and has acquired the appearance, the manner, and the language, and even the spirit of Vietnam.

President Hồ has combined the quintessence of Vietnam and the world to lead the August 1945 Revolution and to create the democratic republican regime, wiping out thousands of years of dictatorial monarchism. Now, standing behind him, the

Vietnamese people are carrying out the resistance war and national construction. A new Vietnam and new-type Vietnamese have gradually appeared amidst the flames of the struggle.

Formerly, in both the East and the West, philosophers taught people "to perfect yourself, to manage your household, to rule your country, and to pacify the masses". These philosophers not only established royal dynasties, political systems, new ideological and ethical eras, but they exerted deep influences on the evolution of mankind. President Hồ reminds us of these ancient philosophers. But in the past, the scheme "to perfect yourself, to manage your family, to rule your country, and to pacify the masses" could only be partly realized only because of limited historical conditions. Now there are favorable conditions for achieving those objectives.

Therefore the Vietnamese people are now learning from President Hồ. What do we learn from him then?

### **To learn to be loyal to the country and devoted to the people**

All his life, he has taught us this maxim and he will continue to do it. This duty will never end. We have been learning it, and we will continue to learn it, and the learning will never end. Because as long as Vietnam and the Vietnamese people exist, we still have to learn to be loyal to the country and devoted to the people.

Loyalty to the country and devotion to the people are the roots of our activities. If the roots are solid, the tree will be solid, bearing fresh leaves and fine fruits.

Loyalty to the country and devotion to the people consist in making the country independent, prosperous and powerful, and the people free and happy. We make the country independent,

prosperous and powerful with a view to making the people free and happy. And only when the people are free and happy, can the country really be independent, prosperous and powerful. Now the people and country are one. President Hồ has endeavored to teach us this idea. Therefore no force and no stratagem can deviate us from our path and make us lose our way.

To learn to be loyal to the country and devoted to the people is to learn how to carry out the resistance war and national construction, how to mobilize the force of the whole people for these purposes, how to strengthen and perfect the democratic republican regime, the citadel for opposition to foreign aggression and internal betrayal, and how to fulfill the duty of a Vietnamese citizen, no matter where, when, and what circumstances you are in.

To learn to be loyal to the country and devoted to the people is to learn how to make sacrifices and efforts in the interests of the country and the people, as President Hồ has done all his life. He has nothing for himself. The interests of the country and the people are his interests. The supreme interests of the country, the daily interests of the people are subjects of his concern, day and night. His family is the great family of Vietnam. Though he has nothing in private, he is very rich, with the prospects of glory for the country and the people. He lives with the soul of the nation; today he shares the woes and joys with the people; tomorrow, together with the people, he will sing the triumphal hymn. He is very happy and wants us to be loyal to the country and devoted to the people so as to live in happiness with all the people.

### **To learn to achieve national unity**

President Hồ day after day reminds us of this objective because this is the decisive factor for the survival of the nation



in this war. We have learned to recognize this objective but we have not achieved it yet. We have worked for it but our effort is not yet sufficient.

Today, more than ever, we review the lesson on national unity taught by our Old Father: "Unity assures life; division brings death", the enemy today can pin their hope only on their activity to divide and destroy us.

Today we review the lesson with all our loyalty and faithfulness to the country, the people, and President Hồ. We will, with all sincerity, correct our errors and overcome our shortcomings.

To learn to unite all the people consists in integrating our personal interests into the common interests of the nation, and in being one-minded with the whole people in order to secure the common interests of the nation. It consists in sacrificing small things to secure the greater objectives, and sacrificing the transient to obtain the eternal. It consists in working for the country, which is actually working for oneself. If the country is lost, the family will disintegrate.

To learn to unite all the people also consists in eradicating the spirit of isolation, narrow mindedness, susceptibility, prejudice, conceitedness, self-pride, pretentiousness, groundless suspicion, and unprincipled conflict. We can be very different from one another in ideology, political stance, character, as well as in social position. But we all are patriotic, and we should understand one another, be tolerant to one another, love one another, and be united.

To learn to unite all the people also consists in prevailing over individualism and sectarianism advocating that "what pertains to me is the best, and prevailing over the attitude that in my position, my locality, my work, my branch of activity, and what is good is mine, what is bad belongs to others." Thus conflict, fric-

tion, disharmony arise between the military, the political, and the civilian circles; they even arise within the military itself, e.g. between the National Guards corps and the militia; within the Government, e.g. between the administration and the special branch; and within society, e.g. between Việt Minh and Liên Việt. These are manifestations of division leading to death. Vietnam is one, the Vietnamese resistance war is one; any section and any individual must submit to the whole.

To learn to unite all the people is to eliminate all that can divide us and to nurture all that can unite us. At the same time our individual characteristics should be maintained because they are our national assets. President Hồ who unites all the Vietnamese people remains President Hồ, the outstanding man. A pagoda in the shade of a century-old tree and the bell tower of a cathedral enhance the beauty of our country. Twenty million Vietnamese people, twenty million brains but only one mind.

We should remember that to learn from President Hồ is first and fundamentally to learn how to unite all the people.

### **To learn to struggle**

President Hồ's life is one of harsh struggle. He unremittently opposes the imperialist aggressors and all forces that prevent the development of Vietnam.

He says: "We had rather die than to be enslaved." He also says: "The Vietnamese people will fight until final triumph."

He always recommends that we should keep our spirit firm, our mind perspicacious, and our constitution strong for struggle. He also recommends that we should avoid being now optimistic, now pessimistic, being negligent, seeking our safety only, and letting things go adrift. His spirit in struggle is to be learned:

bravery, forcefulness, courage, tenacity, not to be haughty when victorious; not to be despaired when defeated, and determination to fight until final victory. He says: "Vietnam will be unified and independent".

We should learn from him about the struggle against foreign aggression, famine, illiteracy and physical weakness; the devotion to the resistance war and national construction, the efforts to overcome the innumerable obstacles set by the imperialists and the feudalists, and also the struggle against what is obsolete in our own person, the errors and shortcomings that everyone has. We should also learn about the incessant struggle for building a new Vietnam and new Vietnamese.

President Hồ often says: "There is nothing easy, nor anything difficult." That means: however easy, efforts are required to bring the work to success, and however difficult the work may be, with methods and plans, we will finally achieve it.

That is a lesson on will, on determined struggle, on the high revolutionary spirit of the oppressed, a lesson on energy, courage, and resolution in any job and any circumstance, and a lesson of tenacity, perseverance, and austerity in daily life. That is also a lesson on confidence in the unlimited strength of the Vietnamese people and the world people, in the certain future victory of our glorious cause. Therefore it is the lesson on the optimism of the combatant and victor.

### **To learn scientific theory and method**

President Hồ's revolutionary activities give us a valuable lesson that revolution and politics are scientific, i.e. to be successful, a revolution or a political objective must be based on a scientific doctrine and carried out scientifically. Scientific theory

and method have helped President Hồ be realistic and grasp the opportunity to put forward and implement correct policies.

President Hồ's genial talent and clear-sighted leadership take source in that fact.

To learn President Hồ's scientific theory is above all to believe in what is right, fine, and just and to believe in the strength of the developing democratic movement for realizing these fine things. That is why we will win victory over the imperialists and colonialists because we are democratic and they are reactionary, our cause is just and theirs unjust, and we are good and they are bad.

To learn President Hồ's scientific method is to learn to work according to plans and in an organized way, no matter whether the work is important or minor, temporary or long term. We should know that when President Hồ allots work to a person, the latter must have a plan of execution and discuss the plan with him. It is recommended that the plan should be realistic and conforming to the capability of the performer. "Any work should be realistic and practicable. We should begin with easy minor tasks and gradually assume more important, more difficult tasks" (President Hồ's letter to the Vietnamese youth).

President Hồ's scientific theory and method, in brief, are the means to carry out successfully the resistance war, to secure independence, to build the democratic republican regime, and to strengthen an independent, free, and happy Vietnam. They are also to cleverly wage guerilla warfare, to strive for movement warfare, to increase production for self-sufficiency, to develop popular education, and to introduce a new way of living.

The movement of patriotic emulation is mobilizing the whole people on the path of making effort and progress. It is the move-

ment of learning President Hồ's scientific theory and method because whoever well grasps this theory and method will succeed.

### **To learn industriousness, thriftiness, integrity and righteousness**

These four terms imply the fine qualities necessary for every Vietnamese in the cause "to perfect yourself, to manage your family, to rule your country, and to pacify the masses". They represent disinterestedness and complete respect for public property and work.

To learn these qualities is the duty of government officials and workers in popular organizations. It is also the duty of all Vietnamese citizens.

We should learn President Hồ's industriousness and thriftiness because our country is poor and at war. All of us have to work hard to obtain our bowl of rice. We may produce a full bowl but we should only eat half of it.

We should learn President Hồ's integrity and righteousness because these qualities are the foundations of our community life. We should be honest and righteous in our attitude and action with regard to money and our duty, with regard to our neighbors and village fellows and to our compatriots.

Industriousness, thriftiness, integrity and righteousness are the characteristics of a prosperous society. Their contraries are the characteristics of a declining society. In Vietnam today, which is being at war and under construction, laziness, wastefulness, dishonesty, and unrighteousness are adversities that are not allowed to exist and to be tolerated by the Vietnamese people. Nevertheless, these impermissible behaviors are still seen in a number of persons, branches of activity, and cities.

Therefore, to be industrious, thrifty, honest, and righteous consist in eradicating wastefulness, bribery, embezzlement, gambling, and speculation, hoarding, black marketing, and smuggle. All that is bad and obsolete should be eliminated, and at the same time all that is useful and profitable to the people and the State should be encouraged.

To learn from President Hồ is to learn to be loyal to the country and devoted to the people, to realize national cohesion, to struggle, to apply scientific theory and method, and to be industrious, thrifty, honest, and righteous. Other lessons of his are to learn his political lines, to learn from his leadership of the national liberation revolution over the past 30 years; to learn to make our eyes shrewd, capable of understanding the situation of each moment, and grasping all of its aspects, to learn to see the forest and each tree; to know oneself and to know others, to avoid shortsightedness and subjectiveness, and thereby to act at the opportune moment and to adopt a correct policy; and to learn his way of writing and speaking. Generally, his speech contains few words but is rich in meaning; his written sentences are simple and brief, but his ideas are rich, easy to understand, to remember, and to practice. His letters, his interviews, and his calls constitute a storehouse of instructions that we should frequently refer to for action. To learn from the President is also to learn his way of treating human beings and solving affairs, of persuading men by reason and moving men by kindheartedness, and of laying regulations through his own actions. To learn from President Hồ: How can we exhaustively learn from him! Therefore, finally we learn his method of learning: to learn while working, to work for the purpose of learning, to learn for the purpose of working, to learn through books and through practise, to learn the experience of others, and particularly to learn from the masses, the teachers of all of us.

However, to learn from President Hồ is not difficult. Any Vietnamese knows what kind of man the President is, what he always says, and what he does all his life. The simple common man understands President Hồ more easily than others. So all Vietnamese can learn from him. Moreover, he gives lessons to each group of people separately: the old, the young, the rich, the poor, the military men at the front, the villagers in the rear, the government servants, writers, artists, people having left the cities for war evacuation reason, the people in enemy-occupied regions, and Vietnamese residents abroad.

In fact, to learn from President Hồ is very easy, because what he teaches us is already found in our heart and mind. Thinking it over, we can recall that we have learned from our forefathers the concepts of loyalty to the country and devotion to the people; solidarity in struggle; and industriousness, thriftiness, integrity, and righteousness. Reflecting, we shall better understand President Hồ and the practicing of his teachings will be no longer difficult.

President Hồ is the image of the Vietnamese people. His stature is that of the nation, but he lowers himself to suit the stature of any Vietnamese and raises any Vietnamese to his stature.

Lo! President Hồ is stretching his arm to raise us up, let us heave our bodies up!

## **PRESIDENT HỒ CHÍ MINH, THE FOUNDER, TEACHER AND LEADER OF OUR PARTY\***

*Trường Chinh\*\**

... The revolutionary successes we have achieved to date have been possible thanks to the sacrifices made for the revolution by countless comrades, combatants, Party members and other people. They have overcome all difficulties and hardships to fulfill all revolutionary tasks assigned to them by our great President Hồ Chí Minh, the founder, teacher and leader of our Party.

President Hồ Chí Minh founded the Vietnam Revolutionary Youth Association, a forerunner of the Indochinese Communist Party.

President Hồ Chí Minh merged the first three communist organizations of Vietnam - the Indochinese Communist Party (Northern Vietnam), the Indochinese Communist League (Central Vietnam) and the Annamese Communist Party (Southern Vietnam) - into the Communist Party of Vietnam which was later renamed the Indochinese Communist Party.

Since the Indochinese Communist Party came into being, whether at home or abroad, President Hồ Chí Minh has always

\* Excerpt from the report *On the Vietnamese Revolution* to the 2nd Party Congress held in February 1951.

\*\* Trường Chinh (1907-1988), General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam from 1941 to 1956 and from July to December 1986.

shown great concern for the Party. He has trained it into a new type of revolutionary Party of the working class, led it through all difficulties and dangers and caused it to win one victory after another.

He has personally trained cadres and Party members. He has set a bright example of industriousness, thrift, integrity, and uprightness; of total dedication to the public interest and selflessness; of determination to struggle and absolute loyalty to the Party, the working class and the nation; and of energy, perseverance, simplicity and modesty.

He has taught us to unite the whole Party, love our comrades and take care of our cadres, who constitute the most valuable asset of our Party and our State. He has taught us to preserve broad national unity to carry on our protracted war of resistance.

He has taught us the method of criticism and self-criticism in the ideological struggle within the Party and the National United Front.

He has taught us to practice a careful style of work, to inquire into and study problems, keep in close contact with the mass movements, and avoid falling into errors of bureaucracy and authoritarianism.

He has taught us to associate revolutionary ardor with revolutionary realism in all things.

He has taught us keep in close contact with the masses, believe in the masses, learn from the masses, but also to lead them, coming forward and setting examples for the masses to follow, and never to tail after the masses.

He has taught us that to keep a close relationship with the masses, we should speak and write so as to be understood by the masses. He said that to lead the people, we must win their trust, admiration, and love.

He has taught us always to grasp the main objective in a sequence of operations, concentrate our strength and imagination on it, with the determination to achieve it at all costs and then to advance further.

He has taught us to combine ardent patriotism with genuine proletarian internationalism.

His most precious teaching is always *to associate theory with practice, and creatively apply Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of the country.*

Deeply imbued with Marxism-Leninism, he has judiciously applied it to every eventuality: he has always combined strictness of principle with flexibility of tactics, and never let himself be deflected from revolutionary objectives by any immediate advantage.

He has taught us to work in such a way that our Party, when working out slogans and policies, should base itself not on rigid formulas learnt by heart, but on the specific conditions of the Vietnamese revolution together with the actual situation at home and abroad. He underscored the importance of studying the experiences of our country and at the same time learning selectively from the experiences of other countries.

He has taught us that whenever the situation has changed, new conditions for the revolutionary movement have appeared, and shifts have occurred in the ranks of our enemies as well as our allies, we should reconsider at once our revolutionary policies and slogans, basing our assessments on the new situation to work out revised directions, strategies and tactics, instead of sticking to outdated guidelines.

We have found that at each turning point of the Vietnamese revolution, President Hồ Chí Minh has quickly put it on the

right tack. Thanks to that, the boat of our Party has weathered many storms and steered clear of all rocks and rapids and forged ahead toward its goal. All these successes stem from the fact that *he has always firmly held our compass: Marxism-Leninism.*

We must do our best to learn from President Hồ Chí Minh, the great teacher of the Vietnamese revolution, and unite single-mindedly around him, always uphold the banner of Marxism-Leninism, *to complete the liberation of our nation, develop people's democracy, and advance toward socialism.*

... To make our revolution successful and our resistance victorious, we should make great efforts to strengthen the National United Front, strengthen the people's army and people's government, promote international unity. The most important is to make our Party clean and powerful, based on the Marxist-Leninist line and a sound platform in conformity with the new conditions of our revolution in order to lead the mass resistance, to defeat the invaders, to perform the cause of national independence and unification, to firmly step on the path to people's democracy and socialism.

There remain many difficulties. We cannot be subjective and self-sufficient. And under the leadership of our Party and President Hồ Chí Minh, we surely gain the entire triumph.

## LAST TRIBUTE OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE VIETNAM WORKERS' PARTY

*(Read by Comrade Lê Duẩn\* at the memorial  
ceremony for President Hồ Chí Minh on  
9th September 1969)*

Fellowmen and combatants throughout the country, comrades and friends.

Our venerated and beloved President Hồ Chí Minh is no more!

This is a tremendous loss! Boundless is our grief!

Our people and Party have lost a leader of genius and a great teacher.

The international communist movement, the national-liberation movement and all progressive mankind have lost an illustrious fighter, a staunch comrade-in-arms and a dear friend.

Our people and combatants in the whole country mourn him in boundless grief! Our brothers and friends all over the world share our deep sorrow.

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\* Lê Duẩn (1907-1986), the First Secretary of the Central Committee, then General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam from 1960 to 1986.

For over sixty years, from his youth to his last moment, President Hồ Chí Minh dedicated his whole life to the revolutionary cause of our people and of the world's people. His was an exalted life, full of hardships and sacrifices, most noble and rich, immeasurably pure and beautiful.

With his ardent patriotism, President Hồ Chí Minh soon embraced Marxism-Leninism, in which he found the light that would show the path to salvation for the people and the country. He was the first Vietnamese to creatively apply Marxism-Leninism to the conditions of our country and to chart the course for the Vietnamese revolution so that it could advance step by step, from victory to victory.

President Hồ Chí Minh was the founder, leader and educator of our Party, the builder of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the National United Front, the beloved father of the Vietnamese people's armed forces. He was the very soul, the shining banner that led our entire Party, our entire people, our entire army to unite as one man and struggle gallantly, thus writing the most glorious pages in the history of our Homeland.

Our nation, our people and our land gave birth to President Hồ Chí Minh, the great national hero, and he, in turn, has covered them with glory.

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He personified the essential character of our nation, he symbolized the indomitable will shown by the Vietnamese people over four thousand years of history. "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom". "We would rather endure and sacrifice than lose independence and be slaves". Such is the pressing patriotic summons of the Homeland at this moment, the call of our forefathers from time immemorial and

our sacred duty to all future generations. He said: "Vietnam is one country, the Vietnamese are one nation". "The South is the blood of Vietnamese blood, the flesh of Vietnamese flesh". During his lifetime, he always followed closely every step of the revolution for the liberation of the South; day and night he thought of our countrymen and fighters in the South with immense love.

Parting from him, we vow:

*Forever to carry aloft the banner of national independence, to fight and defeat the U.S. aggressors, to liberate the South, defend the North, and reunify the country in fulfillment of his wish.*

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The most cherished desire of President Hồ Chí Minh was to see the Homeland liberated and the people happy. He said, "I have only one desire, a most earnest desire - to achieve complete independence for our people, and opportunities for all our countrymen to have adequate food and clothing and education". He also said: "The North must advance to socialism".

During his lifetime, he gave his warm affection to his people, young and old, men and women, in the North and in the South, in the plains and in the mountains. Departing from this world, he left "boundless love" for the whole people, the whole Party, the whole army, and to his nephews and nieces, the youth and children.

Parting from him, we vow:

*To go on devoting all our strength to the realization of the lofty ideal of socialism and communism that he set for our*

*working class and people, so as to achieve prosperity for our land and happiness for our countrymen.*

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President Hồ Chí Minh devoted constant attention and efforts to the building of our Party into a firmly welded structure. He said, "The strength of the Party lies in its unity and oneness of mind". He was the incarnation of national unity, of North-South brotherhood. He said, "Unity, unity, great unity. Success, success, great success". He always advised us to preserve and enhance our traditions of unity and our love for our countrymen and comrades.

Parting from him, we vow:

*With all our heart and strength to preserve the unity of the Party as we would the apples of our eyes, to increase the fighting strength of the Party, the nucleus of national unity, and to ensure total victory for the revolutionary cause of the Vietnamese working class and nation.*

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President Hồ Chí Minh was a lofty symbol of genuine patriotism closely combined with proletarian internationalism. His heart and mind were dedicated both to the Vietnamese nation and to the proletariat and the oppressed peoples in the whole world. As a faithful disciple of Karl Marx and V.I. Lenin, President Hồ Chí Minh was not only a great patriot, but also an outstanding fighter in the international communist movement and the national liberation to the movement of the 20th century. President Hồ Chí Minh constantly taught us to devote our care and attention to the preservation of international solidarity, for the sake of our high duty to the world revolution.

Parting from him, we vow:

*To constantly enhance the pure internationalist sentiments shown by President Hồ Chí Minh, do our utmost to contribute to the restoration and development of solidarity and unity in the socialist camp and among the fraternal parties on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism; to strengthen solidarity and friendship among the Indochinese peoples; to extend whole-hearted support to the revolutionary movement of other peoples; and to make an active contribution to the struggle of the world's people for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.*

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President Hồ Chí Minh's great life was an ever-shining example of staunch revolutionary courage, the spirit of independence and sovereignty, deep love for the people, total dedication to the public interest and complete selflessness, modesty and simplicity. President Hồ Chí Minh taught us, "Our Party should preserve absolute purity and prove worthy of its role as the leader and very loyal servant of the people".

Parting from him, we vow:

*All our life to learn from his virtues and style of work, to foster revolutionary virtues, fearlessly face hardships and sacrifices, and to temper ourselves into fighters loyal to the Party and the people, worthy of being his comrades and his disciples. Following his example, our entire people and youth pledge to do their best to steel themselves into new men, masters of their country and masters of the new society, and to carry his invincible banner to the final goal.*

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President Hồ Chí Minh is no more! But he left us an extremely precious legacy. This is the Hồ Chí Minh epoch, the most brilliant one in our nation's glorious history. This is the era of independence and freedom for the Homeland, the era of socialism in our country.

The whole nation and each of us individually feel eternal gratitude to him for the immense services he rendered to us.

In the presence of his spirit, we vow to remain faithful to him all our life, to struggle with all our heart and energy, to weld ourselves into iron-like unity, struggle with self-abnegation to fulfill our noble duty to the independence and freedom of the Homeland and the happiness of the people, and to make a worthy contribution to the revolutionary cause of the world's people.

President Hồ Chí Minh is no more! But he is always here to guide us. We still feel his constant presence by our side. For we continue to follow the path charted by him, and carry on his great work. For he will forever live with our mountains and rivers, and his name and image will be ever more deeply engraved in the heart and mind of each of us.

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Dear comrades and fellow-countrymen,

Parting from us, Uncle Hồ left a historic *Testament* for our Party, for all countrymen and for combatants in both South and North. These are his ultimate recommendations, his sentiments towards, and his confidence in the present and future generations.

Let us prove ourselves worthy of him!

Let us contain our grief, struggle valiantly, ardently march forward, overcome all obstacles and difficulties and be resolved to defeat the U.S. aggressors completely, build socialism successfully and fulfill the pledge of honor we are making in this sacred farewell to him!

*President Hồ Chí Minh, the great leader, the venerated and beloved teacher of our Party and people, will live forever!*

## PRESIDENT HỒ CHÍ MINH, THE GREAT LEADER OF OUR PARTY AND NATION\*

*Lê Duẩn*

The Vietnamese people are very heroic.

In the long process of national construction and defense, our people had soon acquired national conscience and manifested deep patriotism. Under the French domination, over nearly one century, our people did not resign themselves to slavery and continuously stood up in arms against the invaders and the traitors. But all the previous patriotic movements opposing the French met with failure.

In the 1920s, after the royalist uprisings were extinguished, the ebullient liberation movement of our people met with a profound crisis of lines and policies. The French colonialists, on one hand, harshly repressed and terrorized the patriots; on the other, they diffused the ideas of submission and encouraged by every means the tendency of making reforms and compromises. Within the ranks of the people, the struggle regarding the way to carry out national liberation also became acute among the patriotic forces, between two main tendencies, that of the young proletarian class and that of the national capitalists. These forces presented their political programs to win popular support.

\* Excerpt from *Under the Glorious Banner of the Party, Let Us Strive for Independence, Freedom, Socialism and Advance to New Victories*. Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, 1970.

At this very moment, President Hồ with his intelligence and his experience in revolutionary activity, met the pressing demand of Vietnamese history. Overcoming the limitations of the patriotism of the scholars and the bourgeois-minded revolutionaries of that time, President Hồ Chí Minh had early come to Marxism-Leninism and adopted the path of proletarian revolution. He said: "To save the country and to liberate the people, there is no other way than the proletarian revolution."<sup>(1)</sup>

The first great deed of President Hồ Chí Minh was the linkage of the Vietnamese revolutionary movement with the international worker movement, leading the Vietnamese people to the path he himself had followed from patriotism to Marxism-Leninism. This was the only way for liberation, opened by the Russian October Revolution for the working people and the oppressed people all over the world.

Marxism-Leninism came to the Vietnamese people like "water for the thirsty, or food for the hungry traveler in his long march."<sup>(2)</sup> It attracted the Vietnamese patriots to adopt the path of the proletarian revolution and aroused a strong national and democratic movement throughout the country in which the working class had become an independent political force. The association of Marxism-Leninism, the most revolutionary ideology of the time, with the energetic struggle movement of the working class, as well as the close alliance of the latter with the patriotic movement of an actively revolutionary people, led to the founding of our Party on February 3rd, 1930.

This event marked a fundamental turning point in the history of the Vietnamese revolution. It was the diffusion of Marxism-

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. Second edition. National Politics Publishing House. Hanoi, 1996, vol. 9, p. 314.

(2) Hồ Chí Minh. *Op. cit.* Vol 8, p. 571.

Leninism in a colonial and semi-feudal country, the first necessary preparation for the most glorious period of uprising and the greatest leap forward in the history of the Vietnamese people's development, beginning with the August 1945 Revolution and the setting up of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The forty years of our Party's history have been forty years of glorious revolutionary struggle.

It is the history of several continuous revolutionary surges and several heroic insurrections: the 1930-1931 and the 1936-1939 revolutionary surges, the 1940-1945 national salvation movement that led to the success of the August 1945 Revolution.

It is the history of the two wars of resistance by a heroic people against the French colonialists and the U.S. imperialist aggressors for the achievement of national liberation and defense, thereby contributing to the great struggle movement of the world peoples for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.

It is also the history of the two great revolutions of our era: the people's national democratic revolution and the socialist revolution. Over the last ten years, under the leadership of our Party and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, these two revolutionary tasks were closely combined into one common objective, namely to liberate the South, to defend the North, and eventually to peacefully unify the country.

Under the leadership of our Party headed by great President Hồ Chí Minh, the entire Vietnamese people have written the finest pages of our national history and brought our country into the era of independence, freedom, and socialism.

Leading the Vietnamese revolution over the past forty years, our Party and President Hồ Chí Minh have ushered our people

onto the international arena as the first colonial and dependent people who have successfully carried out the national liberation revolution and seized power in all the country; as one of the first peoples who have vanquished old colonialism, thereby opening the hump-after-lump collapse of the imperialist colonial system; as the vanguard combatants who are defeating U.S. neo-colonialism, the ring leader of imperialism and the international gendarme.

By our magnificent anti-imperialist and anti-feudalist victories and our successes of the socialist revolution in North Vietnam, our Party-led working class and people, together with the people of the brother socialist countries, are most actively contributing to the process of historical change of the world in the present era.

The brilliant successes of the Vietnamese people over the past forty years stem from the clear-sighted leadership of our Party, a Party absolutely faithful to the supreme interests of the working class and the nation.

Every step forward of the Vietnamese revolution and our people is a success of Marxism-Leninism, the invincible revolutionary doctrine and the radiant truth of the present era.

It is the great victory of the militant solidarity of the working people and the entire Vietnamese people who are fighting shoulder to shoulder with the brother peoples of Laos and Cambodia against the common enemy for independence, freedom, and socialism.

The successes of the Vietnamese revolution over the past forty years are related to the development of the world revolution in the new era - the era of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale - that began with the great Russian October Revolution and then the victory of the Soviet Union

over the German-Italian-Japanese fascists. We should also mention on that score, the triumph of the Chinese revolution, the superior force of the entire socialist bloc which is the most decisive factor of the development of human history, the strong national liberation movement, the struggle movement of the working class and labouring people in the capitalist countries, the broad democratic and peace movement all over the world.

To obtain the present success, our Party and people have overcome innumerable hardship and ordeals. Under the banner of the Party, uncountable cadres, Party members, compatriots, and combatants have sacrificed themselves to enhance the heroism of the vanguard class and the nation, to set in relief their boundless faithfulness to the fatherland, to the national liberation cause, and to invincible Marxism-Leninism. These examples of heroism will live forever with our people, our Party, with our present generation and for thousands of generations to follow.

... President Hồ was the sower of Marxist-Leninist seeds in Vietnam, making the Vietnamese revolution bear fruits. He trained a great number of outstanding cadres for our Party and endeavored to build our Party into a united and one-minded bloc. Led and trained by President Hồ Chí Minh, the teacher of the Vietnamese revolution, the great national hero, and an eminent internationalist combatant, our Party soon became a new type of Party of the working class with rich experience and a glorious history of struggle.

Each progress of our Party and people over the past 10 years was related to the eventful and fine life of President Hồ Chí Minh. His life of activity, our party and the people's cause constitute an eternal epic of the Vietnamese revolution.

## UNCLE HỒ, THE FINEST VIETNAMESE\*

*Lê Duẩn*

... President Hồ Chí Minh was the greatest personality in Vietnamese modern history, the embodiment of the revolutionary path of Vietnam, and the struggle and success of the Vietnamese revolution.

Having been a most enthusiastic patriot, after many years of peregrination to seek a way to save the people and the country, having lived as a worker and participated in the broad struggle of the working class, young Nguyễn Ái Quốc had gone from national liberation to proletarian revolution, from patriotism to Marxism-Leninism. He understood the great truth of our epoch that independence and freedom must go along with socialism. And throughout his life of ebullient and eventful activity, President Hồ Chí Minh raised high the banner of national independence and socialism, overcame innumerable difficulties and challenges to lead our people in very heroic struggles and to win most brilliant successes that radically changed the life of our country and contributed a great impact on the development of world history.

The reason of President Hồ's success is that he built our Party into a new type Party of the working class, absolutely faithful to the ideal of national and social liberation, always associating the vanguards of the working class with the popular masses, the real

\* Excerpt of the opening speech at the grand meeting to celebrate the 90th anniversary of President Hồ Chí Minh's birthday in May 1980.

makers of history who have extraordinary strength and unlimited capability. He did his utmost to educate, to organize, and to mobilize all strata of people to stand up for national salvation and construction. He realized and ceaselessly consolidated the worker-peasant alliance as the basis of the National United Front; he organized the people's armed forces and set up the revolutionary government and built the new regime.

Together with the Party, he organized and led all the revolutionary work of the Vietnamese people, thereby harmoniously combining the quintessence of the nation and the intelligence of the era, inheriting the traditions of our people's four-thousand-year history, putting in relief the revolutionary and scientific nature of the working class and the characteristics of the Vietnamese revolution. He demonstrated the close relation, from the very beginning, between patriotism and proletarian internationalism, the absolute faithfulness to Marxism-Leninism, the will of staunch struggle against all foes and difficulties, the creativeness in theoretical application and in revolutionary action, the unwavering attitude at historical turning points, the capability of taking the revolutionary opportunity, changing the situation at moments of danger, the capability of creating and putting to avail the combined strength for winning victory.

President Hồ Chí Minh was the finest Vietnamese and one of the finest men in our epoch, an exemplary communist having clear-sighted mind, noble heart, indomitable spirit, pure feelings, modest behavior, and simple way of living. He was the marvelous paragon of a new-type man, deeply loving the country and socialism, mastering natural conditions and himself. He was a man of labour, compassion and reason, correctly associating his personal life and the collective life of society.

Celebrating the anniversary of President Hồ's birthday, we will continue to learn his revolutionary thoughts and ceaselessly

cultivate the revolutionary qualities to be his worthy students. At the same time we will strive "to nurture revolutionary generations for the future" for pursuing his and the Party's glorious cause. We will strive to practice his sacred teaching that "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom", resolutely to overcome all difficulties and obstacles for firmly defending socialist Vietnam and successfully building socialism. Thus, we will bring about an abundant, civilized, happy life to all Vietnamese and ensure that all of them "have enough food and clothes and be educated". In so doing, we will contribute a worthy part to the world people's revolutionary cause and make Hồ Chí Minh's epoch radiate more magnificently.

Continuing President Hồ's and the Party's international policy, we will ceaselessly consolidate and develop the special relationship between our people and the Laotian, the Cambodian brother peoples; strengthen the solidarity and all-sided cooperation with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries; promote solidarity and mutual support among the brother parties in the world communist movement in accordance with "sentiment and reason", persevere in our policy of peace, friendship, cooperation with all peace- and freedom-loving peoples in the world. We will be ready to foil all schemes of the imperialists and reactionaries in the world and successfully realize the lofty objectives of our era: peace, national independence, democracy, and socialism.

## **PRESIDENT HỒ CHÍ MINH - THE TALENTED LEADER AND GREAT TEACHER OF THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION\***

*Trường Chinh*

PRESIDENT HỒ CHÍ MINH BECAME ACQUAINTED WITH  
MARXISM-LENINISM AND THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION  
TO FIND A WAY FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION

... To come to the present-day independent, unified, and socialist Vietnam, our people have experienced a long road of difficulty and hardship, full of challenges and sacrifices, but one that was extremely glorious way. It is precisely the way drawn up by President Hồ Chí Minh on the basis of the creative application of Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions to Vietnam.

Uncle Hồ was born and grew up when our country was full of upheavals. Like his compatriots, he suffered the pain of losing the country. He was influenced by his elders' patriotism. He witnessed the innumerable heroic insurrections by our people and the cruel repression by the French colonialists. He scrutinized the royalist movement of Phan Đình Phùng, the Going-East Movement of Phan Bội Châu, the anti-French armed struggle of Hoàng Hoa Thám, and the reformist movement of Phan Chu Trinh. These movements successively met with failure, causing him to be puzzled and to ponder for an explanation.

\* Excerpt from speech at the celebration of the 95th anniversary of President Hồ Chí Minh's birthday on 18th May 1985.

He soon found out the errors of the previous generation of revolutionaries and the limitations of the contemporary scholars. He did not follow their route and sought the correct path for national liberation.

Early in the 20th century, while all the country was sinking in long years of darkness, President Hồ Chí Minh left his native land to look for a way for national salvation with a strong will, extraordinary energy, and unwavering determination.

How to drive out the colonialist aggressors and bring independence to the country and freedom to the people? During that period, Uncle Hồ's highest objective and aspiration was to find out correct answers to these questions.

Setting out with warm patriotism and deep compassion for the people, he went to Western countries where bourgeois democratic revolutions had broken out, and he tried to understand how revolutions were carried out by the peoples of these countries in order to return to Vietnam and help his compatriots to chase out the French colonialists.

He set foot in many countries, from Asia to Europe, from Africa to America for observation, understanding, and drawing necessary conclusions for his people's revolutionary path.

From knowledge about French colonialism, he got knowledge about colonialism and imperialism in general. From the love for his country and people, he sympathized with all colonized peoples and fraternized with laborers, with oppressed and exploited proletarians.

During tens of years of peregrination, he earned his living as an ordinary worker; he acquired a profusion of knowledge, immense and warm revolutionary feelings for a quick comprehension of Marxism-Leninism, the truth of the epoch.

He got initial knowledge of that truth from *The First Draft of the Theses on the National and Colonial Questions* by V.I. Lenin. In his famous thesis, Lenin pointed out many important issues, namely the real equality and freedom between peoples; the combatant solidarity between the proletarian class and the working people of various countries; the correct assessment regarding the Russian October Revolution, the Soviet administration, and proletarian internationalism. In particular, the *Theses* also pointed out the way for the liberation of colonial and dependent peoples, and the tasks of communist parties in solving national and colonial issues, etc.

It can be said that all the questions pondered by President Hồ Chí Minh for many years in order to find ways to save his country, were now answered. He said: "Lenin's *Theses* moved me, filled me with enthusiasm and enlightenment. I was so glad that I shed tears. Sitting alone in my room, I spoke aloud as if I were speaking to a crowd: Suffering and poor compatriots, this is what we need, this is the way for our liberation!"

President Hồ Chí Minh was *the first Vietnamese who clearly saw the importance of the Theses of V.I. Lenin* and early understood their importance for the Vietnamese revolution, the Indochinese revolution, and the colonial revolution in general. This was the result of his long process of seeking a way for national liberation and his participation in the life and struggle of the proletarian class and working people of many countries. This was also the result of the outstanding intelligence that had been unceasingly enhanced by persevering study and the acquisition of the quintessence of the world culture.

From then on, he made expeditious efforts to carry out propaganda and organizational activities among the working class and patriotic people in a number of colonial countries. He resolutely opposed the vague rightist ideas about colonialism,

even within the French Communist Party. He continuously denounced colonialism to make the French people clearly understand the situation of the Vietnamese and other colonial peoples. He had become *the first Vietnamese proletarian journalist* having a high militant spirit, *the first revolutionary bringing the light of Marxism-Leninism to Vietnam*.

The *Theses* of Lenin opened the door for President Hồ Chí Minh to get acquainted with Marxism-Leninism. As required by his revolutionary activities, he went more deeply in the study of Marxism-Leninism to grasp its essence, to creatively apply it to the concrete conditions of Vietnam, and to solve the issues arising from the Vietnamese revolution.

So, President Hồ Chí Minh had *gone from patriotism to Marxism-Leninism, from a patriot to a communist fighter*. He longed to return to the country for the realization of his great aspiration. In mid-1923 he bid farewell to his militant comrades in the Union of Colonial Peoples: "What shall we do? For me, the answer is clear: to return to my country, to live with the popular masses, to rouse them up, to organize them, to unite them, to train them, to lead them to struggle for freedom and independence."<sup>(1)</sup>

His way back to Vietnam was via Soviet Russia, Lenin's land, the cradle of the Russian October Revolution. This way led him to the source of the epochal truth. During his stay in the Soviet land, he enthusiastically studied Marxist-Leninist doctrine and took part in the activities of the Communist Internationale. He participated in the 5th Congress of the Communist Internationale and many others of the International Red Trade Union, International Peasants' Organization, International Women's Organization, International Youth Organization, etc.

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. Second edition. National Politics Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, vol. 1, p. 192.

He became a brave combatant of the international communist movement, resolutely defending Lenin's viewpoints regarding the world revolution. He expanded his international relations and *laid the first foundation* for the friendship between the Vietnamese people, the Soviet people, and the people of many other countries.

He tried to understand the Soviet society, a new social regime in which the working people had been liberated and had become the real masters of their destiny. In reality, it is clear that the way to save the country and the people found by President Hồ Chí Minh was not only aimed at eliminating colonialism and imperialism but also *at building a new society, a socialist and then communist society.*

In the light of Marxism-Leninism and the experience of the October Revolution, President Hồ Chí Minh was *prepared to map out a correct strategy to bring the Vietnamese revolution to a new phase.* He affirmed: "... For the Vietnamese revolution, Marxism-Leninism is not only a "marvelous manual", a compass, it is also the sun lighting our way to complete victory, to socialism and communism."

The way found by President Hồ Chí Minh is the one that the Vietnamese people necessarily have to follow. President Hồ Chí Minh continued the Vietnamese nation's national construction and defense on the basis of a new strength, the strength of Marxism-Leninism and of the epoch. He left the country to seek a way to save the country and he went back with a strategic path that he had drawn up to bring the Vietnamese people from one success to another, to write most glorious pages of the national history, and to bring the Vietnamese people up to the level of the era.

#### PRESIDENT HỒ CHÍ MINH CREATIVELY APPLIED AND ENRICHED THE LENINIST DOCTRINE ON COLONIAL REVOLUTION

1. President Hồ indefatigably struggle all his life for the independence and freedom of his people and for the self-determination of other peoples in the world. For him, the truth 'Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom' was the principle of primary importance of the theory on colonial revolution and at the same time the guiding principle for action in combat.

President Hồ Chí Minh endeavored to study the question of colonial revolution, a vital question for the Vietnamese and other colonial peoples in the 20th century. He creatively applied and further enriched and developed the Leninist doctrine on the national and colonial questions.

He was born and grew up in a period when the internal contradictions of capitalism were developing to a nearly explosive level, when the rising up of the oppressed Orient was increasing along with the maturity of proletarian revolution in capitalist countries. He early realized the fundamental contradictions between imperialism and the colonial peoples, among the imperialist powers themselves, and the relations of the colonies with one another.

He profoundly understood the famous point of view of Lenin that in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution, national liberation revolution no longer belonged to the category of bourgeois revolution, in spite of its national and democratic content; that it had become an inseparable part of proletarian revolution. He said, at present, *national liberation revolution was an integral part of proletarian revolution on the world scale.*

This point of view helped President Hồ Chí Minh perceive, as early as the beginning of the 1920s, the decisive importance of



the solidarity of the anti-imperialist oppressed peoples, and the alliance between colonial peoples and the working class of imperialist powers.

For him, proletarian revolution and national liberation revolution are two currents of the same revolutionary process. They do not cut across each other or run in contrary directions, but they merge into each other and form a common current of the world revolution process.

He always found out the unifying factors of these two currents and he outstandingly implemented the strategic motto of Lenin: "Proletarians and oppressed peoples all over the world, unite!"

2. After the October Revolution, the militant alliance between the national liberation revolution in colonial countries and the proletarian revolution in mother countries entered a new phase of qualitative change. The salient characteristic of that alliance was that the working class had woken up and increasingly played decisive role in the national liberation movement. As for the national capitalist class, it had gradually given up its leading role or proved to be incapable from the very beginning of the movement; even when it held the leadership of the revolution in a certain colonial country, the revolution ran the danger of incompleteness, the possibility of that country becoming a neo-colony of imperialism being not excluded.

President Hồ Chí Minh had early seen this inevitable developmental trend of history. He clearly understood *the close relation between the national liberation revolution and the October Revolution*. He said: "The October Revolution opened a way for the liberation of peoples as well as of the whole mankind, ushering a new era in history.

So, the theory and practice of the October Revolution helped oppressed peoples clearly see that the way for self-liberation

must be related to the first proletarian revolution in the world. Because the October revolution had overthrown imperialism in a 'mother country,' shaken the great rear of world imperialism, *liberated the colonial peoples from the Tsarist rule*, and opened a period of unchecked uprising of oppressed peoples for independence and freedom.

President Hồ Chí Minh's thoughts regarding colonial revolution clearly proved that national liberation revolution could not be pushed forward if the road-opening role and the encouraging example of the October Revolution were denied, that the colonial system of imperialism could not be erased if the guiding principles, the invaluable and universal lessons of the October Revolution were denied.

President Hồ Chí Minh's thoughts regarding the relationship between national liberation revolution and the October Revolution still keep their value intact. They have been proved in practice by the repeated successes of the national liberation movement after the October Revolution.

3. As a leader of the national liberation movement, President Hồ Chí Minh profoundly perceived that *national liberation revolutions in the colonies and proletarian revolutions in the mother countries must be closely coordinated, encourage and assist each other in achieving the common objective of smashing the common enemy, imperialism*. He compared imperialism to a two-proboscis leech, implying the necessity to attack it at both ends: one in the mother country, the other in the colony. In this way the revolution could be more easily successful. He considered the close ties between the two revolutions the two wings of the same bird, the world revolution. The bird must flap its two wings to fly.

The proletarian revolution in the mother country attacks at the very den of imperialism while national liberation revolution

in the colony attacks at its rear base. This is the organic relation and the reciprocal influence between the revolutionary forces of the working class in imperialist powers and those of the colonial peoples, forming a common front against imperialism for the liberation of the working class and oppressed peoples.

4. President Hồ Chí Minh particularly emphasized that *the national liberation revolution should hold initiative*. In his view, although a colonial revolution is closely related to the revolution in the mother country, it does not depend on the revolution in the mother country. *It is quite possible that the colonial revolution wins success before the revolution in the mother country*. This is because a revolution can break out and win success at the weakest link of imperialism. The people of colonial countries cannot wait for the success of the proletarian revolution in the mother country to liberate them; they must take the initiative to start the revolution and the success of the colonial revolution will stimulate and effectively help the proletarian revolution in the mother country. The August 1945 Revolution in Vietnam testifies to this fact.

President Hồ Chí Minh pointed out that: "If we want to prevail over imperialist countries, we should first of all deprive them of their colonies. The success of colonial peoples will help their brothers in the West completely liberate themselves."

This is a very important thesis reflecting the revolutionary spirit of offense and the scientific attitude of a great experienced thinker. At the same time, it is a significant contribution to the Marxist-Leninist theory regarding colonial revolution.

The success of the revolution in Vietnam and many other countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America over the past few decades has proved the correctness of the aforesaid viewpoint of President Hồ Chí Minh.

5. Another question of particular importance is "What way should a colonial people follow to advance? What should they do to secure complete independence and real freedom?"

President Hồ Chí Minh answered the question as soon as he became a Marxist-Leninist, a communist combatant: to win victory, national liberation revolution must follow the path of proletarian revolution; the liberation of the nation must be associated with that of society, of the proletarian class, and the working people; national independence cannot be separated from socialism. In his view, in a colonial country, the proletarian class, for the purpose of self-liberation, must liberate all of its people from any oppression and exploitation. Reversely, for national liberation from oppression and exploitation to succeed, the proletarian class must be liberated. These two liberations can only be the result of socialism and the world revolution. He also affirmed: "... National liberation revolution must develop into socialist revolution to win complete victory."<sup>(1)</sup>

So, after success, the national liberation revolution should immediately proceed to carrying out the socialist revolution. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam and President Hồ Chí Minh, our people have carried out two revolutions: the people's national democratic revolution and the socialist revolution. These two revolutions are the two phases of the same process. The people's national democratic revolution is the preparation, the premise of the socialist revolution. The socialist revolution is the necessary development of the people's national democratic revolution.

The people's national democratic revolution is carried out first, after success, it should proceed to the socialist revolution,

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(1) Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. Second edition. National Politics Publishing House, Hanoi, 1996. Vol. 12, p. 305.

it cannot call a halt. Therefore in 1954, after winning victory in only half of the country, our Party and President Hồ advocated to shift the people's national democratic revolution in the North to socialist revolution while the South continued to achieve the people's national democratic revolution. After the great triumph of Spring 1975, South Vietnam was completely liberated, the country was unified, and our Party at once stood for ushering all Vietnam to the period of transition to socialism.

6. To achieve the two aforesaid revolutions, President Hồ Chí Minh stressed on *the leading role of the working class*, that was considered the decisive condition for success. He said: "In the present era, the working class is the only class having the historical mission of leading the revolution to final victory".<sup>(1)</sup>

From the beginning, he pointed out that the working class of colonial countries should grasp the national liberation banner and should not let it fall into the hand of any other class. Although he clearly saw the role and the great strength of the peasant class in colonial countries, he energetically criticized the erroneous viewpoints that the peasants were to be founded and flattered and that the colonial question might be solved on the strength of the peasantry.

He must have well grasped Lenin's views, thoroughly understood the peasant class, and had a broad vision to be able to foresee the disastrous consequences that the opportunists might bring to the revolution in colonial countries.

So, by his rich practical activity, his clear sightedness and extraordinary intelligence, President Hồ made outstanding contributions to the creative application of Marxism-Leninism, and enriched and developed Lenin's doctrine on colonial revo-

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, 1980. Vol. 1, p. 157.

lution. He established a close theoretical system, laid foundations for forming up the strategies and tactics as well as the method and the art of carrying out revolution in a colony like Vietnam.

President Hồ Chí Minh firmly held the banner of Marxism-Leninism, the symbol of the necessary developmental trend of the national liberation movement advancing to socialism. With his thoughts regarding colonial revolution, President Hồ Chí Minh actively contributed to the process of profound change in world history in the present era.

#### PRESIDENT HỒ CHÍ MINH'S GREAT SERVICE AND GREAT CAUSE WITH REGARD TO THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

... President Hồ Chí Minh met the pressing requirement of history. From the *position of a finder of ways to save the country*, he became *the revolutionary leader* of the Vietnamese working class and people, opening the most glorious stages in the four-thousand-year history of our nation.

With regard to the Vietnamese revolution, his cause was grandiose and his services boundless.

His greatest service was *to bring Marxism-Leninism to Vietnam*. A strong nation-wide revolutionary wave surged up on the basis of that fact, leading to the founding of the Communist Party of Indochina, which marked a fundamental turning point in our national history, or more precisely, in the history of the three Indochinese countries.

He creatively applied Marxism-Leninism to drawing up a correct revolutionary line and to leading the people to success in the revolution. This was the line of *carrying out the people's national democratic revolution then shifting at once to the*

*socialist revolution in an agricultural country, a former colony. This was the holding high of two banners: national independence and socialism.*

With his theoretical views on colonial revolution, he laid the foundations for the shaping of the revolutionary line of the Party, which was a combination of strategic guiding principles in politics and theory, in perception and action, in method and the arts of vanquishing the enemy and building the country.

Firmly keeping that line of his, we have a scientific basis to understand the development of the Vietnamese revolution and the long process of the world revolution in the present epoch. Thence we can understand why our Party and President Hồ Chí Minh could combine the strength of national independence and the strength of socialism, the strength of our people and that of our epoch, the resistance of our people and the offensive of the three revolutionary currents in the world.

To put in practice the aforesaid line and to bring the Vietnamese revolution to success, President Hồ Chí Minh paid attention first of all to *founding the Revolutionary Party of the working class in our country*. His great success was to found and to train our Party in all three aspects, political, ideological, and organizational, a Marxist-Leninist Party in a colonial and semi-feudalist country, with small production as the common form, but constantly preserving the radically revolutionary nature of the working class and capable of enhancing the heroic traditions of the Vietnamese nation.

President Hồ Chí Minh paid attention *to the preservation of the cohesion and one-mindedness of the Party, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and the correct line of the Party*. He considered that the cohesion and one-mindedness of the Party must be preserved as well as the pupils of our eyes. For him, the

cohesion and one-mindedness of the Party must be manifested in all aspects, political, ideological and organizational. He always firmly kept the principles of democratic centralism of the Party and required all Party members to defend and to resolutely implement the lines and policies of the Party, seriously and consciously to respect the Party's discipline, to carry out criticism and self-criticism, and to heighten political and ethnical revolutionary qualities.

*The ruling Party* was a question of President Hồ Chí Minh's concern. He early saw the danger of bureaucratism when the Party held power, particularly in an agricultural, backward country with a still underdeveloped economy, many remaining features of feudalism, and many evils and bad habits of small producers. This danger alienates the Party from the people, and from the assets that make the strength of the Party. Party members and cadres are frequently reminded that they must oppose arrogance, commandism, must not be "revolutionary mandarins," and must avoid all other manifestations of bureaucratism, an evil alien to our Party.

For him, the training of revolutionary cadres for future generations was very necessary for Party building. He gave importance to the training and improvement of a large number of Party members and cadres meeting the requirement of each revolutionary stage.

Revolution is an undertaking of the masses. To ensure a certain success to the revolution, President Hồ Chí Minh made all efforts to establish *a worker-peasant alliance*. He said that only with the alliance of workers and peasants under the leadership of the working class can we resolutely and completely prevail over the reactionary forces, seize and consolidate the people's revolutionary administration, and fulfil the historical task of the people's national democratic revolution and advance to socialism.

President Hồ indefatigably strove to establish, consolidate, and strengthen the cohesion of all the people on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance so as to take united action against the enemy of the nation. The motto he recommended to the National United Front was "Unity, unity, great unity! Success, success, great success." This strategic thought of the President was kept throughout the process of the people's national democratic revolution as well as during the socialist revolution.

President Hồ Chí Minh was the beloved father of the people's armed forces. He organized, educated, and trained our troops into a strong revolutionary army, closely linked to the people, capable of waging people's warfare in the specific manner of Vietnam; as a result, great exploits have been recorded, bringing glory and pride to the Party and the people.

He laid solid foundation for the revolutionary military theory of Vietnam. He deeply understood the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint on revolutionary violence, the great role of armed struggle, and the role of the people's armed forces in revolutionary struggle. He always paid attention to building the army politically, ideologically, and organizationally; educated our army with regard to the nature of the working class and the heroic and staunch traditions of the nation, the fine political and ethnical qualities of a revolutionary. He also took constant care of the material and spiritual life of the army, giving them the deepest feelings of love and affection.

We shall forever remember the great service rendered by President Hồ Chí Minh to the people's armed forces. Our army shall enhance revolutionary heroism, fully carry out their national tasks and international duties, in order to be for ever worthy of "Old Uncle Hồ's troops," to hold high the traditions of "loyalty to the Party and the country, piety to the people, ready to fight and to sacrifice for the independence and freedom

of the country, for socialism and to overcome any difficulty and to defeat any adversary".

President Hồ Chí Minh was the creator of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the first worker-peasant State in South East Asia. According to him, when the Vietnamese revolution reaches a certain degree of development, the people's revolutionary government must be established to represent the collective mastership of the working people and to guarantee and safeguard the success of the revolution. In the conditions of armed struggle, with the successes of the revolutions, a government may be established in a locality, a region, even in many localities, many regions or in a large part of the country. The experiences of the August 1945 Revolution, of the resistance wars against the French and the U.S. are eloquent proofs of this fact. The view that in a colony or dependent country, people's revolutionary administration can only be established after the success of the revolution all over the country, is completely erroneous.

President Hồ Chí Minh spent great efforts in building the State. In socialist revolution, he pointed out fundamental principles for the consolidation and strengthening of the State of proletarian dictatorship in all respects.

He frequently reminded the State organs that they must reflect the aspirations and desires of the people and at the same time, they are the instrument to serve the people, to take care of the people's life and interests. He always recommended that government servants and cadres must avoid bureaucratism, arrogance, and oppression with regard to the people; that they must be faithful servants of the people.

President Hồ Chí Minh was the teacher on the strategy and tactics of the Vietnamese revolution. After finding the correct

way of the revolution, he determined with high talent its strategies and tactics, clearly pointing out the target and the object of the revolution. He decided on the principal opponent to be attacked at each stage (or each period); and put forward appropriate plans for the deployment of revolutionary forces and resolutely endeavored to implement them at each revolutionary stage. Finally, he adopted correct methods and forms of struggle, combining political, military, and diplomatic struggles... to vanquish the adversary and to win success for the revolution.

His strategy and tactics in the people's national democratic revolution and in socialist revolution are aimed at "having more friends and less foes". He advocated unity with all forces possible, winning over forces possible to win over; those forces which are impossible to win over but possible to neutralize are to be neutralized. That is, the lesser foes and the more friends the better.

The Vietnamese revolution is characterized by the fact that it has to confront more powerful enemies and often several enemies at the same time. Therefore, President Hồ Chí Minh's strategy and tactics consist in following the guiding principle of lasting resistance, securing gradual victory, and eventually final victory. On the other hand, the contradictions in the ranks of the enemy must be put to full avail, thereby dividing them and isolating them, weakening and paralyzing them while the revolutionary forces are consolidated and strengthened.

In strategic and tactical direction, he based his actions on the actual situation and then decided appropriate methods and forms of revolutionary struggle. He chose correct ways to attract the masses to the Party's slogans and turned these slogans into conscious actions of the masses aimed at the fundamental objectives of the revolution.

*The combination of patriotism with proletarian internationalism* was a very important achievement of President Hồ Chí Minh. From the very beginning, he clearly saw that the Vietnamese revolution was an integral part of the world revolution. The Vietnamese people's revolutionary cause contributed to reaching the objectives of the epoch: peace, national independence, democracy, and socialism.

For him, the Vietnamese revolution not only performed its obligations to the people of Vietnam but also its lofty international obligations; not only for the sake of Vietnam's interests but also for the sake of the world revolutionary movement. He said: "For the independence and freedom of our country, for the benefit of the socialism camp, of oppressed peoples and progressive mankind, we are fighting and winning victory over the most cruel adversary in the world." <sup>(1)</sup>

Consistent with these strategic thoughts of President Hồ, our Party has been able to make full use of the combined force of the Vietnamese revolution, the world revolution, the Vietnamese nation and the epoch. As a result, our Party has been able to unite the socialist forces, the revolutionary and progressive forces, and the peace and democracy loving forces in the world and to make them side with our people, support and assist our people in opposing the imperialists, the colonialists, and other reactionary forces, as well as in national construction and defense.

President Hồ Chí Minh was *an exemplary communist combatant*. He embodied the fine moral values of the Vietnamese working class and people. He symbolized the radiant peak of proletarian qualities and ethics.

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(1) Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. Second edition. National Politics Publishing House, Hanoi, 1996. Vol. 12, p. 373.

The rationale of his life was to serve the people with all his heart and mind, to fight all his life for the Party and the revolution. His utmost aspiration was to make our country completely independent, our people completely free and to ensure that all our compatriots had enough food and clothes and the possibility to go to school. These aspirations governed all his ideas and actions, and made him courageous, determined, optimistic, and confident.

He was nobly characterized by his loyalty to the Party and the country, his piety to the people, his efforts to overcome all difficulties and challenges. "Riches cannot seduce him, poverty cannot make him waver, military power cannot dominate him".

His working style was to "match words to deeds". He advocated that "Party members should go first and the people will follow". He himself set an example of industriousness, thriftiness, righteousness, and disinterestedness"; he listened to the views of the masses, sought to find out the truth. His behavior was popular, standing for the collective, the democratic and the scientific.

His feelings for the people were boundless and deep. He heeded all strata of people; he remained close to them and confident in their creativeness. When passing away, he "left love and affection to all the people, all the Party, all army-men, young people and children."<sup>(1)</sup>

President Hồ Chí Minh's cause was quite great. His service was quite immense.

Uncle Hồ's personal life, activity, revolutionary thoughts and theory, qualities and ethics constitute an invaluable heritage that our Party and people appreciate and keep alive in our heart.

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(1) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 12. p. 512.

The new era had brought him into being, nurtured his soul and intelligence so that he could lead the Vietnamese revolution forward, help the Vietnamese nation reach the rank of advanced peoples in the world and ensure a brilliant prospect for our country.

## HỒ CHÍ MINH - HIS CAUSE\*

*Phạm Văn Đồng*

Hồ Chí Minh's system of theoretical views has pervaded the masses and become revolutionary practice in Vietnam over the past sixty years. They are decades of revolutionary upsurge in Vietnam and in the world.

A man, a nation, an age, a cause, these are the four factors that combined to make up an historical movement starting from a man, going along with a nation and a time, leading at last to the liberation of the nation, society, and its people. That was what Hồ Chí Minh sought when leaving his country, nurtured when he came back and fostered throughout his life before recording it in his *Testament*.

As Hồ Chí Minh pointed out time and again the revolutionary work he advocated and implemented, together with the nation, was a long and arduous process requiring struggle and sacrifice by many generations. In his lifetime, he made extremely important contributions to it, laying the groundwork and blazing trail for the future.

Hồ Chí Minh was the founder of the new Vietnam, in which national independence was closely linked to socialist ideals and then to socialism itself.

Hồ Chí Minh was the founder of the Communist Party of Vietnam, which is armed with Marxism-Leninism.

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\* Excerpt from *Hồ Chí Minh - A Man, a Nation, an Age, and a Cause*. Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, 1990.

Hồ Chí Minh was the founder of a new era, the Hồ Chí Minh era - the most resplendent page in the long history of the Vietnamese nation.

I think the most important part of Hồ Chí Minh's contribution can be summarized as follows: to hold high the banner of national independence linked to socialist ideals and then to socialism, to wage a national people's democratic revolution, to develop it into a socialist revolution, and then to build socialism and pass beyond the stage of capitalist development. <sup>(1)</sup> This is a contribution of great value to the nation and many Third World countries.

### 1. National independence closely linked to socialism

Hồ Chí Minh was the founder of a new Vietnam, independent, reunified and developing along the socialist path.

From an enslaved country, Vietnamese patriots and the Vietnamese nation had to struggle to rid themselves of foreign domination. They experienced many paths to national salvation and at last found through Hồ Chí Minh the correct and good way. Hồ Chí Minh wrote in the early twenties: "Only in socialism and communism can we find the way for our liberation".

Today when looking back, we realize all the more the stature of the man who wrote these words. That short sentence strongly and clear-sightedly asserts a great line encompassing space and time, permeating the patriotic movement, gradually pervading the Vietnamese nation, and showing the road to victory. At that time the Vietnamese workers and peasants, youth, and intellectuals

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(1) We usually say: "... passing beyond the stage of capitalist development." I think we should say: "... passing beyond the stage of development of capitalism."



who responded to Nguyễn Ái Quốc's<sup>(1)</sup> call, although they were not fully and deeply imbued with revolutionary awareness, definitely chose that way to national salvation and to build their country and realize the age-old dream of their nation and mankind.

The concept of national independence closely linked to socialism has proved to be the correct ideology, mapped out since the Party's foundation and further clarified later on. This line is the process of the Vietnamese revolution with two periods which overlap - a national people's democratic revolution and socialist revolution - the latter period completes the tasks not fulfilled in the former, and the former period, when conditions permit, can begin a few tasks of the latter one.

Right in the national people's democratic revolution, when the main task was to overthrow imperialist rule, national independence and socialism were two banners - one may say a twin banner - forming the driving force of the revolutionary movement. National independence helps build socialism while socialism gives an epochal meaning to national independence, making it thorough and most effective. Right after the August 1945 Revolution Hồ Chí Minh pointed out that it was nonsense when the people of an independent country did not enjoy democracy and did not have sufficient food and clothing. Fighting against hunger, ignorance and foreign aggression was a program of national independence linked to socialist ideals, expressed in a most practical way, easily perceived by the nation at that time, understood by every citizen and agreed by all patriots. In the resistance war against U.S. aggression, national independence and socialism were all the more closely linked.

National independence closely linked to socialist ideals and then socialism itself, from national people's democratic revolu-

(1) Another name of Hồ Chí Minh.

tion advancing to socialist revolution, such is the revolutionary route of the Vietnamese nation. This itinerary shows the essence of Vietnamese revolutionary work, the will and aspiration of the Vietnamese people, and brings a new stature, a new driving force to the Vietnamese revolution, and makes all the fiercer attacks by enemies of all kinds. The Vietnamese people have had to pay for independence and freedom with protracted and arduous fights and have won glorious victories.

Twenty years after the first revolutionary training class was opened by Hồ Chí Minh in Canton, fifteen years after the founding of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the August 1945 Revolution triumphed, leading to the establishment of the first worker-peasant State in a colonized country that had freed itself from the colonialists' yoke.

At the starting-point of all work the August Revolution contained the seeds and the forces which would lead to historical evolution in the future. However, it is true that it was but a starting point.

The Communist Party of Vietnam and people, availing themselves of a rare opportunity to seize power, issued the *Declaration of Independence*, and set up a new Vietnam. But the enemies of Vietnam's independence and freedom are not yet liquidated, and will surely return. The French-like colonialistic and imperialistic forces of the world, for example, the U.S., could not bring themselves to acknowledge a Democratic Republic of Vietnam born of a colonized country.

Within three weeks of the declaration of independence, the fight against the French aggressors burst out in Nam Bộ and more than a year later it spread throughout the country. After nine years of valiant fighting, the Vietnamese army and people won the glorious Điện Biên Phủ battle, a victory resplendent in

their history. The failure of the French colonialists heralded the collapse of old-style colonialism in the world. Afraid that Vietnam's victory would lead to the breakup of a series of their positions in many other countries, the U.S. imperialists took the place of the French. Thus broke out the resistance war against U.S. aggression which lasted more than twenty years, until the total victory of the Hồ Chí Minh Campaign.

This was a do-or-die fight between the Vietnamese nation and the most powerful and aggressive imperialist forces. Owing to the character and significance of the resistance war, helped and supported by the whole of mankind, as many international friends in many countries appraise and assert, this was also a confrontation between the liberation movement of the Third World and neo-colonialism, between civilization and brutality.

Once again, in our time, the Vietnamese people "successfully support justice against brutality, humanism against violence."<sup>(1)</sup> Following the collapse of old-style colonialism, neo-colonialism has experienced its first defeat. A new situation and potential opened for Third World nations to gain independence and freedom through many ways and in many forms.

History will record forever the Vietnamese generations that fought hard throughout thirty years under the leadership of Hồ Chí Minh and of the Communist Party of Vietnam. It will record those who suffered countless hardships and sacrifices and conquered untold difficulties that seemed insurmountable at first to make the present patrimony of their nation and contribute in a modest way to the state of our planet today.

The Vietnamese people are proud of their armed forces, which grew from self-defense and small guerrilla units, worthy

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(1) Nguyễn Trãi, a famous strategist, politician and diplomat (15th century). *Proclamation of Victory Over the Wu.*

of being "Old Ho's soldiers", "loyal to their country, pious towards the people, able to fulfil any task, overcome any difficulty, and against any enemy," score resounding exploits, and bring glory to their homeland.

In the two resistance wars, he closely followed major battles and anticipated the results of the fighting. This was generally a victory, but he used to say that a victory for which there was rejoicing must be one at a small cost; that is few or negligible losses. These seemingly simple words which I have heard many times have had an extremely deep impact upon our army commanders.

In the spring of 1975, the task of winning independence and reunification of the country was completed.

Before that, the task of building of a new regime had already begun, exactly as Hồ Chí Minh advocated: "building while fighting."

In the particularly difficult circumstances of war, the Vietnamese people gradually consolidated people's power, carried out land reforms, organized the peasants into co-operatives, built up the economic infrastructure, developed education, culture and health services, and gradually made socialist thinking into the leading influence in the people's spiritual life, thus creating good relationships between men. On the basis of a low-level economy and low living standards, there already appeared a wholesome society with a strong fighting force and many humanist values, leaving a deep impression upon foreigners visiting Vietnam during the wars of resistance.

Hồ Chí Minh paid special attention to the production movement and thrift was followed in all aspects of such undertakings. He urged his associates to perform their duties, both major and minor, especially those with a direct bearing on people's lives

was much impressed. I will never forget that in a season of storms which resulted in floods, he wanted me to stay in Hanoi at my post.

The achievements in building the new society contributed greatly to the victory, fostering and mobilizing various strata of the toiling people, turning the North into a great rear guard force fighting heroically, supplying manpower and wealth and iron will to the patriotic resistance war against U.S. aggression, and pointing to the orientation of the Vietnamese revolution after the victory.

Broadly viewed, one can see that the new regime in Vietnam gloriously overcame the trials of war, showing that it could mobilize the whole people and avail itself of the forces of our time, conquer the aggressors, and that no brutal force could prevail against it.

## 2. The Communist Party and Marxism-Leninism

The above achievements are close linked to the birth and development of the Communist Party of Vietnam, founded and shaped by Hồ Chí Minh. Here it is necessary to reiterate and emphasize the Party because it was an important part in Hồ Chí Minh's career, an extremely great contribution of his to the nation. A genuine son of the Vietnamese working class and nation, the Party is fostered by the quintessence of the class and nation, linked from the start to the international communist and workers' movement, is the genuine helmsman of the revolutionary boat, the leader and organizer of every victory of the people.

Throughout his life from the founding of the Party, Hồ Chí Minh considered Party building his primary task. He trained Party cadres and members to firmly grasp and apply Marxism-Leninism to the specific circumstances of the country. He taught

them to uphold the radically revolutionary stand of the working class, to be imbued with industriousness, thrift, integrity, righteousness, and public-spiritedness, and to abide by collectivism and reject individualism. He said emphatically that the Party must enforce broad democracy, self-criticism and continual and serious criticism. He often reminded us to keep close contact between the Party and the masses, respect the people's role of master, show vigilance and struggle against bureaucracy, a danger which can make a ruling party stand aloof from the masses, alienate itself and degenerate.

Thanks to Hồ Chí Minh's teaching and guidance, the Communist Party of Vietnam has been turned into a great contingent of fighters for independence, freedom and socialism, worthy of being the vanguard unit of the working class and nation.

The more Hồ Chí Minh cared for Party building, the more he was concerned about building revolutionary organizations, closely linked to the leading core - the Party - to make up a system which gradually develops and perfects itself. Each revolutionary organization is an original creation of Hồ Chí Minh and the Vietnamese nation, like the National United Front and mass organizations, the people's armed forces, the democratic republic and the socialist republic. Gathered around the Party, continuing and multiplying its impact, the system of revolutionary organizations are tools and at the same time great achievements which will show their long-lasting effects.

The doctrine of Marxism-Leninism that Hồ Chí Minh from the start, equipped the Communist Party with and propagated in Vietnam since 1920's was a great achievement he brought to the nation. Marxism-Leninism's theoretical system explained by Hồ Chí Minh in easy-to-understand and penetrating words revealing its innermost meaning was received by a nation whose history had prepared it for a meeting with this truth of our epoch. Under

Hồ Chí Minh's leadership, the Vietnamese revolution is Marxism-Leninism in action in a formerly colonized country.

For the Vietnamese nation to adopt Marxism-Leninism was to remould its old thinking to adopt a new outlook on life and the world, to assert its choice of socialism, and thus take a firm political stand regarding the problems of the nation and the world.

Together with Marxism-Leninism, Hồ Chí Minh brought to the Vietnamese nation proletarian internationalism.

Hồ Chí Minh promoted a fine relationship of solidarity between the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Soviet Communist Party, the Chinese Communist Party, French Communist Party, and other communist and workers' parties near and far throughout the world. While they were joined to one another, disagreement could happen, but Hồ Chí Minh persistently worked for the international communist movement on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, conforming to reason and sentiment.

Since the advent of the Vietnamese revolution, Hồ Chí Minh fostered a warm friendship between the Vietnamese and Soviet peoples - the people of Lenin - and took pains to promote close ties between the Vietnamese people and the neighbouring Lao and Cambodia peoples in the common revolutionary struggle.

Hồ Chí Minh fostered in the Vietnamese nation kinship with the peoples of socialist countries, and a feeling of comradeship in the struggle against colonialism and imperialism with the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Hồ Chí Minh guided the Vietnamese nation to win broad international support in its resistance war against French aggression, and to shape a real world peoples' front - including the people of the U.S. - supporting Vietnam against U.S. aggression, turning a nation's just cause into a struggle by the whole of mankind.

Hồ Chí Minh told the Vietnamese people to support all progressive movements, to love and respect all other nations and fulfill their obligation toward them, to treasure, preserve and develop their friendship with all forces, organizations and men of goodwill in the world.

The internationalism that Hồ Chí Minh cultivated, like a feature of the Vietnamese nation, was proletarian internationalism of the working class and oppressed peoples, the socialist internationalism of nations which have brought their revolution to victory and are building socialism, the internationalism imbued with the humanism of all men of conscience before the common destiny of nations and mankind during our time.

### **3. The Hồ Chí Minh era and the new ideological and spiritual values**

Hồ Chí Minh created a new era for the Vietnamese nation, a part of mankind's new era, a period of transition from capitalism to socialism throughout the world ushered in by the Russian October Revolution. In the new era a new Vietnam is forming with noble ideological and spiritual values.

National independence linked to socialism, Marxism-Leninism and internationalism - these great concepts, previously unknown, become familiar and popular, mingle with social life and gradually condition it.

In the country of Hồ Chí Minh, revolution is the rising up of the whole nation and of each man to overcome difficult trials and perils through fierce struggles. At the same time, revolution is the joy, freedom, and enthusiasm of a man knowing that he is contributing to a great cause. Revolution is an extraordinary endeavor and also a festival of the masses. Revolution is the soli-

darity of the whole people, the whole nation and each man growing up in an altruistic and humanist cause to write new pages of history, epic and lyrical.

In the resistance war to win independence and freedom, Vietnamese revolutionary heroism with countless resplendent manifestations was the crystallization of noble ideological and spiritual values, symbolizing the unstoppable rising up of the Vietnamese nation and the invincible strength of man.

Living near him, I saw one of his salient traits: he paid attention to man's virtue and fostered revolutionary ethics in cadres and people throughout his life.

Vietnamese society in the era of Hồ Chí Minh was a society upholding the spiritual values and the good relations between men. In this society, representative men were valiant fighters defending the homeland, toilers zealously building the country, men caring about the people's life, men with altruism and love for their fellow-countrymen and comrades, ceaselessly endeavoring to rise up following the motto: "One for all, all for one."

#### **4. The style of Hồ Chí Minh, the leader and the organizer**

In order to fulfill his work, Hồ Chí Minh pursued thorough, clear-sighted leadership in politics, ideology and organization. His leadership showed clearly that revolution is a science and at the same time, an art. Revolution is a clever application of all possibilities, a creative reaction to all situations.

Hồ Chí Minh was the man mapping out the line, deploying the forces, the organizer, the manager and the architect. He achieved extraordinary results from ordinary and simple deeds, concrete and practical ways of doing first modest and firm steps; small and simple forces at the start. Hồ Chí Minh's huge revo-

lutionary work was developed according to a plan which was scientifically thought through and calculated as to both method and time, aim and result.

It can be said that Hồ Chí Minh was an integral part of history. History, over many months and years, in critical as well as ordinary times, was with perseverance created by Hồ Chí Minh in a style like that of history - with initiative, optimism, sacrifice and defiance despite hardships and ups and downs.

Hồ Chí Minh's genius was to grasp very rapidly the laws of history and apply them in the right place, at the right time, in the right amount, following the right way, turning impossible dreams of ordinary men into reality.

Throughout his life, Hồ Chí Minh followed one road and one goal. Nevertheless, he directed strategy and tactics in a dynamic and versatile way, without sticking to rigid principles and dogmas. To reach its final goal, the Vietnamese revolution has had to deal with many enemies and overcome many obstacles, hence it has had to follow devious and tortuous paths, advance and retreat, use gentle and tough tactics, and varied methods. Under Hồ Chí Minh's leadership, the Party's line met the requirements of the revolutionary circumstance. With a special political sensitivity, Hồ Chí Minh correctly appraised the turning point, making very clear-sighted and clever decisions, now compromising to preserve and consolidate his forces, now resolutely turning to the attack with well-prepared forces in decisive battles. In the period of war of resistance, building the country, and the period of land reform, when there were shortcomings or mistakes, Hồ Chí Minh and the Party undertook frank self-criticism and when necessary criticized themselves in public and promised to set those mistakes right.

Hồ Chí Minh's particular style was to believe in the people and rely on them. From the period in Cao Bằng up to the two

resistance wars, Hồ Chí Minh was a revolutionary who continually mobilized, organized and inculcated the masses with a deep confidence in their strength, creativity and potential. Living near him, I saw in clear relief some of his great thoughts: revolution is the masses, the masses are the movement, the movement is the sweeping promotion of good men and good deeds through patriotic and socialist emulation, enthusiasm to destroy the enemy in wartime and to rebuild in peace time.

Hồ Chí Minh constantly linked the Party to the nations, his work was the Vietnamese revolutionary work of the entire Party and the whole people. From the founding of the Party up to the establishment of the State and through two resistance wars, the historical evolution led to the shaping of Hồ Chí Minh's staff, the collaborators, comrades and disciples who made up with him a clear-sighted and staunch collective whose influence molded the entire Party and the whole nation. Vietnam's history records names and contributions by Comrades Trần Phú, Lê Hồng Phong, Nguyễn Văn Cừ, Lê Duẩn, Trường Chinh, Ngô Gia Tự, Võ Văn Tần, Nguyễn Thị Minh Khai, Hoàng Văn Thụ, Nguyễn Chí Thanh, Tôn Đức Thắng, Phạm Hùng and many deceased predecessors together with the present Comrades Nguyễn Văn Linh, Lê Đức Thọ, Võ Chí Công, Đỗ Mười and many others.

The Party's key cadres, from the high-ranking to the lowest, having gone through trials and choice of the revolutionary movement, are in general men with character, virtue and talent. One cannot quote all the many Party members who have fought and laid down their lives for the independence and freedom of the homeland, for socialism and the people's happiness. They were communists in the clandestine period not yielding to any of the enemy's repression or inducements. They were heroic fighters always in the front-line to destroy the enemy in the two resistance wars against French and U.S. aggressions. They were

exemplary Party cadres and members zealous in peaceful construction leading the masses to overcome difficulties and implement the desires of the masses. In concluding this chapter, I think I should make it clear that in the light of the present renovation, when looking back to the past, we can realize the shortcomings and mistakes in social and economic construction, which were due to the limits of their historical experience.

## 5. Hồ Chí Minh's contribution and legacy

Throughout more than half a century of fighting, the Vietnamese nation has undergone major changes. From an enslaved nation to one knowing independence and freedom, from a partitioned country to a completely reunified one, from a colonized and feudal society to one of renewal, taking its first steps in the creation of a life of wealth, civilization and happiness for the people, from a land little known, without a name on the map to a credited member of world revolutionary forces and the international community with important contributions to make to mankind. These are the major themes of Hồ Chí Minh's work embodying the historic meeting between a man, a nation and a time.

Sixty years are the span of action of a man's whole life, but it is only a short one in the history of a nation and the evolution of our times. Looking back to the past and at the world, one sees that what Hồ Chí Minh brought to the nation and realized was truly a change in life.

However, compared to what Hồ Chí Minh nurtured, the trail he blazed for the nation - two revolutions to achieve three great liberations: liberation of nation, society and man - what was achieved in Hồ Chí Minh's lifetime were but the first steps. These first steps were glorious and extremely important,

creating a basis for the whole path, ensuring and forecasting the ensuing victories, but they are only the first stages. In the entire work devised by Hồ Chí Minh, what has been done can be considered just the groundwork.

Let us recall what Hồ Chí Minh said immediately after the August 1945 Revolution, expressing and earnest longing, "Our country must be completely independent, our people must have enough food, clothing, and schooling". To day, our country is independent but our people have only begun to build a life of wealth and happiness. Not long after the North was liberated, Hồ Chí Minh pointed out: to defeat the imperialists and feudalists is relatively easy, but to do away with poverty and backwardness is much greater difficult. He already foresaw the complexity and difficulty faced by a socialist revolution.

At an advanced age and declining in health, Hồ Chí Minh began writing his recommendations, five years before he passed away. His *Testament* is filled with his boundless love for all the people and crystallizes so many of his thoughts and reflections on the path forward and the future of the Vietnam nation and the world revolutionary movement.

While the war was raging fiercely, Hồ Chí Minh asserted the total victory of the patriotic resistance war against U.S. aggression. The main part of his recommendation was reconstruction after victory, which is condensed into two verses:

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

*American invaders defeated, we will rebuild our land ten times more beautiful."*

Hồ Chí Minh's first concerns were to preserve the Party's unity, one-mindedness and purity so that it would be worthy of

being a truly faithful servant and leader of the people and to constantly urge the fostering of revolutionary generations in the future. He placed particular emphasis on mapping out sound plans to develop the economy and culture, so as to continuously raise the people's living standards. The reality of past years has proved that these were key points in deciding the destiny of the nation and the prospects for socialist revolution. The emphasis on these points after many years of reflection and decision shows how clear-sighted he was in his vision.

As Hồ Chí Minh pointed out, six years after he passed away, the patriotic resistance war against U.S. aggression triumphed, the building of socialism met with difficulties and snags, exactly as he warned. Our Party has time and again undertaken self-criticism and drawn useful conclusions from it.

Marking a turning-point which time makes all the more significant, the 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam decided to begin an all-round renovation.

In this regard, the source of strength in the Vietnamese nation is precisely the work done by Hồ Chí Minh, and now becomes his sacred legacy, comprising both reality and potential, both material achievements and spiritual values, crystallizing the energy and sacrifice of so many Vietnamese generations, combining the depth of history with the height of our time, harmonizing age-old traditions and the new revolutionary character.

To carefully preserve Hồ Chí Minh's revolutionary legacy is to carry on revolutionary work in today's world, the pressing requirement of which is renovation. As the world evolves rapidly and intricately in an unprecedented way, many new concepts crop up in all fields, which we have to grasp and apply. However, we should not forget Hồ Chí Minh's legacy. This is precisely the basis on which to create the new.

Being true to Hồ Chí Minh's legacy is the basis for uniting the whole people, mobilizing all potentialities of the country, and carrying out renovation in a creative and effective way.

Being true to Hồ Chí Minh's legacy is to preserve along the path of national independence and socialism, of Marxism-Leninism, of proletarian internationalism, and to overcome waverings and hesitations and resist deviations.

Being true to Hồ Chí Minh's legacy is to maintain and uphold in the new context the fine qualities of the nation and the Vietnamese and to overcome signs of decay and oppose alienation and degeneration.

Through the process of this historic encounter, enduring while overcoming immediate difficulties, Vietnamese revolutionary work will continue to flower along the trail which Hồ Chí Minh blazed and along which he led the nation during the past half century.

## **WE SHALL FOREVER FOLLOW THE PATH CHOSEN BY PRESIDENT HỒ CHÍ MINH\***

*Nguyễn Văn Linh\*\**

... President Hồ Chí Minh is venerated by the Vietnamese people and progressive mankind as a national liberation hero, a great cultural celebrity, a leader of genius, the great teacher of the Vietnamese working class and people, a staunch combatant of the national liberation, international communist and workers' movements, a close friend of peoples struggling for peace, national independence, democracy, and social progress in the world. He initiated the struggle for the liberation of colonial peoples in the 20th century. He was an indefatigable fighter for peace, friendship and cooperation between peoples, a great thinker and a cultural celebrity. He crystallized the quintessence of the people and the intelligence of the era; he was a fine personality with extraordinary and simple qualities at the same time, a brilliant example of present-day and future man.

*Uncle Hồ's cause and service, thoughts and virtues live forever in the hearts of present-day and future generations of Vietnamese.*

President Hồ Chí Minh's name and cause are associated with the glorious history of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the struggle and the success of the Vietnamese revolution almost over the past century.

\* Excerpt from speech at the celebration of the 100th birthday anniversary of President Hồ Chí Minh, Hanoi, May 18, 1990.

\*\* Nguyễn Văn Linh (1915-1998), General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam from 1986 to 1991.



*President Hồ Chí Minh was the most eminent hero in the Vietnamese history of national liberation.*

He was born and grew up in a period of historical upheavals of the country. Many heroic struggles for the recovery of national independence and unity had successively failed. Prompted by deep patriotism and compassion for the people, he left the country to seek a new way ensuring success to the national salvation and liberation. After several years of study, from a young patriot he came to Marxism-Leninism. He *discovered the way for the liberation of the Vietnamese people* by combining genuine patriotism with proletarian internationalism, national independence and socialism, the national strength and the epochal strength, thereby bringing about a great turning point in the Vietnamese revolution history.

He *founded and trained the Communist Party of Vietnam* into the solid and clear-sighted vanguard brigade of the Vietnamese working class and labouring people. Over the past 60 years, the Communist Party of Vietnam has led the Vietnamese revolution from one victory to another.

He built *the solid national cohesion bloc* as foundation to vanquish any foe and to overcome any difficulty and challenge. In the past, at present, and in the future, he has been the banner attracting all patriotic Vietnamese to struggle for a peaceful, unified, independent, democratic, and eventually socialist Vietnam.

He was *the beloved father of the Vietnamese people's armed forces*. He founded and trained the People's Army of Vietnam.

He *brought into being the Democratic Republic of Vietnam*, the first Worker-Peasant State in South East Asia.

He was *a strategist of genius* who, together with the Communist Party of Vietnam, led the resistance wars against the

French colonialists and the U.S. imperialists, opening the period of collapse of the old colonialist system and the initial defeat of neo-colonialism, exerting a deep influence on the development of world history. President Hồ Chí Minh's great contributions to the theory of national liberation revolution have helped the advance of the movement in colonial countries; they still keep their practical significance in the struggle for peace, national independence, democracy, and social progress.

The fine traditions of our people and the quintessence of our epoch have steeled President Hồ Chí Minh's personality: he was the great national hero who made the Vietnamese nation and people well known to the world.

President Hồ Chí Minh's great cause and momentous service brought him to the position of the greatest national liberation hero in Vietnamese history and won him love and admiration from peoples struggling for self-liberation throughout the world.

*President Hồ Chí Minh was the courageous and creative revolutionary renovator.* He appeared in the history of the Vietnamese people's revolutionary struggle as a person who constantly stood for renovation. On the basis of the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism, he applied appropriate strategies and tactics for each stage of the Vietnamese revolution. He found solutions in a very creative way to extremely difficult situations to gradually bring the revolution to success. He was never tied to obsolete ways of thinking and actions of routine when they were no longer useful to human livings. He looked straight at the truth; when shortcomings and errors were discovered, he bravely self-criticized and resolutely corrected them. Even today in the comprehensive social renovation initiated by the 6th Party Congress, the following words of his still keep their guiding value: "We must have a creative spirit, find out the new, practice the new..." He considered "renovation a combat against what

was obsolete and wrong to create new, better things... It is a gigantic struggle requiring the mobilization of the entire people, their organization and education, the reliance on their great strength."

*President Hồ Chí Minh was a famous cultural personality, the symbol of the national quintessence and the current epoch.*

He left us a rich and huge cultural heritage, the most important part of which was the liberation of the Vietnamese people from the darkness of enslavement to become a vanguard people in the world with ever developing education, culture, and science.

He was a deep thinker. He expounded great historical and epochal truths in simple but meaningful words. His ideas have become guiding principles leading to the success of the revolution. "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom", "To take the invariable to cope with ten thousand things variable", "A work ten times easier is impossible without the people's support; A work hundred times more difficult is practicable with the people's participation", "Unity, unity, great unity; Success, success, great success", "Party members lead the way, villagers will follow", "We must preserve the Party's cohesion and one-mindedness like the pupils of our eyes", etc.

He was the theorist who creatively applied the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of the Vietnamese revolution. As a result, he contributed to the further development and enrichment of the Marxist-Leninist theory regarding the revolution in colonial countries, the people's warfare, the construction of the Party, the National United Front, the economic and cultural building in an agricultural and backward country advancing to socialism without passing the stage of capitalist development, etc.

He was also a great poet, writer, and an outstanding revolutionary journalist. All his writings faithfully and lively reflect the beauty of the virtues, intelligence, and mentality of an eminent personality. Therefore, all his writings are sincere, simple and natural, being the criteria of human beauty and perfection.

*President Hồ Chí Minh was an outstanding internationalist combatant. He made great contributions to the liberation of oppressed peoples, the consolidation of the international communist and workers' movement, and the solidarity of forces struggling for peace, democracy, and social progress.*

President Hồ Chí Minh's over 60 years of revolutionary activity were devoted not only to the independence and freedom of the Vietnamese people but also to that of other oppressed peoples in the world. He participated in the communist and workers' movement in Europe, the liberation of colonial peoples in Asia. He constantly educated the Vietnamese people in grasping and combining patriotism with proletarian internationalism. He said: "We are fighting and making sacrifices not only for our own freedom and independence but also for that of other peoples and for world peace"; therefore, we must also fulfill our international duties, because "helping our friends is to help ourselves."

He was the fine symbol of faithful and genuine international solidarity. Until his last moment, he had indefatigably acted to contribute to the "restoration of the united bloc between brother parties on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, in accordance with reason and sentiment".

President Hồ Chí Minh was an eminent fighter for peace. He firmly pursued a foreign policy of peace and negotiation. He always found clever and flexible solutions to settle all disputes and conflicts in very critical and complicated situations. He

constantly educated our people about the necessity to clearly distinguish aggressors from the working people of capitalist countries. He was opposed to any idea of racial hatred.

President Hồ Chí Minh was the messenger of friendship between peoples. During his peregrinations to find a way for national liberation and after he became President of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as well, he visited many places and lived in many countries; he came in contact with the people and statesmen of many continents. Wherever he went, he brought to the people of these countries the warm friendship of the Vietnamese people and was heartily welcomed as messenger of peace and friendship.

Throughout his life, President Hồ Chí Minh pursued the ideal of good friendship "proletarians of all continents are brothers" and he was the embodiment of this lofty ideal.

*President Hồ Chí Minh was an exemplary communist; he was the very fine image of the relationship between a leader and the popular masses.*

He was the revolutionary leader who crystallized the ethical and moral values of the working class and the people of Vietnam. His loving heart was wholly devoted to the people; he respected the people, had complete confidence in their unlimited force. For him, the revolution was the cause of the people. Therefore, he relentlessly educated and mobilized them to arouse them all and to bring into play the intelligence, the capability, and the energy of millions of people for the common cause.

After the seizure of power by the people, he said: "We have now founded the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, but if the country is independent and the people cannot enjoy happiness and freedom, then this independence becomes meaningless". He

recommended: cadres from the central to village level are "all the servants of the people, i.e. to shoulder public work for the people, and not to oppress the people as it was under French and Japanese domination". That is why he always reminded us to oppose bureaucratism, waste, and the intrinsic evils of old-type States.

All his life, Uncle Hồ perseveringly taught us to rely on the people, to develop their mastership and their great strength to overcome difficulties and to bring the country forward.

President Hồ Chí Minh was the embodiment of pure revolutionary virtues. All his life testified to what he said: "I have only one desire, a supreme desire: to make my country completely independent, and my people completely free, to enable my compatriots to have enough food and clothes, and be educated". For this objective, he led a life that "riches could not seduce him, poverty could not waver his, and military force could not submit him". He set examples of "industriousness, thriftiness, righteousness, disinterestedness", "to love doing what is beneficial to the country and the people and to condemn position, fame, and wealth".

President Hồ Chí Minh's thoughts and virtues are a treasure of the Party and Vietnamese people. The present and future generations of Vietnamese must cherish, protect, learn, further enrich and promote that heritage so as to enable Hồ Chí Minh's thoughts to acquire vitality in the lively reality of the Vietnamese revolution.

The services, thoughts and virtues of Uncle Hồ will always remain in the hearts of present and future generations of Vietnamese. With great pride and deep gratitude, we will study and follow his example, worthily continue his cause and follow forever the path chosen by him.

TO MOLD HIGH THE BANNER OF MARXISM-LENINISM, TO FIRMLY MAINTAIN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY, AND TO PUSH FORWARD THE RENOVATION CAMPAIGN

The 6th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam started the comprehensive renovation campaign in the country. It drew four great lessons, which are actually the lessons for fully grasping Uncle Hồ's thoughts:

- The lesson to 'take the people as foundation' in national construction and defense; that everything belongs to the people, everything is decided by the people and done for the people's sake.

- The lesson to start from reality, to act in accordance with objective laws, i.e. Uncle Hồ's lesson regarding the unity between theory and practice, between revolution and science.

- The lesson regarding the combination of national strength and epochal strength, or the combination of patriotism and internationalism, national independence and socialism.

- The lesson regarding the building of the Party, considered as important as the new historical task, which was within the focus of attention of Uncle Hồ all his life.

President Hồ Chí Minh's thoughts have become the source of light and strength of the renovation campaign. So, for our Party, inheritance and renovation constitute a dialectically united and uninterrupted process. Renovation is not changing the objective chosen by Uncle Hồ, but it is the search for and the creation of measures and ways to bring that objective to success... Once again, all our Party and people affirm that we will forever follow the path chosen by Uncle Hồ.

To ensure complete success to the cause pursued by Uncle Hồ, what shall we do?

First, we shall resolutely *step up renovation*, which is the vital path for our country to get out of crisis and to continue to go ahead, a historical necessity consistent to the development law of the revolution in our country and to the recommendations in Uncle Hồ's last will. We understand that renovation is a revolutionary process full of difficulty and hardship; we should not be impatient and subjective in carrying it out massively, which can lead to chaos detrimental to the renovation itself.

Our renovation is comprehensive, radical and harmoniously coordinated, but it should have appropriate objectives and steps; it is mainly aimed at economic renovation, at the same time, at the renovation of the political system by solid steps. Our adversaries want nothing but the creation of internal troubles beyond our control and the diversion of renovation from the socialist aims.

The successes obtained over the past three years are initial ones but they are very important. They prove that our policy of renovation and our proceeding are correct and appropriated to the real conditions of our country. They have gradually restored the people's confidence and given an impetus to us to advance.

In the coming period, renovation should still better change the socio-economic situation. We should continue to promote the popular movement, to use every means to develop production, and to fulfill the three major economic programs. State-run economic units should renovate themselves to overcome difficulties, to increase efficiency and the effectiveness of production and business. They should endeavor to play a leading role in the national economy. We should strongly develop the collective economic sector and others to turn out more products for society, to increase national income and to create more jobs and gradually to solve the question of unemployment. The State should improve and complete policies and laws to encourage

and orientate the correct development of the economic sectors, to eliminate spontaneous development and chaos in the economic life. At the same time, we should find good solutions to such burning questions as employment, inflation, finance, banking, prices, consumption of products, etc. thereby stabilizing the socio-economic situation, improving the people's living conditions, paving the way for still further progress of the national renovation.

Along with the socio-economic renovation, we should *continue to step up the process of democratization*. Uncle Hồ said: "Our country is a democratic one. All utilities are for the people. All the rights belong to the people... The administration from the commune to the central level is elected by the people. The mass organizations, from the center to the grass-roots, are organized by the people. In a word, the authority and the strength lie with people." These are the fundamental principles of a democratic state laid down by Uncle Hồ. We are striving to build and improve the democratic institutions and mechanism to ensure the real democratic rights of the people in the political, social, and moral life... Since the 6th Party Congress, socialist democracy has been strengthened, primarily in the economic field. State organs and mass organizations have made efforts and progressed in respecting and enhancing the mastership of the people. Many policies and resolutions of the Party and State have been submitted to the people's discussion and assessment. The State structure has been simplified for a step; bureaucracy and red tape have partly reduced.

However, these are but initial results. Inadequacy or absence of democracy is still serious and frequently seen. The violation of the people's property, even of their lives, the unsettlement of their grievances creates an uneasy psychology in part of the population.

Besides the lack of democracy, have appeared manifestations of extremist democracy, abusing democracy to carry out such wrong actions as attacking the Party, the State, and the socialist regime, denying the achievements of the revolution, rejecting the principles of Marxism-Leninism. Democracy cannot be alienated from discipline and law, from correct centralism. We broaden democracy with regard to the people, but we will never loosen dictatorship with regard to the minority of reactionaries, who are undermining the people's revolutionary achievement. It is obvious that, to establish and increase socialist democracy, to make democracy become a normal thing in the social life of each person, on the one hand, the State should strengthen social management by laws, on the other, it should make everyone, from a central official to a common citizen, understand his citizen rights and obligations, his responsibility toward the country, and get into the habit of living and working in accordance with the Constitution and law.

Second, we should *continue to hold high the banner of Marxism-Leninism*, a decisive factor for the success of renovation. Marxism-Leninism is the quintessence of human intelligence, the compass of communist and workers' parties in the world. For the Vietnamese revolution, it is not a simple borrowing or imposition from outside. Precisely, because of the activity and the development of theoretical thinking, through the intermediary of our great leader, the revolution in our country, when mature, got acquainted with Marxism-Leninism, accepted it, completed and enriched it by the experience and practical lessons of our people.

President Hồ Chí Minh directly diffused Marxism-Leninism, correctly and creatively applied it to the conditions of Vietnamese revolution thereby enabling the Vietnamese revolution achieve one victory after another. He repeatedly affirmed

that our success stemmed from many factors, but we should emphasize that 'these successes were first of all recorded thanks to the irreplaceable weapon: Marxism-Leninism.'

As Uncle Hồ often said, Marxism-Leninism is invincible because it is not a collection of dogmas but a compass for action for those who understand its essence - dialectic materialism - and thus can avoid failures. Therefore, we should differentiate the failures caused by miscomprehension of Marxism-Leninism or misdoings from the revolutionary, scientific, and creative nature of Marxism-Leninism. There has been so far no more revolutionary and scientific doctrine than Marxism-Leninism.

Third, following President Hồ Chí Minh's path, *we should firmly ensure the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam*. To ensure success of the revolution, Uncle Hồ said: "First of all, there should be a revolutionary party for the mobilization and organization of the people at home, and for liaison with oppressed peoples and the working class abroad. If the revolution is to succeed, the Party must be solid."

The Communist Party of Vietnam, founded, trained, and led by President Hồ Chí Minh, over the past 60 years, has been the only force recognized by the people to lead the revolution in our country. The reason for which our Party can assume such a heavy historical task is that "Ours is a great, strong, truly clean and radically revolutionary Party," as Uncle Hồ said. That is why our Party's leading role is recognized by the entire people, all political and social organizations within the National United Front; they resolutely followed our Party to bring the August 1945 Revolution to triumph and the resistance war to victory, to unify the country and to bring the whole country to socialism.

Now in the face of the requirement of renovation, to be worthy of being the political leader of society, worthy of the

people's confidence and expectation, our Party should constantly improve its leadership and strengthen its close relations with the people. The intelligence of our Party should be manifested by its long-sighted and broad vision, its understanding of the pressing current problems, its scientifically grounded prevision of future developments, the prerequisites for mapping out a socio-economic program and strategy to orient the social development of our country towards socialism.

Uncle Hồ recommended: "The first work to be done is the rectification of the Party". To restore the image of the honest and pure communist Party member, to make the Party really become the conscience, honor and pride of the masses "we should keep our Party absolutely pure". For this purpose, we should take timely and severe actions against the corrupted, degenerated cadres and Party members who extort money from the people, abuse their power, and oppress the people. They are cancers capable of causing gangrene on the Party body and they must be removed.

In the process of renovation of the Party, each Party member must incessantly renovate himself in all respects: knowledge and method, quality and capability, close contact with the masses, enhancement of his leading role and the exemplary attitude of a Party member; he must be "worthy of being the leader and the faithful servant of the people."

Fourth, following President Hồ Chí Minh's path, *we should strive to learn from his example and his brilliant revolutionary virtues*. Uncle Hồ's revolutionary virtues are the crystallisation of the people's fine traditions and communist ethics. They constitute a valuable heritage that all the Party and people have to preserve for Party rectification and building of a new-type man, the socialist man, who is absolutely loyal to the country, devoted to the people, leads a honest and simple life, is hard-working, thrifty,

righteous and disinterested. We should severely condemn and energetically oppose any action or way of living in luxury, bureaucratism, wastefulness, show-off formalism, self-interestedness of a number of degenerated Party cadres and members. We should continuously combat negative manifestations with appropriate focuses and steps. Above all we should fight corruption and unjustified privileges, bring to law court cases of violation of laws and make them known to the public. The struggle against wrong doings within Party and State organs should be associated with that in society, particularly that against crimes to safeguard political security and social order. Each Party member and grass-root organization must be the core of leadership and set examples in learning the revolutionary virtues of President Hồ Chí Minh. They must take the first position in the struggle against law violations to purify the Party and the State machinery, and to cleanse society. Only by so doing can we actively step up the renovation cause in our country.

Fifth, following Uncle Hồ's path, *we should persevere in combining the strength of our people with that of the epoch*. Our Party, founded and trained by President Hồ, has from the beginning held high the banner of proletarian internationalism and highlighted the solidarity with the world proletarian class and oppressed peoples, considering it a matter of principle, one of the decisive factors for the success of the Vietnamese revolution. Each progress of the Vietnamese revolution is a success of Marxism-Leninism, of the militant solidarity between the Lao, Cambodian, and Vietnamese peoples in the struggle against their common enemy for national independence and socialism. It also results from the solidarity and the great, timely, and effective assistance of the Soviet people, the Chinese people and others socialist countries, as well as from the support of the communist and workers' movement, the national independence, democracy, and peace movement in the world. At the same time, we should

do our utmost to fulfill our international duty with regard to the brother peoples on the Indochinese peninsula, and the national liberation, communist and workers' movements in the world. Under the leadership and education of Uncle Hồ, we are proud of our faithful and pure internationalist sentiments. The manifestations of narrow nationalism are completely strange to our Party and people.

Many socialist countries are now in a comprehensive and serious crisis never seen before. This crisis is negatively affecting the world revolutionary movement. The imperialist and reactionary forces are making full use of the socialist countries' difficulties to increase their interference and sabotage activity aimed at realizing the peaceful evolution and the eradication of the socialist countries.

In the face of such a situation, we persist in keeping the consistent international policy of our Party. We support the search for correct reforms and innovations in a number of socialist countries aimed at overcoming the deformations of socialism, strengthening socialism, and further enhancing the superior nature of socialism.

For its part, our Party advocates the consolidation of the close solidarity and the multi-sided cooperation on the basis of socialist internationalism with the Soviet Union, Laos, Cambodia and others socialist countries.

We support the world people's struggle for peace, national independence, democracy, and social progress. We side with the peace loving and progressive forces to oppose nuclear war and limited war. We support peoples struggling against aggression and war by proxy for the defense of their national independence and sovereignty. Recent developments in the world remind us to increase vigilance on the perfidious schemes of counter-revolutionary, warlike, and reactionary forces.

... One hundred years have elapsed since the birth of President Hồ Chí Minh. During that time, revolutions in the world and in Vietnam have made big strides changing the face of the world. The picture of the era has undergone significant changes. Imperialism has lost its hegemonic position in the world; it can no longer rule the roost and decide the destiny of peoples. Socialism has actually come into being, and under its positive impact, hundreds of peoples have stood up to seize independence, to become the masters of their fate, and to exert a positive influence on the development of world history.

In spite of the serious difficulties it is facing, socialism will surely overcome them and win. That is an irreversible trend; it is in accordance with the development law of mankind, because the socialist ideals have deeply penetrated in the heart and mind of hundreds of millions of people as a superior social system in history.

Mankind is always grateful to the great men who have helped the development of history. President Hồ Chí Minh is one of these men who had left their mark in the 20th century. His great thoughts regarding the equality of people, the right to live, the freedom for each individual, the ideal of justice, democracy, fraternity, peace and friendship for peoples, the intensification of relations among human beings, etc. are values of world significance, contributing to the culture of mankind.

On the occasion of this grand anniversary, being proud of being the continuators of President Hồ Chí Minh's thought and glorious cause, we express our deep respect and unbound gratitude for him and undertake to turn his lofty thoughts into reality on our beloved native land.

## THE WORLD IS STILL CHANGING, BUT HỒ CHÍ MINH THOUGHT WILL LIVE FOREVER\*

Võ Nguyên Giáp\*\*

### The core of Hồ Chí Minh thought

... Scientists from many different countries and stands share the common view that *the world has changed and will change, but Hồ Chí Minh thought will live forever in mankind's cultural treasure.*

So what has made Hồ Chí Minh thought perpetuate with mankind? One cannot explain clearly Hồ Chí Minh thought if one fails to place Hồ Chí Minh in his relationship with his time. President Hồ Chí Minh was born and grew up at a time when colonial occupation by capitalism had been completed. Hundreds of independent and sovereign countries had lost their independence and become enslaved. Inheriting the nation's tradition, Hồ Chí Minh made up his mind to leave his country in search of the way for national salvation. After nearly ten years his survey of the imperialist power and their colonial system, he came to this conclusion: Everywhere capitalism and imperialism are cruel and ruthless; everywhere the working people are exploited, tortured and have no right to life.

\* Excerpt from speech at the International Conference "Hồ Chí Minh-Vietnam-World Peace" held in Calcutta (India) on 14th January 1991.

\*\* Võ Nguyên Giáp (born in 1911), Minister of National Defense, the first to have been promoted to the rank of General by President Hồ Chí Minh in 1948.



*Imbued with deep love for his country and people, with his profound sympathy for the plight of millions of wretched people, Nguyễn Ái Quốc came to Leninism in 1920. The path to national salvation is that of proletarian revolution. Patriotism is closely linked with genuine internationalism. National independence is linked with liberation of society, of mankind. That is the kernel of Hồ Chí Minh thought.*

In the subsequent decades of study and struggle Hồ Chí Minh thought was brought to perfection.

Hồ Chí Minh thought is the imaginative and successful application of the principles of Marxism-Leninism to the specific realities of Vietnamese society, of Eastern societies which used to be colonial and semi-feudal. That thought blazed the path to national liberation for colonial and semi-colonial countries, and set an orientation for those societies to advance from national-liberation revolution and people's national democratic revolution to socialism.

Meanwhile some revolutionaries of that time held that only when the proletarian revolution of the mother country succeeded could the liberation of the colonial countries be achieved. But Nguyễn Ái Quốc realized that the cause of national liberation of the colonial countries might be based mainly on its own strength to gain victories; more than that, victories could be achieved earlier and were of great help to their mother countries as well.

Apart from its three sources namely French utopian socialism, English political economics and German philosophy and Marxist dialectics, Marxism was enriched by Hồ Chí Minh who brought new elements to its content: the Vietnamese people's patriotism, the oppressed peoples' thirst for national liberation, the community tradition and the quintessence of

Oriental philosophy. Dialectics was also been applied with imagination on the basis of inheriting and developing the dialectical elements in the thinking of the Vietnamese nation and Asia's time-honored civilizations.

If the goal of Marxism is not only to perceive the world but also to transform it, then Hồ Chí Minh is a vivid model of that goal. In Hồ Chí Minh, theory and practice were one; words and deeds were one. Just as some scholars said, "Hồ Chí Minh's thought and cause cannot be evaluated only through his writings and speeches, but also through his actions, and what is more, through his work, studies and struggle, and his flawless, simple and great life".

*Hồ Chí Minh thought is a new development of Marxism-Leninism in its application to the reality of the cause of national liberation and building a new society in Vietnam, and can therefore contribute to the development of Eastern countries and, to a large extent, to other countries as well.*

For the Vietnamese, Hồ Chí Minh thought not only led the national liberation struggle to complete victory, through thirty years of fighting without respite. But today, under the leadership of the Communist Party, it continues to develop with new creations in order to find the way of transition to socialism, to build a peaceful, civilized and happy life for the whole people of Vietnam, for every Vietnamese citizen.

## **National independence**

First of all, I would like to deal with the question of national independence in President Hồ Chí Minh thought.

Mankind, throughout its history of evolution, has engendered so many civilizations, and not a few shameful things.

Colonialism is one of the most shameful things suffered by mankind. It has burdened the fates of small and weak nations with fetters and oppression, famine and poverty, illiteracy and diseases, etc. Wining back independence and freedom is therefore the burning aspiration of oppressed nations in the 20th century. And Hồ Chí Minh was one of those symbolizing that will and aspiration. Hồ Chí Minh put up the celebrated motto: "*Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom*". He is regarded as the vanguard in wakening his nation and other exploited nations in the struggle for freedom, independence, and human values.

In the process of leading the national liberation struggle as well as in the process of leading the Vietnamese revolution, President Hồ Chí Minh highly *valued the forces of the people and the nation, and regarded them as the decisive forces for the victory of the revolution*. His strategy consists in uniting the whole people and the whole nation in the common struggle for national independence and freedom. He said:

"*Unity is strength*".

"*Unity, unity, great unity*

*Success, success, great success!*"

The Vietnamese community is composed of over fifty ethnicities, whom the enemy constantly tried to "divide and rule". President Hồ Chí Minh appealed to all ethnicities to unite and consider themselves to be brothers of the same family.

Vietnamese society consists of many *classes* having different interests, but sharing the same fate of being enslaved by colonialism. President Hồ Chí Minh appealed to all classes, all strata of the people - workers, peasants, brain workers, patriotic personalities and overseas Vietnamese - to close their ranks in the fight to save the nation and their families, and to resolve all problems arising from the relationship between classes and the nation.

People of different *religions and beliefs* are living on Vietnam's soil. The enemy always tried to provoke and divide them. That's why President Hồ Chí Minh mapped out a policy of uniting different religious, uniting religious and non-religious people, with a view to joining efforts to fight the aggressors and build the country.

President Hồ Chí Minh set great store by unity between the Vietnamese people and fraternal peoples and progressive forces in the world, including the French and American peoples. He found a correct solution to the *problems arising from the relationship between the national and the international, between the Vietnamese nation and others*.

The National United Front, which rallies everybody into a monolithic block, is regarded as a tremendously great force, not only in the national-liberation revolution but also in the socialist revolution.

It is on the basis of that solid and broad national unity that the whole Vietnamese people, regardless of their age and sex, from the mountain areas to the plains, have raised up millions as one man to put up a fight, thus creating the invincible force of the *Vietnam people's war* which defeated all aggressors.

It is on the basis of that international solidarity that the strength of the Vietnamese people has been multiplied, creating the *aggregate strength* that led the two wars of resistance to complete victory.

Hồ Chí Minh thought and the example set by Vietnam have become a source of strong inspiration for all the peoples in their struggle for national liberation. Many independent countries have acknowledged the impact, direct and indirect, influence exerted by the Vietnamese revolution and Hồ Chí Minh thought.

Today, the thought that "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom" still retains its vitality. Having gained political independence, developing countries still have to struggle against all neo-colonialist forces which are making use of their financial, technical, and technological power to plunder them and to keep them in a state of backwardness and dependence; in other words, they are, in fact, carrying out "re-colonization".

At this time of restoration of national spirit from Asia to Europe, one is deeply moved by the following verses by Hồ Chí Minh:

*"There are thousands of bitter things in the world*

*But no bitterness can compare with loss of freedom".*

In short, freedom for everybody, every nation and every State in the choice of their path of development, that is the ever-lasting aspiration of mankind. That is also the essence of Hồ Chí Minh thought.

### **The new regime**

For President Hồ Chí Minh, national independence is always linked to people's *freedom and happiness*. He said: "The country may be independent, but if the people do not enjoy freedom and happiness, that independence has no meaning". He also said: "I have only one desire, the strongest one, that is the desire to make our country totally independent and enable all our countrymen be well-fed, well-dressed and have opportunities to get education". This reminds us of Mahatma Gandhi, who also said that he would "endeavor for an India (...) where there would be no nobles and no pariahs, an India where all communities would live in harmony."

Ever since the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, President Hồ Chí Minh had set forth three big and urgent tasks: "To annihilate three enemies: famine, ignorance and foreign invaders". He advanced the slogan: "To carry out simultaneously resistance and national construction". He devoted great efforts to painstakingly building *a new society* and new life; he called on the people to do everything possible "to increase production and practice thrift," to develop the economy and culture, to organize general elections, to draw up a new Constitution and set up the State of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, a State of the people, by the people and for the people.

Hồ Chí Minh discovered the value of independence, freedom and happiness in the objectives and ideals of *scientific socialism* of Marxism-Leninism. For President Hồ Chí Minh, socialism is not a set of rigid dogmas, alien to the material and intellectual interests of man. He set a very concrete and practical objective for the period of transition from people's democracy to socialism: "To ensure that everybody is well-fed, well-dressed, happy and free", "to liberate the working people from poverty, to provide everybody with employment, welfare and a happy life". This objective is indicative of the consistency of Hồ Chí Minh thought in people's democratic revolution as well as in socialist revolution: always taking into the highest consideration the interests of the country and the people. One can call this socialism *a socialism that "makes the people rich and the country strong,"* a kind of socialism consistent with the country's peculiarities and the essential trend of mankind.

In the process of leading Vietnam's revolution and in his creative search for the path to advance the country, President Hồ Chí Minh highlighted *the main content of the new society*:

- In the economy: to gradually build up the material and technical foundation of socialism, to provide everybody with

employment; to institute democratic management and a system of distribution according to labour; to unceasingly increase labour productivity and raise people's material and intellectual living standards; to work toward the liquidation of the regime of exploitation of men by men.

- In politics: to set up an order where the working people are masters, taking the alliance between workers, peasants and intelligentsia as the foundation; to establish a State of the people, for the people and by the people, where all power belongs to the people; the people are masters while the government and officials are only public servants, etc.

- In cultural and social fields: to bring into shape a just and democratic society, where men are friends and brothers to one another, a society endowed with fine traditions and practices, where traditional values are given prominence in combination with a selective acceptance of the cultural essence of mankind; where science and technology are developed; the people's cultural standard is raised, talented people are trained and used, and conditions are provided for the new-type man to gradually come into shape and develop his creativeness.

According to President Hồ Chí Minh<sup>1</sup>, socialism in Vietnam does not evolve along *the path of natural development in history, from capitalism to socialism, as Karl Marx said*, but from a backward agricultural economy with an under-developed production force. This advance is still full of hardships and of long duration, and one cannot have a high material standard of living overnight; however, right now there should be a struggle to build up a democratic and just society, with a healthy life style and a fine relationship between men.

In short, President Hồ Chí Minh's concept of socialism is a creative application of Marxism-Leninism combined with the traditions of the community culture of the Vietnamese nation

and the aspirations to justice and fraternity in the philosophical thought of the East. Therefore, other nations, while refusing the tormenting road of capitalism, may study and find in Hồ Chí Minh's thoughts on socialism, an orientation fitting their choice.

### Hồ Chí Minh humanism

For President Hồ Chí Minh, national and social liberation should eventually lead to *the liberation of man* from all kinds of oppression, exploitation and injustice. This ideal springs from his boundless humaneness and love for the people and mankind.

*Hồ Chí Minh humanism* is first of all directed to suffering and persecuted compatriots, but *his love and affection* know no limit in terms of races or skin colors. Hồ Chí Minh humanism, however, is absolutely not compassion. His love for man is closely linked to his boundless trust in the creative energy and common sense of man, and his constant awakening of the potential capabilities of man to rise up consciously and fight for his own emancipation, wrest back independence and freedom for the nation and dignity for himself.

Hồ Chí Minh humanism is full for optimism for man and of *trust in the fine nature* and possibilities to strive to go forward, even though he may have once committed errors. He said that we should use tolerance and generosity to treat the children that have been led astray due to some circumstances. The duty of a revolutionary is to see to it that "the fine parts of every man blossom like flowers in spring while the ugly ones wither gradually".

Regarding socialist construction, President Hồ Chí Minh paid a special attention to building "the new man", for this is the motive force determining the future advance of Vietnamese society. He demanded that there be a strategy "to grow men".

The new man should be both the cause and the result of the process of fighting to build a new society. According to him, the new, socialist Vietnamese man should have the spirit of being master of society. "If you are masters, you should know how to bear your responsibilities and not to rely on others or should not adopt a wait-and-see attitude," he said. "The new man should have cultural and scientific knowledge and some professional level. The new man should possess revolutionary virtues: industriousness, thrift, integrity and righteousness", "devotion to public interests and selflessness". He should oppose individualism, but opposing individualism does not mean negating the legitimate interests of the individual. Hồ Chí Minh also said, "Everyone has his own character, his own strong point and his own life and the life of his family. If personal interests do not clash with collective interests, that is not bad". In his opinion, the new Vietnamese man is a man imbued with national traditions and with socialist internationalism.

Hồ Chí Minh is the symbol of noble values in human relationships: veneration for the elder, affection for children and young people, and respect for women. He did not miss anyone in the focus of his attention, made sacrifices to all of them, and was not concerned with fame and gains for himself. In his lifetime, he led a humble, simple, pure, upright and refined life.

Hồ Chí Minh humanism is the crystallization of Vietnamese traditional values and at the same time the product of mankind's quintessence. It can be said that Hồ Chí Minh humanism is the humanism of the new times.

### **Facing a new conjuncture**

"The world today is experiencing a psychological crisis," once said the Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru. "What

is needed now is an approach to peace, friendship and amity." And he affirmed that "Dr. Hồ Chí Minh is the expression of such an approach." This assessment by the Indian Prime Minister is still valid.

President Hồ Chí Minh was a man of boundless love and friendship. More than anyone, he aspired to *peace -- a peace linked to independence and national integrity*. Steadfast in strategy, he proved to be extremely flexible in tactics, and many times tried to make concessions, sometimes important ones, to preserve peace for his nation. But the great the concessions he made, the more the enemy encroached. When there was no other alternative to select, he was compelled to mobilize all the Vietnamese people to carry out the most protracted and fiercest war in history in order to wrest back independence and unity for the country.

Only recently did we manage to have a peace that the President had dreamt of all his lifetime. We are doing our best to fulfill his last wish, that is, to build up a peaceful, united, independent, democratic, powerful and prosperous Vietnam in new favorable conditions, but also in immense difficulties. Those difficulties arise from our backward economy and many decades of war to which should be added the economic blockade and embargo by imperialist forces, the influence of the changes in Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union and a very complicated situation in the world.

These days, ... we are also witnessing the continuation of the profound changes in the international conjuncture with the appearance of the multi-polar situation, the detente of the great powers. Meanwhile in the USSR as well as in Eastern European countries, a serious and many-sided crisis is taking place entailing disbalance of forces. So, peace and cooperation tend to develop favorably but the struggle between the forces is by no

means less intense and the danger of war has not yet been ruled out. Nobody can predict what is going to happen in the Persian Gulf and beyond it tomorrow.

At this juncture, the fast growth of the technological revolution is accompanied with the widening gap between developed and developing countries. With their deliberate ruses, developed countries make use of their technological, commercial and financial strength and the most powerful mass media to control the political situation, infiltrate into poor countries by economic, cultural and ideological means with a view to creating an ever-widening inequality in the North-South relationship, putting on the shoulders of developing countries the enormous debt, preventing the creation of a new world economic order with equality that India, together with other nations have proposed since long.

As part of the world community, Vietnam has been trying to make contributions to creating peace and stability in the region and in the world as well, to promote international exchanges, to normalize and improve relationships, to take part in labour division and to cooperate with other countries with different political tendencies, to avail itself of the support from the latter in many fields: economic management, scientific and technological. Meanwhile the Vietnamese people will heighten their self-reliance, independent creative thinking to overcome difficulties and obstacles and to tide them over the burning questions of the time.

In order to solve these problems we should keep on following the goals of our revolution: *national independence and socialism* that our late President strived for. The Vietnamese people are stepping up *an all-sided renovation* across the country. We all the more understand clearly the statement of President Hồ Chí Minh: "This is a gigantic struggle against what is obsolete and decaying in order to create what is new and full

of vitality; this struggle cannot come to a successful end without relying on the strength of the entire people". This cause of renovation has gained initial results of significance. Our Party is carrying out the line of broadening democracy, encouraging the whole nation to take part in the *Platform and Strategy for Socio-economic Development* to be presented at the coming 7th Party Congress.

Facing the present situation in the world, the Vietnamese as well as other countries should assert more their fundamental national rights, preserve the identity and fine tradition of their nations, while promoting international cooperation and absorbing the cultural and scientific achievements of the intellect-based civilization. The desire for independence, freedom and genuine happiness of each nation is a condition for the solidarity of world peoples.

... Hồ Chí Minh, a hero of the Vietnamese people, a loyal friend of all nations and of the progressive mankind, was a thinker, a sage, a social activist whose theory was linked to reality. *Hồ Chí Minh thought is a set of tenets that can be summarized as follows: independence and reunification for the homeland, freedom and democracy for the people, equality and happiness for everybody, peace and friendship for every nation and the development of cultural and humanitarian relationships for the time.*

## HỒ CHÍ MINH THOUGHT IN THE RENOVATION CAUSE\*

*Đỗ Mười\*\**

... President Hồ Chí Minh was the talented leader of our Party and people, the close friend of peoples fighting for independence, freedom, and social progress, “an outstanding national liberation hero and cultural celebrity”. He devoted all his life to his lofty objectives: independence for the country, freedom and happiness for the people.

Over the past years, although confronted with complicated developments in the world and many difficulties at home, our Party, firmly grasping and correctly applying Hồ Chí Minh thought, has led the people in promoting the renovation cause, overcoming difficulties and challenges to ensure the continued advance of the country and to record important achievements: economic growth, improvement of the people's living standard, preservation of political stability, enhancement of democratic rights, consolidation of national defense and security, development of foreign relations, raising our country's prestige and stance on the international arena, thereby opening a new period of development with brilliant prospects.

As we are deepening the renovation cause, many new and complicated problems arise; the thorough comprehension of the

\* Excerpt from the speech at the celebration of the 105th anniversary of President Hồ Chí Minh's birthday on 19th May 1995.

\*\* Đỗ Mười, born in 1917, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam from 1991 to 1998.

great ideas of Hồ Chí Minh in solving theoretical and practical problems of Vietnam becomes more pressing than ever. This is an effective way to celebrate his birthday anniversary.

The 65-year history of our Party and people's struggle fraught with innumerable hardships and sacrifices has proved that every advance of the Vietnamese revolution is associated with President Hồ Chí Minh. He was the embodiment of the ideas of national independence linked to socialism, the paragon of the spirit of independence and sovereignty, self-reliance, renovation and creativeness. His thoughts were the crystallization of the moral values, the cultural identities, the gallant traditions of indomitability, righteousness, fidelity of our nation, which have been cultivated for thousands of years and combined with the quintessence of the world culture and the era's intelligence, the peak of which is Marxism-Leninism. He correctly and creatively applied that doctrine to the specific conditions of our country. He also contributed to its development on several important questions, particularly on the national liberation revolution and the advance to socialism in colonial and dependent countries. His thoughts have blazed the way for us to win victory; they have become lasting values of the Vietnamese people and increasingly known in the world.

Experience shows that our revolution can be successful only when we firmly stick to our objectives, keep high our spirit of independence and sovereignty, self-reliance, renovation, and creativeness. Hồ Chí Minh was such a man, and so did he act. Throughout his very active life, he always based himself on reality, he avoided conservative and dogmatic ideas. He did not repeat existing obsolete solutions, and he always strove to bring about renovations or new creations.

Each people must find out their own way for self-liberation and development in accordance with their concrete conditions.

Being a great patriot, President Hồ Chí Minh deeply understood this fact. From patriotism he came to Marxism-Leninism, he found the way to save his country through revolution in a colonial and feudal country with the immediate tasks of overthrowing the imperialists and their feudal agents, securing national independence, providing land to tillers, then step by step advancing to socialism. President Hồ Chí Minh pointed out that at first we must carry out the national liberation revolution and the agrarian revolution, or the people's national democratic revolution, thereafter the socialist revolution. These are two successive closely-related revolutions. So, he combined national independence with socialism, genuine patriotism with proletarian internationalism, the strength of the nation with that of other peoples, the traditional strength with that of the epoch, for the purpose of liberating the nation, society, and man.

In spite of difficulties and challenges, President Hồ Chí Minh consistently kept that line throughout his life. Under the banner of his thought, the Vietnamese revolution has steadily advanced and recorded historical successes of an epochal character: to successfully carry out the August 1945 Revolution, to win victory over the wars of aggression waged by cruel and powerful colonialists and imperialists, to liberate South Vietnam, to unify the country, to recover complete independence, thereby opening the way to socialism from a poor and backward country.

Our Party, State and people are continuing to hold high the banner of national independence and socialism, to make research and creation in the new conditions, strictly implementing the teachings of President Hồ Chí Minh: "Only under the leadership of a party capable of creatively applying Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of one's country can national liberation revolution be brought to triumph and socialism revolution to success."

The world has now greatly changed. The way to socialism of our country contains many new factors, including points quite different from what we thought a few decades ago. In such circumstances, our Party has pursued the policy of renovation, standing for the development of a multi-sectoral commodity economy, operating under the socialist-orientated market mechanism and the management of the State. At each phase of development, economic growth must always be related to social progress and justice. Carrying out renovation in this direction, we have recorded very important achievements but many theoretical and practical questions have arisen and call for solutions to keep on the strong and steady advance of the revolutionary cause.

In the process of seeking ways and creating tempos for stepping up the industrialization and modernization of the country, we should learn the experience of countries which have preceded us so as to draw good points to be applied and to avoid the errors or failures they have met with. In learning from them or referring to them, we definitely should not copy on other persons' model. Dogmatism on one side or the other is detrimental to the interests of the country or people. President Hồ Chí Minh set a brilliant example on that score. He highly valued the world's intelligence; he made ample reference and learned a lot to draw the best knowledge of mankind and to find the revolutionary path of Vietnam. We should inherit and well apply that lesson.

President Hồ Chí Minh's revolutionary life was full of difficulties and ordeals, but very heroic and glorious. In any circumstances, he remained calm and fearless; at decisive moments of the revolution or critical moments of history, he took clear-sighted and bold decisions. For instance, he declared the dissolution of the Party for underground activity, or he signed the 6



March 1946 Preliminary Accord... He said: "In the face of that pressing and dangerous situation, the Party could not hesitate. Hesitation would spoil everything. The Party should take quick decisions and even painful methods to retrieve the situation..."<sup>(1)</sup> This is the great capability of a leader both intelligent and brave, not fearing any difficulty or danger and overcoming any trial.

Over the past fifty years, the Vietnamese revolution has been facing innumerable opportunities and dangers, favorable conditions and adversities. In 1930, after the failure of the Yên Bái insurrection, French repression was extremely savage; communist organizations in our country were still scattered, Nguyễn Ái Quốc had a very clear vision and an absolute prestige; he stood out to unite all the communist organizations in the country, founded the Communist Party of Vietnam, meeting the requirement of the revolution in the new phase. As a result, the workers' movement and the patriotic movement of various strata of people could early have a unified political Party that took the leadership of the Vietnamese revolution and launched the great revolutionary surge of 1930-1931 which culminated in the Nghệ Tĩnh Soviet insurrection.

In 1945, the Allied countries won the war, opening a possibility of bringing about self-determination to colonial peoples. But at the same time the event paved the way for the allies to enter Indochina to disarm the Japanese troops; along with the disarmament of the Japanese was the scheme of reinstalling colonialism in our country in spite of the fact that we had been an active participant in the fight against fascism. So, at that moment, our country was faced with both good opportunity and danger of invasion.

In such circumstances, President Hồ and Party had launched in time a nation-wide general insurrection. He had taken a strategic resolution to seize independence at any cost. In this spirit, he and our Party led the entire people in taking power all over Vietnam before the arrival of the allied forces.

The Democratic Republic of Vietnam had hardly come into being when it had to cope with a very complicated situation. Thanks to the clear-sightedness of President Hồ Chí Minh and our Party, to their correct lines and strategies, as well as their flexible tactics, our country had gone out of the dangerous situation, firmly safeguarded the revolutionary power, and waged a resistance war lasting several decades until glorious victory. That was our people's long march in the implementation of President Hồ's call: "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom".

In his life time, President Hồ Chí Minh frequently had to cope with mixed good opportunities and perilous situations. However, he always kept his strategic determination to control the situation, to make full use of the favorable conditions and resolutely to fight and to win. His attitude is a practical lesson for the present generation when our country has started the cause of renovation with the good opportunities and the great risks that the mid-term National Conference of Representatives of the Party (VII tenure) pointed out. That lesson reminds us of the necessity to grasp the good opportunities and to clearly realize the dangers so as to calmly cope with and overcome them.

The achievement already obtained is creating a new force and stance for us. The tremendous progress of the scientific and technological revolution, the trend of expanding global and regional cooperation is bringing us new important sources of strength. Deeply confident in our intelligence and strength, we should cleverly and creatively apply Marxism-Leninism and Hồ

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. Second edition, National Politics Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995. Vol. 6, p. 161.

Chí Minh thought to fulfill the Party's and the entire people's strategic determination to eradicate poverty and backwardness and to turn our country within a few coming decades into a developed country in the region with a prosperous economy, an advanced culture, a just society.

To materialize that strategic determination, we should strictly respect the ideas of our forefathers and Uncle Hồ to rely on the people and to take the people as foundation. We should raise the people's knowledge; train, nurture, and make full use of talented men; mobilize our forces, devote our intelligence and energy to determine what step to take first to push forward the strong development of the national economy and the whole society. We should arouse the people's ardent patriotism and revolutionary heroism; enhance their spirit of independence and sovereignty, their self-reliance, their aspirations and ideals so as to create a gigantic force and determination for successful renovation, industrialization and modernization and for building a rich and strong Vietnam.

Throughout his life as a revolutionary, President Hồ steadfastly stood for national cohesion. He was the symbol of the united bloc of the nation. His great idea about "Unity, unity, great unity; Success, success, great success!" has become a stimulus and an encouragement that assemble all strata of people and individuals to make an invincible strength.

For the purpose of national liberation, all strata of people must be gathered in a broad national united front. In national construction too, national cohesion must also be strengthened. National renovation, industrialization, and modernization can be successfully achieved when all the nation is united and one-minded as one man and devotes all of its talent and energy to the benefit of the country, to the brilliant future of the present generation and their descendants.

For President Hồ, national unity is a fundamental lasting strategy in the national liberation revolution as well as in the socialist revolution. The idea of national unity should impregnate all lines and policies of the Party and all laws of the State. According to him, our State is distinguished by the nature of the working class and by its popular and national character. It is really the symbol of the unified power of the National Unity State.

To gather and unite the whole people, the cohesion within the Party should be first of all strengthened. President Hồ affirmed, "Cohesion is a very precious tradition of our Party and people". In revolutionary struggle, on the battlefield or in imperialist jails, innumerable communists have set brilliant examples of revolutionary ideals and ethics; shown readiness to accept difficulties and sacrifices for themselves and to cede better conditions to their compatriots, thereby creating the morally and sentimentally united bloc of the Party and the people who are ready to sacrifice themselves for sacrifice the great cause. That is why our Party has won confidence, admiration, and love of the people at home and friends abroad. Today, that tradition continues to develop in the renovation campaign.

It is a normal thing and a necessity that different views exist in the Party in seeking ways to reach the determined objective. What is worth attention now is that in a number of places internal disunity is serious and lasting. Individualism, provincialism, sectionalism, thirst for power, vying merit for oneself and shifting fault on others are the main cause of division. Uncle Hồ criticized: "He who shares one's mind is regarded a good man, however bad he might be; his bad deeds are considered good; then both cover up each other's fault and support each other. He who does not share one's mind is regarded as a bad man, though he is actually good; his good deeds are considered bad; then he is disparaged and ill-spoken of; he is dropped down

by every means. This evil is detrimental to the Party, to the unity of the Party". Divisive activity and sectarianism do harm to the prestige of the Party and constitute a crime.

Cohesion in the Party is the core of national unity. Our country forms a community of 50 ethnic groups. Our society is still composed of different classes, different strata with different interests, different religions and beliefs. This fact is an objective reality we have to take into consideration when lines and policies are decided. At the same time, hostile forces constantly take advantage of these differences to incite discontent and to divide out nation.

President Hồ Chí Minh perseveringly pursued the consistent policy of uniting all the people, all religions, uniting the North and the South, the high region and the plain, social classes and strata, all Vietnamese living in the country and those living abroad. He did his best to build and consolidate the worker-peasant alliance, the foundation of the national united front; he also attached great importance to the role of other social strata: the intelligentsia, the petty bourgeoisie, national capitalists, patriotic personalities, overseas Vietnamese. He did not forget anyone, from each individual to all the community; he highly appreciated the service and the experience of previous generations and had deep confidence in future generations. While he severely condemned the anti-national reactionaries operating under the cover of religion, he sincerely respected the faith of religious people.

Uncle Hồ's principle for national unity is to take the supreme interests of the nation and the fundamental rights of the working people as foundation, to harmoniously combine private and common interests, personal and collective interests, and the interests of each unit, and each locality with those of the community, the nation, and the class.

Uncle Hồ's method to achieve unity is through campaigning, education, persuasion, setting examples; he used his trust, affection and assistance to move people; he promoted positive factors, limited and pushed back negative factors to help each individual and organization progress, become mature to effectively contribute to the cause.

President Hồ Chí Minh also endeavored to strengthen international solidarity, to win approval and support, cooperation and assistance of friends in all parts of the world for the revolution and the nation. At the same time, he actively fulfilled his lofty international obligations. His ideas about national unity, his humanism and his pure morality became a force bringing about national unity and international solidarity, an extremely important factor for the success of the revolution in our country.

Thoroughly imbued with President Hồ Chí Minh thought, our Party has repeatedly expressed its viewpoints on national unity, urgently calling our entire people living in the country or abroad to take the national cause as the common objective, to wipe out all complex and hatred, to look to the future, to unite all people into one single bloc, to smash all schemes to prevent the advance of our people, and to implement by every means the *Testament* of Uncle Hồ: "To build a peaceful, unified, independent, democratic, and powerful Vietnam".

Respected Uncle Hồ has left the most glorious revolutionary achievements to our people. Through his heroic, noble, eventful, pure and splendid life full of hardships and sacrifices, he has also left an invaluable heritage. He set a brilliant example of a revolutionary's qualities and virtues symbolizing the finest values of the Vietnamese mentality, determination and personality. He said: "Our Party represents virtues and civilization". He himself attained the peak of these virtues and civilization.

Salient in his exemplary life are the qualities of a new-type leader of the people; his lofty ideals, his staunch will, his great intellect, his broad vision, his capability of attraction and persuasion helped him keep close to all strata of people.

President Hồ Chí Minh was the fine image of the close ties between a leader and his people. He regularly read local papers, spared time to visit the people not for giving orders or for pep talks but for listening to their views and those of Party members, of "not-so-important-persons", to get information, to learn experience and wisdom from the people. From these contacts, he meditated and drew what was necessary for deciding appropriate and persuasive policies.

In spite of his high prestige and his being greatly loved and respected by the Party and the people, he never considered himself standing above the people. On the contrary, he always said he was a faithful and devoted servant of the people. Answering questions by journalists, he stated: "Now holding the presidency because the people have entrusted the post to me. I have to strive to fulfill my task like a soldier goes to the front at the command of the people. When I am allowed to withdraw, I will be glad to do so."<sup>(1)</sup> His modesty, his noble feelings and his disinterestedness constitute a great lesson for us now.

Uncle Hồ was the finest embodiment of love and respect for the people. He was an aged president but he always remained modest. Receiving letters or gifts from old people, children, young men, and women, he himself always wrote letters of thanks in sincere and friendly terms. This was Uncle Hồ's way of treating people, which was full of humanism and impregnated with the Vietnamese soul.

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. Second edition. National Politics Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995. Vol. 4, p. 161.

That is why, our people from high personalities and intellectuals to common working people, all see in Uncle Hồ a man of great mind and heart, a great personality enlightened by reason, generosity, and tolerance. From their love and respect for Uncle Hồ, the people have, by their own will, followed his ideals and cause; through him, they have more confidence in the Party and closer connection with the Party and our regime.

In the present conditions when there are multiple challenges, following the example of Uncle Hồ, most of our Party cadres and members keep their vanguard exemplary role, maintain their way of living in honesty and integrity, winning the people's love and admiration. However we should frankly admit the painful fact that no small number of Party cadres and members are abusing their power and being degenerated; they cannot overcome their ambitions and ordinary seductions. Their negative actions and corrupted way of life are causing painful concern to society. A number of them, who control the finance or property of the State, have committed embezzlement to illegally enrich themselves. A number of others, who are elected representatives of the people, have stretched their power and committed innumerable immoral and uncultured actions, even blatant violations of law that indignify the people. When alive, Uncle Hồ recommended that Party cadres and members must resolutely combat individualism, corruption, wastefulness, and bureaucratism and constantly keep themselves industrious, thrifty, honest, righteous, and disinterested. The above-mentioned category of wrong doers have acted at variance with the teachings of Uncle Hồ.

To preserve the prestige of the Party and the State, to consolidate the confidence of the people, we must dismiss at once these parasites of society, irrespective of their positions and functions. With regard to persons who call themselves Party members but who betray their ideals, do harm to the country and the people,

we must without pity exclude them from the Party, State organs, and mass organizations. If they violate laws, they must be severely judged and punished.

Moreover, a number of other officials who have held their posts for a long time, become subjective and self-conceited. They are lazy to study theoretical matters and reluctant to keep up with realities or to sum up the creative experiences of the grass-root level; they become sclerotic in intelligence and no longer capable of organizing and guiding the people's actions.

The 8th Plenum of the Party Central Committee has just decided to "continue the building and perfection of the State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, laying emphasis on the administrative reform." The Plenum also stressed that the administrative reform must be associated with Party rectification, the enhancement of virtues, knowledge, and capability of government cadres and officials in order to enable them to deeply understand that they are both the representative of the State power and at the same time the devoted servants of the people. They must seriously remember Uncle Hồ's last will saying that "Ours is a ruling Party. Each Party cadre and member must thoroughly abide by the revolutionary qualities, really be hard-working, thrifty, honest, and devoted to their public duties. They must be the worthy leaders and the most faithful servants of the people."

The study and thorough comprehension of Hồ Chí Minh thought is very necessary and important. But what is more necessary is to apply his thought to the current circumstances and conditions of our country. In the immediate, it is necessary to study and apply Hồ Chí Minh thought in summing up the realities of recent years, drawing lessons and experience; on this basis, we shall prepare the content of the 8th National Party Congress, from the Political Report, the Report on Party building to the determination of the strategy and orientation for

development in the coming years, the correct internal and external lines and policies for the successful implementation of the resolution of the Congress. This is a very important and significant work that makes Hồ Chí Minh thought permanently linked to reality, ceaselessly completed and developed, and further enriched to guide our actions.

In the ebullient atmosphere of the celebration of the great anniversaries, everyone of us is profoundly proud of living in a glorious era of the nation, of being a citizen of independent Vietnam brought into being by President Hồ Chí Minh, of being a member of the Party founded and trained by leader Nguyễn Ái Quốc. At the same time, each of us also realizes the heavy responsibility of our generation in perpetuating and developing the glorious cause started and directed by Uncle Hồ.

Permeated with deep patriotism when still very young, pondering day and night on the future of the country and the prospects of the nation, Hồ Chí Minh traveled in all parts of the world to seek a way for national salvation. From patriotism he came to Marxism-Leninism, he profoundly understood that doctrine and applied it to the conditions of Vietnam, woke up our people and made them tenaciously and gallantly struggle for the present state of our land, thereby making Vietnam renowned in the world. Wherever he went, he always turned his mind and heart to his native land and his compatriots with boundless feelings. Our people will be forever proud of him, the great son of the nation. We shall remember his words: "I have only one and single objective all my life, that is to struggle for the interests of my country and the happiness of our people. I had at times to take refuge in mountains or to face imprisonment or dangers for the said purpose"<sup>(1)</sup>. It was that strong aspiration which gave him extraordinary energy to remain unreduced by richness,

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 4, p. 240.

unshaken by poverty, and unsubmitted by force, and to get abroad vision and to choose wise measures leading to victory.

His greatest longing was to see “the country independent, the people completely free, every compatriot able to eat his fill, to have enough clothes, and to be educated.” Holding high Hồ Chí Minh’s banner, we are determined to bring renovation to complete success, to make the people rich, the country strong, the society just, civilized, deserved of the profusion of love and affection he left to the entire people.

*Great President Hồ Chí Minh will live forever with our revolutionary cause!*

*His thought and his cause will light forever our way to new victories!*

## HỒ CHÍ MINH THOUGHT LIGHTS UP THE PATH OF OUR PARTY AND PEOPLE TO THE 21TH CENTURY\*

*Lê Khả Phiêu\*\**

... With all our people at home and our compatriots abroad, today we solemnly celebrate the 110th birthday anniversary of President Hồ Chí Minh, the national liberation hero, a cultural celebrity of the world, the founder, leader, and teacher of the Communist Party of Vietnam, who ushered the Vietnamese people in a new era, an exemplary international communist combatant and a close friend of the peoples fighting for peace, national independence, democracy, and social progress all over the world.

Uncle Hồ was born into a poor but honest Confucian scholar’s family, in a multiethnic country which had early become a unified nation-state. In the millenary process of nation building and defense, our people have created and developed a brilliant national culture, the core of which is *patriotism*, staunch struggle, kindness, tolerance, community sense, and national cohesion for mastering nature and society. It is precisely Vietnamese culture with the positive influence from Oriental culture that has shaped up Hồ Chí Minh’s personality and greatly contributed to the formation and development of his thought.

\* Excerpt from the speech at the celebration of the 110th anniversary of President Hồ’s birthday on 19 May 2000.

\*\* Born in 1931, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam since 1998.

In the middle of the 19th century, the French colonialists invaded our country. Although anti-French patriotic movements continuously took place, and despite the fact that when a combatant fell, another behind him immediately stood up, ready "to move mountains and to fill up seas with an iron will, and to wash away the shame of slavery"<sup>(1)</sup>, all of these insurrections ended in "hundreds of failures and not a single success". The reasons are multiple but in final analysis, the main reason is that there was not a correct policy.

Witnessing the painful failures of this elder patriots and the harsh living of the people under the cruel colonial yoke, the outstanding young Vietnamese Nguyễn Tất Thành left the country to seek a way for national salvation. Initially, he set out only with deep patriotism, great pity for the people, and earnest aspiration for independence and freedom. He chose a way different from that of his predecessor revolutionaries. He set foot in the most civilized centers and also on the poorest and the most unfortunate places of the world. He first came to France, a world center of civilization and the country that was dominating his nation.

During his long years of peregrination, he came to many countries, came in contact with many strata of people of various ethnic groups. When living in developed capitalist countries in Europe and North America, he saw the harsh oppression and overexploitation of the working class. In Asian, African, Latin American countries, he saw with his own eyes many nations living under the extremely cruel and savage ruling of the colonialists. He clearly realized the indomitable struggle of the working class, the inflexible spirit of the oppressed peoples and the poor laborers everywhere, including the working people in

(1) Phan Bội Châu's statement.

France. Recognizing the common enemy, he came to an important conclusion: "Although the skin color is different, *in this world there are only two races: the exploiter and the exploited. There is only a genuine good friendship: the proletarian friendship.*"<sup>(1)</sup> From patriotism and pity for the people to the differentiation of "the two races" in society, Nguyễn Ái Quốc had undergone a profound ideological change and developed a class conscience, causing him to go in a very natural way, like a historical necessity, to Leninism, to Marxism-Leninism, the peak of human intelligence. Enlightened by Marxism-Leninism, Nguyễn Ái Quốc "grew up at once to the level of his mission as a maker of history."<sup>(2)</sup>

His activity in the communist movement, the worker and the national liberation movement, the continuous study of Marxism-Leninism, the experiences of the communist Parties and the Soviet Union, the cradle of the October Revolution, helped him accumulate rich knowledge and practical experience. He gradually mapped out his path for national salvation and affirmed: "*For national salvation and liberation, there is no other way than the proletarian revolution.*"<sup>(3)</sup>

In the spring of 1930, under the instruction of the Communist International, he chaired the Conference unifying the three communist organizations in Indochina, founded the Communist Party of Vietnam. The documents of the Party-founding Conference were prepared by him, such as the *Communist Party of Vietnam's Platform in Brief, Policy and Tactics in Brief*,

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. National Politics Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995. Vol. 1, p. 266.

(2) Phạm Văn Đồng. *Hồ Chí Minh – A Man, a Nation, an Age, and a Cause*. Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, 1990, p. 14.

(3) Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. National Politics Publishing House, Hanoi, 1996. Vol. 9, p. 314.

*Program in Brief*, and *Rules in Brief*, which are models of the creative application of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine and the line of the Communist International to the concrete conditions of our country. They became the first political platform of our Party, i.e. “to carry out a bourgeois democratic revolution and an agrarian revolution to eventually establish a communist society.”<sup>(1)</sup> This line associates national independence with socialism, patriotism with genuine internationalism, the Vietnamese revolution with the proletarian revolutionary movement. The revolutionary path of Vietnam, the way for national salvation had been pointed out by Hồ Chí Minh. Nguyễn Ái Quốc’s correctness from the very beginning had been tested and confirmed. From then on, the Vietnamese revolution recorded one victory after another, opening a new, most brilliant phase in the history of Vietnam.

*Hồ Chí Minh was a talented strategist.* Grasping Marxism-Leninism, understanding the developmental trend of the era, *he very early pointed out that the national liberation revolution must follow the way of the proletarian revolution and that the Vietnamese revolution was an integral part of the world revolution.* From the viewpoint that imperialism is a “two-proboscis leech” he considered that the revolution in the mother country and the national liberation revolution in colonies are the “two wings of a bird”, the two currents of the world revolution. Creatively applying Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of a colony, Hồ Chí Minh came to a new theoretical point: the revolution in a colony does not depend on the revolution in the mother country; it can take the initiative to rise up and “use its own strength to free itself.”<sup>(2)</sup> Moreover it “can assist its brothers in the West in carrying out complete liberation.”<sup>(3)</sup>

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 3, p. 1.

(2) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 3, p. 554.

(3) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 1, p. 36.

Therefore, in a colony, the primary task is to carry out the national liberation revolution to advance to socialism. This is a great historical lesson having a principal significance: practice is the criterion of truth; revolution is creative; dogmatism and imitation will lead to failure.

Early in 1941, he returned to the country and together with the Party Central Committee, led the Vietnamese revolution. At the 8th Plenum of the Central Committee, it was decided *to shift the strategic orientation of the Vietnamese revolution, the national liberation task should be carried out above all and first of all.* On the basis of the correct analysis that the sharpest contradiction of our society then was the contradiction between the whole Vietnamese people and the French colonialists, the Japanese militarists, and their feudal agents. “If the question of national liberation is not solved, if independence and freedom are not recovered for the whole people, the entire nation will not only remain enslaved, but the interests of the working class will also be unrecovered for 10,000 years more.”<sup>(1)</sup>

*Hồ Chí Minh always highlighted the national motive force. He always advocated the cohesion of all national forces. In 1924, he already said: “Nationalism is a great motive force of the country.”*<sup>(2)</sup> In his thinking, the nation is viewed from the position of the working class, harmoniously combining patriotism and genuine internationalism. That is “nationalism oriented to communism.” That viewpoint is the greatest contribution of President Hồ Chí Minh to the Marxist-Leninist ideology and to the world revolution.

(1) Communist Party of Vietnam: *The Party’s Completed Documents*. National Politics Publishing House, Hanoi, 2000. Vol. 7, p. 113.

(2) Hồ Chí Minh. *Completed Works*. National Politics Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995. Vol. 1, p. 466.



Under the banner of national independence and socialism, the national liberation revolution not only brought independence and unification to the country, it gradually brought freedom and happiness to the whole people. Therefore it has mobilized and put to the fullest avail the strength of the national and class motive force, won the approval and support of the international communist and worker movement, of the national liberation movement, and of all the progressive mankind to vanquish several times stronger foes. These viewpoints are the basic thoughts of Hồ Chí Minh that revolution must be based on the strength of all the people; "with the people's support, we can do everything", and on national unity, a constituent part of the general line of the Vietnamese revolution for our people's past and ever lasting national construction and defense.

With regard to the construction of socialism in the North, only after a short period, President Hồ had put forward very fundamental and profound viewpoints about the starting point, the basic immediate and long-term objectives, the social forces, the mode of implementation, the steps to be taken, and the role of science and technique... He stressed that the characteristics of the socialist revolution in our country are that we directly advance to socialism from a small production and a backward economy without passing by the phase of capitalist development. Therefore the construction of socialism will take a long time and develop gradually; it cannot be done hastily. He said in practical, concrete terms, easy to understand: "Socialism is above all aimed at freeing the working people from poverty, creating jobs for everybody, ensuring an abundant and happy life to everybody,"<sup>(1)</sup> "Independence has no meaning if the people are not happy and free,"<sup>(2)</sup> "Socialism consists in making the

people have enough food and clothes and a happier and happier life, ensuring that everybody can go to school, receive medical care when sick, that the elderly who are no longer able to work may rest, that bad customs and habits can be gradually eliminated."<sup>(1)</sup> "Socialism is aimed at bettering the material and cultural life of the people; this betterment is done by the people themselves."<sup>(2)</sup> In a word, "Socialism is to make the people rich, the country strong,"<sup>(3)</sup> etc. These are the characteristics of the nature of the socialism that our Party and people are striving to achieve.

Regarding the progress to socialism, he said that above all we must develop production. "To install socialism, there is no other way than everybody making the greatest efforts in production. Production is our principal battlefield now;"<sup>(4)</sup> "Production must go along with thriftiness", "Our most important task is *to build the material and technical base of socialism...* having modern industry and agriculture, advanced culture and science."<sup>(5)</sup> He also said that socialism and science would bring mankind to unbounded happiness. The socialist revolution is aimed at overcoming backwardness and poverty and building everlasting happiness for our people and descendants."<sup>(6)</sup> He spoke about economic sectors, about the development of the State-run economic sector as foundation, about economic management, about how to encourage the peasantry to enrich themselves, the poor to improve their living conditions, those who have improved their lots to get rich, the rich to get richer, etc.

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 591.

(2) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 556.

(3) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 8, p. 226.

(4) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 312.

(5) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 13.

(6) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 292.

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 17.

(2) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 4, p. 56.

The achievements of the construction of socialism in the North during the anti-US resistance war made it really become the great rear playing the most decisive role in winning complete victory together with the South which played the directly decisive role, liberating South Vietnam and unifying the country.

After national unification, all Vietnam now advances to socialism, on the basis of President Hồ's fundamental and correct viewpoints, experience obtained during the years of socialist construction in the North, and the country's realities. Our Party has put forward the renovation policy resulting in significant achievements in the socialist construction in Vietnam.

*President Hồ Chí Minh was a great organizer who laid foundations for the building of the Party, the State, the armed forces and the National United Front, for winning international support and assistance - the fundamental factors for ensuring the success of the Vietnamese revolution.*

Correctly and creatively applying Lenin's principles of a new-type political Party, Hồ Chí Minh had successfully built a communist Party in a colonial country where the majority of the population are peasants. He said: to bring the revolution to success, first of all there must be a revolutionary Party which takes Marxism-Leninism as the guiding doctrine. The working class in a colonial country is small but it is the only class having the mission of leading the revolution. The coming into being of the Communist Party of Vietnam is the result of the combination of Marxism-Leninism with the workers' movement and the patriotic movement of Vietnam. That is why, from the very beginning, our Party's nature is that of the working class, the faithful representative of the working people and the whole nation. In view of the reality of the Vietnamese revolution, he paid attention to the diffusion of Marxism-Leninism and to increasing the capability and quality of Party members. As a

result, though the Communist Party of Vietnam was born in a colonial country and the majority of its members are not industrial workers, the working class nature and the revolutionary vanguard role of the Party is solidly maintained. And precisely through practically leading the revolution, our Party has become the only leader of the Vietnamese people and is considered by the whole people their Party and their only leader.

President Hồ always paid attention to the strengthening and enhancement of Party members' quality and morality. He put in the first place "the essential qualities of a revolutionary" and he himself is a shining example of revolutionary ethics. He early discovered the violation by Party members of the required quality and morality when "the Party becomes a ruling party." He severely criticized bureaucratism, commandism, corruption, wastefulness, the violation of the people's mastership rights. He gave importance to national unity. He stressed that: "Unity is a precious tradition of our Party and people. Party members, from the Central Committee to Party cells, must preserve the Party's unity and one-mindedness like the pupils of their eyes."<sup>(1)</sup> He always taught Party cadres and members to keep flesh and blood ties and close contact with the people: "Under the sky, nothing is more precious than the people; in the world, nothing is stronger than the people's solidarity."<sup>(2)</sup>

Whenever the revolution shifted to a new strategic phase, he always reminded us to readjust the Party and to make it up to the requirement of new tasks. In his *Testament*, he foresaw the phenomena to be remedied in the Party after the victory of the resistance war but it is regrettable that we have not fully abided by his recommendations, that we have let individualism appear and develop with worrying manifestations.

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 12, p. 510.

(2) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 8, p. 276.

Hồ Chí Minh was the founder of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the first people's democratic state in South-East Asia, which he led for 24 years. He determined that it was a State of the people, controlled by the people, in the interests of the people, under the leadership of the Party of the working class. According to him, our country is a democratic one, "the people are the masters;" Government officials are the people's servants, who must wholeheartedly serve the people and the country. The State must be democratic to the people and authoritarian to the opponents of the people's interests. He criticized the government officials who violated the interests of the people, "standing above the people and being revolutionary mandarins".

Hồ Chí Minh was the organizer and trainer of the people's armed forces, the people's army, a new-type army of the Vietnamese people characterized by the working class nature - Old Ho's soldiers. That army originates from the people and fights for the people's sake; it is directly led by the Communist Party of Vietnam. Hồ Chí Minh's military thoughts constitute the core of our Party's military line and our people's policy for the solid defense of the country.

The realization of national unity and the building of the broad National United Front are great achievements recorded by President Hồ Chí Minh. He had gathered the genuine revolutionary organizations into one bloc, concentrated the strength of the entire nation, received the support of all strata of people, and built international solidarity. A great organizer Hồ Chí Minh turned the well-known motto "Unity, unity, great unity; Success, success, great, success"<sup>(1)</sup> into moral spirit and intelligence, into a huge force to vanquish the cruel enemy forces for national construction and defense. Unity of the Party, national and international solidarity will remain forever a great force of the

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 607.

Vietnamese in the national democratic revolution and in the socialist revolution.

Hồ Chí Minh laid foundations for modern Vietnamese diplomacy. He developed the peace-loving spirit of the nation: "To undertake the great cause to overcome cruelty and brutality; To take humanity to replace ruthless violence,"<sup>(1)</sup> to safeguard national independence with determination, to firmly keep principles but to apply flexible tactics according to the guiding line of "Taking the invariable to cope with ten thousand variables", to secure international approval and support for our people's revolutionary cause. Precisely it is due to this creativeness that we have been able to combine the three fronts: military, political, and diplomatic to win over the enemy.

*President Hồ Chí Minh is the embodiment of Vietnamese culture and a celebrity of world culture.* He inherited the cultural traditions of ancient and modern time, of the East and the West; particularly he grasped Marxism-Leninism, the peak of the humanist ideas of mankind. Thanks to this fact, cultural values, national, modern and humanist at the same time, had crystallized in him. Being a vanguard combatant in art and literature, as well as in revolutionary journalism, he fought for national independence, socialism, justice, compassion, and reason in the world. His cultural contributions are rich and diversified, impregnating all his life and work and radiating from each action, each gesture of his, each relationship of his with his comrades, his compatriots, and his foreign friends.

The kernel of Hồ Chí Minh thought about culture is patriotism, love for people, deep compassion for and confidence in human beings; everything is in the interests of man and done by man. This is a humanist world outlook and philosophy of life, a

(1) Nguyễn Trãi. *Proclamation of Victory Over the Wu.*

communist humanism. He said: "*In final analysis, all questions... are related to living and to being a man. Living and being a man require love for the country, for the people, for the suffering and oppressed people.*"<sup>(1)</sup> All his life he accepted sacrifices and struggled against oppression and injustice, for a free and happy life of the people, nation and mankind.

For him, culture is manifested in the new ethics: industriousness, thriftiness, integrity, righteousness, disinterestedness and devotion to public interests. Hồ Chí Minh was a communist ethical paragon. He gave great importance to ethics. He said: "A river takes water from streams; without streams it will dry up; A tree must have roots; Without roots, it will die. Revolutionaries must be virtuous. Without virtues, they cannot lead the people, however capable they may be. National liberation is a great task. Without virtues... a man cannot do anything."<sup>(2)</sup> Revolutionary ethic is an important component of Hồ Chí Minh thought and culture, an invaluable heritage for us today and for future generations.

*President Hồ Chí Minh was a great man leaving a remarkable imprint on Vietnamese history and world history in the 20th century.* Reviewing the formation and development of Hồ Chí Minh thought through the Vietnamese revolution, we see a whole system of comprehensive and consistent thoughts about the fundamental questions of the Vietnamese revolution: development from the national democratic revolution to socialism without passing by the phase of capitalist development; national independence associated with socialism. That is the colonial revolution for national liberation, then for social and human liberation, advancing to communism in Vietnam. That is the

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. *Vietnamese State and Law*. Legal Publishing House, Hanoi, 1990, p. 174.

(2) Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. National Politics Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995. Vol. 5, pp. 252-253.

central concept of Hồ Chí Minh thought, the deepest theoretical thinking of his. His thought has a great value not only in the 20th century, it will also radiate in the 21st century.

Hồ Chí Minh creatively applied and developed Marxism-Leninism in the specific conditions of the Vietnamese revolution. The 7th Congress of the Party for the first time correctly affirmed the position of Hồ Chí Minh thought in the lines and policies of the Vietnamese revolution: Marxism-Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh thought are the ideological foundation, the compass of the Party's actions. This is an accurate summing up and a new development in the theoretical thinking of our Party.

... Under the banner of President Hồ Chí Minh and the Communist Party of Vietnam, our people have fulfilled the tasks of the national democratic revolution; all the country has begun the transitional period to socialism for one fourth of a century.

During the 15 years of renovation and national construction, our people have recorded important achievements. Our country has gone out of the socio-economic crisis and continued its socialist-oriented development.

The world situation is experiencing rapid and sweeping changes. The tremendous development of the modern scientific and technological revolution at present, particularly the revolution of informatics, is creating unprecedented qualitative change in the forces of production and gradually shifting mankind to a new level of civilization, the information civilization. A number of developed countries have stepped from the industrial socio-economic era into a new socio-economic era, the era of knowledge-based economy and global information society. On that basis, a globalization trend has appeared, pushing the whole planet into a hurricane controlled by a small number of developed countries and transnational economic corporations. While

the lessening of tension and peaceful cooperation reflecting the aspiration of mankind are developing, the struggle between classes and ethnic groups is becoming violent and complicated. Local wars, ethnic and religious conflicts continue with the hitherto unseen armament race for hi-tech weapons. It is paradoxical that while material and spiritual riches are increasingly produced, the gap between rich and poor countries is widening, the danger of environmental deterioration, social evils, and mortal diseases is becoming more serious.

Our country has entered a new period. Its stance and strength have greatly changed, but for the time being it is still one of the poor countries with low labour efficiency and competitiveness, backward technology as compared with developed countries. While the advanced countries in the world have completed two industrial revolutions and are carrying out the information revolution, Vietnam is just beginning the period of industrialization.

In such conditions at home and in the world, our country is facing great opportunities and, at the same time, has to confront new serious difficulties and challenges.

To maintain the steady and correctly-oriented development of renovation, national construction and defense, to catch up with the countries having a middle-level economy, then the developed countries in the region and in the world, we should continue the thorough study of Hồ Chí Minh thought, on the basis of grasping Marxist-Leninist theory and method, to fully understand and to diffuse it more widely, and to apply it to the renovation cause in a creative way.

All our Party and people will persevere in our ideals of national independence and socialism that President Hồ has chosen. We should well grasp that nation building must go along with national defense; that these two strategic tasks must

be fulfilled simultaneously. We should preserve our economic self-reliance, our cultural identities, our national independence in the integration with the region and the world. We should realize international cooperation on the basis of equality, mutual interest, and mutual respect. Our foreign policy should be diversified and multilateralized to win the approval and support of the world movement for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress. The cooperation among countries in the Southern hemisphere, in the non-allied movement should be strengthened, thereby contributing to forming a fair and equal world order for the sake of peace, stability, and human development.

The construction of socialism to bring about a qualitative change of our society in all respects is a difficult, complicated, important, and lasting undertaking, as Uncle Hồ said. In the transitional period, the fundamental contradictions remain. We should use the Marxist-Leninist position, standpoint, and method to sum up the experiences of our Party, and to correctly analyze the characteristics of our country. Only in this way can we gradually understand the development laws of the Vietnamese revolution, to determine the lines, guiding principles, and concrete measures of the socialist revolution that are suitable to the situation of our country<sup>(1)</sup>. In this spirit, we should deeply analyze the salient contradiction of our society today, that is the contradiction between the low level of the production forces and the very high requirement of modern production, of socialism, and of the ever-raising material and cultural life of the people. That is why our primary task at present is to strive to develop the production forces and abundantly produce riches in order to overcome poverty and backwardness, to bring a plentiful, free, and happy

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(1) Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works*. National Politics Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995. Vol. 8, p. 494.

life to the people. Each progress of the revolution results in practical improvements of the people's life and more social justice. Democracy and justice are the characteristics of the superior nature of socialism.

To develop production forces, we should step up industrialization and modernization, chiefly the modernization of agriculture and rural areas with a new content appropriate to the developmental trend of modern science and technology, for the purpose of building the material and technical basis of socialism. However, the production forces can only develop in suitable production relations. That is why the State should control the crucial economic sectors; the State-owned economy should obtain high socio-economic effects and play a leading role in the national economy. At the same time, we should study and develop the various forms of economic organization, from lower to higher levels: State economy, cooperative economy, individual economy, small proprietors, private capitalism, joint enterprises with foreign countries, mixing different forms of ownership, etc., so as to push forward the socialization of production in the socialist orientation.

With the reviewed lines, policies, and laws of the Party and the State, everybody, every family, every economic organization, every enterprise should devote their capability, intelligence, and investment to emulating with one another in creating jobs, many high-quality products competitive on the home and world markets. Any discrimination with regard to economic sectors should be eliminated. Goods producers and managers, private or State-owned enterprises, that operate with high efficiency, quality and effectiveness, those who get rich legally and help the poor or have public utilities at heart, all are highly appreciated by society. Abundant production and thriftiness constitute our main endeavors at present, as recommended by President Hồ.

For the purpose of industrialization and modernization, we should develop science and technology and make them really become direct forces of production and main motive forces in socio-economic development, thereby overcoming the danger of lagging behind in science and technology. In the current information revolution, we have no other choice than rapidly to get acquainted with the newest knowledge and technology of the era to modernize the economy and to bring about a change in the economic structure aiming at gradually forming a knowledge-based economy capable of competing with the ever-increasing added value.

To build socialism there must be socialist men and women and the internal general strength of the country, primarily of the Vietnamese, must be put to the fullest avail. Therefore, there should be a strong change, a revolution in education and training, an improvement of popular education. An advanced education should be built to suit the development trend of the era, thereby enabling all the people, the young generation in particular, to incessantly raise their knowledge and capability and the contingent of scientific workers to reach the height of human intelligence. That is also the premise or primordial condition for actively pursuing the open-door strategy and for integrating with the region and the world to develop quickly and sustainably.

Our people have embodied a well-known truth: humanity, knowledge, and heroism. Our Party, each official, each Party member, each communist youth, each patriotic Vietnamese innately have these fine qualities. Each of us should emulate to over-fulfill our plan, each locality should well carry out their key projects; the working class, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, the vanguard youths and volunteers who are engaged in production, work, or opening the Trường Sơn route, or conquering the high

seas, the armed forces all over the country should create a new revolutionary surge to fulfill the 2000 plan with the highest results. That revolutionary surge will certainly bring about new heroes among the present young generation and also those who have participated in the gallant years of the resistance war. This is the best and most realistic way to celebrate the anniversary of President Hồ Chí Minh's birthday.

Implementing Uncle Hồ's *Testament*, the Party should activate the movement of Party building and rectification, criticism and self-criticism according to the example set by President Hồ. Reviewing the one year following the start of the movement, we see that Party organizations have made efforts to raise the problems within Party committees for settlement; questions outstanding for several years have been discussed and concluded; many comrades have sincerely realized their shortcomings; internal solidarity has been consolidated; the sense of responsibility for the assigned functions and the maintenance of close contacts with the grass-root level have been raised; cases of corruption have been criticized, supervised, and inspected by the people; a number of cases have been examined and brought to court; the people's confidence in the Party has been strengthened. It is hoped that the movement of Party building and rectification, criticism and self-criticism will be continued more seriously and more effectively.

However, speaking more strictly, the results of the movement are not great. A number of outstanding problems in Party committees have not been resolved; a number of violations of Party statutes and state laws have not been severely dealt with; a number of comrades, including leading ones, have not sincerely self-criticized; a number of political viewpoints are not yet determined whether they are right or wrong; the shortcomings are not yet seriously rectified after criticism or self-criticism.

The eradication of bureaucratism is very slow; the prevention of corruption is not resolute; wastefulness and luxury are still common. Work performance still tends to be perfunctory; speaking a lot but execution is not effective, laziness in studying, in going to the grass-root level, and in summing up realities is still noted. In particular, the implementation of the 7th Central Committee Plenum resolution regarding the improvement of the ideological political stand and the ethical qualities of Party officials and members in Party and State organs is slow; the reforming for one step of our apparatus and the streamlining of staff are not strictly carried out, as required by the Resolution.

Therefore, to learn President Hồ's thoughts and morality, Party officials and members will strive and must strive to be good men, good communists as taught by Uncle Hồ: faithfully and resolutely sticking to the objective of national independence and socialism; preserving the revolutionary qualities and ethics, internal cohesion and people solidarity, close contact with the bases. They should be ready to accept difficult tasks, to listen to the people's views, to enhance the strength and the initiative of Party organizations and the people in solving problems arising from actual life. They should live a wholesome, simple, and thrifty life. They themselves and their families should not indulge in corruption and cover manifestations of bureaucratism and corruption; they should cultivate their knowledge, raise their intellectual and organizational capability to be able to assume revolutionary tasks in the new phase.

Our Party embodies ethical qualities and civilization. The image of the communist must remain forever the fine and noble image of a life-long servant of the country and people, the member of the Party founded, led and trained by Uncle Hồ, and the official of the State built and cultivated by Uncle Hồ for several decades now.

The movement of Party building and rectification, criticism and self-criticism constitutes a very fundamental and important content of the Party congresses at various levels and the 9th Party National Congress. All Party organizations and the entire Party should fully understand this significance so that, through the congresses, Party organizations will be politically, ideologically, ethically, and organizationally consolidated.

Fortified by President Hồ's thoughts and qualities and enlightened by his great example, our Party and people are confidently entering the 21st century. We are determined to achieve the aspiration of beloved President Hồ, namely 'to build a peaceful, unified, independent, democratic, rich and strong Vietnam and to contribute a worthy part to the world revolutionary cause.'<sup>(1)</sup>

(1) Hồ Chí Minh. Op. cit. Vol. 12. p. 512

## Annex I

### BASIC CHRONOLOGY OF PRESIDENT HỒ CHÍ MINH'S LIFE AND ACTIVITY

- 19 May 1890. Nguyễn Sinh Cung - Hồ Chí Minh is born into a Confucian scholar's family in Hoàng Trù village (presently Kim Liên commune, Nam Đàn district, Nghệ An province).
- 1905-1910. He studies at the National School in Hue, the capital city under the Nguyễn dynasty (1802-1945).
- 1911-1917. He earns his living as an assistant cook on the French ship "*Admiral Latouche Treville*"; he calls at many African countries: Algeria, Tunisia, Senegal, Guinea... He works seasonally in Harlem (New York, USA). He also worked as a snow sweeper, stove burner, an assistant cook in London, and as a photographer in Paris.
1918. He joins the French Socialist Party.
- January 1919. Under the name Nguyễn Ái Quốc, he sends a petition of the Annamite people to the World Peace Conference in Versailles, demanding that the French Government recognize the Vietnamese peoples' rights to freedom, democracy, and equality. This is the first political proclamation of the national liberation revolution in Vietnam.
- July 1920. For the first time he gets knowledge of Lenin's work *Thesis on the National and Colonial Questions*. Ever since he has decided to stand on the side of the Communist Internationale.



December 1920. He attends the Tours Congress of French socialists; together with the communists, he approves the founding of the French Communist Party and becomes the first communist in Vietnamese history.

October 1921. He participates in the founding of the Union of Colonies, becomes a permanent commissioner of the Union and takes part in the drafting of the *Declaration of the Union*.

June 1924. He attends the 5th Congress of the Communist Internationale in Moscow in the capacity of a representative of Indochina.

June 1925. He initiates the founding of the Vietnamese Revolutionary Youths' Association, the forerunner of the Indochinese Communist Party.

3 February 1930. He presides at the unifying conference of Vietnamese communists in Kowloon (Hong Kong). At this Conference, the Vietnamese Communist Party is founded (shortly afterward, it is changed into the Indochinese Communist Party. Later it is named the Vietnam Workers' Party, presently the Communist Party of Vietnam).

7 August 1935. He participates in the 7th Congress of the Communist Internationale. The Congress approves the admission of the Indochinese Communist Party into the Communist Internationale.

2 August 1941. After 30 years of traveling, he secretly crosses the China-Vietnam border to return to the country and to live in Pắc Bó (Cao Bằng).

1944-1945. He directly leads the preparation of the general insurrection. On 22 December 1944, he signs the order to organize the Vietnam Propaganda and Liberation

Brigade. This is the foundation for building up the People's Army of Vietnam. On 16 August 1945, he presides at the People's Delegates Congress in Tân Trào. The Congress approves the resolution to start the general insurrection and elects the leadership of the National Liberation Committee.

2 September 1945. On behalf of the Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRVN), he reads out the *Proclamation of Independence* at the Ba Đình Square (Hanoi), marking the birth of the first Worker-Peasant State in South-East Asia.

2 March 1946. At the first session of the National Assembly, he is elected President and Prime Minister of the DRVN Government (he remains as Prime Minister until 1955).

20 December 1946. Through the radio, he calls on the Vietnamese people to stand up and fight against the French colonialists who are trying to use force to reinstall domination over Vietnam.

September 1950, he himself directs the Cao-Bắc-Lạng military campaign. The success of the campaign opens the way for direct relations between the DRVN, the Soviet Union, and the other socialist countries.

February 1951. He presents the political report to the 2nd Congress of the Indochinese Communist Party. The Congress approves the resolution on changing the name of the Party into the Vietnam Workers' Party (VWP), calls on all the Party members and all the people to mobilize financial and material resources to quickly push forward the resistance war to victory. At the Congress he is elected Chairman of the Central Committee of the VWP.

22 July 1954. He launches an appeal to the people on the occasion of the signing of the Geneva Agreements on the restoration of peace in Indochina.

June 1955. He leads the delegation of the Party and the DRVN Government to pay friendship visits to the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

September 1960. He presides at the 3rd Congress of the VWP. The Congress points out two strategic tasks of the Vietnamese revolution in the new phase: to build socialism in the North and to liberate the South from U.S. aggressors and their agents; and to reunify the country peacefully. He is reelected Chairman of the Central Committee of the VWP.

April 1965. He is elected Chairman of the National Defense Council of the DRVN. At the session of the National Assembly, he calls for "devoting everything to the anti-U.S. struggle for national salvation."

2 September 1969. After a serious heart attack, he passes away in his residence in Hanoi.

29 November 1969. The Political Bureau of the VWP Central Committee decides the preservation of the body of President Hồ Chí Minh and the construction of the mausoleum for him at the Ba Đình Square. On 23 September 1975, the construction is completed.

## Annex II

### DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM\*

"All men are created equal. They are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

This immortal statement appeared in the *Declaration of Independence* of the United States of America in 1776. In a broader sense, it means: All the peoples on the earth are equal from birth, all the peoples have a right to live and to be happy and free.

The *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen*, made at the time of the French Revolution, in 1791, also states: "All men are born free and with equal rights, and must always remain free and have equal rights."

Those are undeniable truths.

Nevertheless, for more than eighty years, French imperialism, abusing the standard of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, have violated our Fatherland and oppressed our fellow-citizens. They have acted contrary to the ideals of humanity and justice.

Politically, they have deprived our people of every democratic liberty.

They have enforced inhuman laws, they have set up three different political regimes in the North, the Center and the South

\* Read on 2nd September 1945 by President Hồ Chí Minh at a meeting of 500,000 people in Ba Đình Square (Hanoi).

of Vietnam in order to wreck our country's oneness and prevent our people from being united.

They have built more prisons than schools. They have mercilessly massacred our patriots. They have drowned our uprisings in seas of blood.

They have fettered public opinion and practiced obscurantism.

They have weakened our race with opium and alcohol. In the field of economics, they have sucked us dry, driven our people to destitution and devastated our land.

They have robbed us of our rice-fields, our mines, our forests and our natural resources. They have monopolized the issue of bank-notes and the import and export trade.

They have invented numerous unjustifiable taxes and reduced our people, especially our peasantry, to extreme poverty. They have made it impossible for our national bourgeoisie to prosper; they have mercilessly exploited our workers.

In the autumn of 1940, when the Japanese fascists invaded Indochina to establish new bases against the Allies, the French colonialists went down on their bended knees and opened the door of our country to welcome the Japanese in.

Thus, from that date, our people were subjected to the double yoke of the French and the Japanese. Their sufferings and miseries increased. The result was that towards the end of last year and the beginning of this year, from Quảng Trị province to the North more than two million of our fellow-citizens died from starvation.

On the 9th March this year, the French troops were disarmed by the Japanese. The French colonialists either fled or surren-

dered, showing that not only were they incapable of "protecting" us, but that, in a period of five years they had twice sold our country to the Japanese.

Before the 9th of March, how often the Việt Minh had urged the French to ally themselves with it against the Japanese! But instead of agreeing to this proposal, the French colonialists only intensified their terrorist activities against the Việt Minh. After their defeat and before fleeing, they massacred the political prisoners detained at Yên Bái and Cao Bằng.

In spite of all this, our fellow-citizens have always manifested a lenient and humane attitude towards the French. After the Japanese putsch of March 9, 1945, the Việt Minh helped many Frenchmen to cross the frontier, rescued others from Japanese jails and protected French lives and property. In fact, since the autumn of 1940, our country had ceased to be a French colony and had become a Japanese possession.

When the Japanese surrendered to the Allies, our entire people rose to gain power and founded the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The truth is that we have wrested our independence from the Japanese, not from the French.

The French have fled, the Japanese have capitulated. Emperor Bảo Đại has abdicated. Our people have broken the chains which have fettered them for nearly a century and have won independence for Vietnam. At the same time they have overthrown the centuries-old monarchic regime and established a democratic republican regime.

We, the Provisional Government of the new Vietnam, representing the entire Vietnamese people, hereby declare that from now on we break off all relations of a colonial character with

France; cancel all treaties signed by France on Vietnam, and abolish all privileges held by France in our country.

The entire Vietnamese people are of one mind in their determination to oppose all wicked schemes by the French colonialists.

We are convinced that the Allies, which at the Teheran and San Francisco Conferences upheld the principle of equality among the nations, cannot fail to recognize the right of the Vietnamese people to independence.

A people who have courageously opposed French enslavement for more than eighty years, a people who have resolutely sided with the Allies against the fascists during these last years, such a people must be free, such a people must be independent.

For these reasons, we, Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, solemnly make this declaration to the world:

Vietnam has the right to enjoy freedom and independence and in fact has become a free and independent country. The entire Vietnamese people are free and determined to mobilize all their physical and mental strength, to sacrifice their lives and property in order to safeguard their freedom and independence.

### Annex III

## HỒ CHÍ MINH'S TESTAMENT

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM  
Independence - Freedom - Happiness

*10 May 1969*

Even though our people's struggle against U.S. aggression for national salvation may have to go through more hardships and sacrifices, we are bound to win total victory.

This is a certainty.

I intend, when that comes, to tour both South and North to congratulate our heroic fellow-countrymen, cadres and combatants, and visit old people and our beloved youth and children.

Then, on behalf of our people, I will go to the fraternal countries of the socialist camp and friendly countries in the whole world and thank them for their whole-hearted support and assistance to our people's patriotic struggle against U.S. aggression.

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\*   \*

Tu Fu, the famous poet of the Tang dynasty in China, wrote: "In all times, few are those who reach the age of seventy".

This year, being seventy-nine I can already count myself among those "few"; still, my mind has somewhat declined in comparison with the last few years. When one has seen more than seventy springs, health deteriorates with one's growing age. This is no wonder.

But who can say how much longer I shall be able to serve the revolution, the Homeland and the people?

I therefore leave these few lines in anticipation of the day when I shall go and join Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin and other revolutionary elders; this way, our people throughout the country, our comrades in the Party, and our friends in the world will not be taken by surprise.

**First about the Party:** Thanks to its close unity and total dedication to the working class, the people and the Homeland, our Party has been able, since its founding, to unite, organize and lead our people from success to success in a resolute struggle.

Unity is an extremely precious tradition of our Party and people. All comrades, from the Central Committee down to the cells, must preserve the unity and oneness of mind in the Party as the apple of their eye.

Within the Party, to establish broad democracy and to practice self-criticism and criticism regularly and seriously is the best way to consolidate and develop solidarity and unity. Comradely affection should prevail.

Ours is a Party in power. Each Party member, each cadre must be deeply imbued with revolutionary morality, and show industry, thrift, integrity, uprightness, total dedication to the public interest and complete selflessness. Our Party should preserve absolute purity and prove worthy of its role as the leader and very loyal servant of the people.

**The Working Youth Union members and our young people** in general are good; they are always ready to come forward, fearless of difficulties and eager for progress. The Party must foster their revolutionary virtues and train them to be our successors, both "red" and "expert", in the building of socialism.

The training and education of future revolutionary generations is of great importance and necessity.

**Our labouring people**, in the plains as in the mountains, have for generation after generation endured hardships, feudal and colonial oppression and exploitation; they have in addition experienced many years of war.

Yet, our people have shown great heroism, courage, enthusiasm and industriousness. They have always followed the Party since it came into being, with unqualified loyalty.

The Party must work out effective plans for economic and cultural development so as to constantly improve the life of our people.

**The war of resistance against U.S. aggression** may drag on. Our people may have to face new sacrifices of life and property. Whatever happens, we must keep firm our resolve to fight the U.S. aggressors till total victory.

*Our mountains will always be, our rivers will always be, our people will always be.*

*The American invaders defeated, we will rebuild our land ten times more beautiful.*

No matter what difficulties and hardships lie ahead, our people are sure of total victory. The U.S. imperialists will certainly have to quit. Our Homeland will certainly be reunified. Our fellow-countrymen in the South and in the North will

certainly be re-united under the same roof. We, a small nation, will have earned the signal honor of defeating, through heroic struggle, two big imperialisms - the French and the American - and of making a worthy contribution to the world national liberation movement.

**About the world communist movement** - Being a man who has devoted his whole life to the revolution, the more proud I am of the growth of the international communist and workers' movement, the more pained I am by the current discord among the fraternal Parties.

I hope that our Party will do its best to contribute effectively to the restoration of unity among the fraternal Parties on the basis of Marxism - Leninism and proletarian internationalism, in a way which conforms to both reason and sentiment.

I am firmly confident that the fraternal parties and countries will have to unite again.

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**About personal matters** - All my life, I have served the Homeland, the revolution and the people with all my heart and strength. If I should now depart from this world, I would have nothing to regret, except not being able to serve longer and more.

When I am gone, a grand funeral should be avoided in order not to waste the people's time and money.

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Finally, to the whole people, the whole Party, the whole army, to my nephews and nieces, the youth and children, I leave my boundless love.

I also convey my cordial greetings to our comrades and friends, and to the youth and children throughout the world.

My ultimate wish is that our entire Party and people, closely joining their efforts, will build a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Vietnam, and make a worthy contribution to the world revolution.

Hanoi, 10 May 1969

HỒ CHÍ MINH



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**Tư tưởng Hồ Chí Minh mãi mãi soi sáng  
đường chúng ta đi**

**Chịu trách nhiệm xuất bản**

**MAI LÝ QUẢNG**

**Biên tập: Trần Đoàn Lâm**

**Sửa bản in: Xuân Hồng**

**Bìa: Ngô Xuân Khôi**

**Trình bày: Trần Huy Tiến**

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