

On the Eve of the VIth Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam – Vietnam 1976-1986
Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi, 1986

The Road of the Communist party of Vietnam and Contemporary Vietnam
Nguyen Van Dam – February 1986

‘..... the way forward for the Indochinese revolution was laid down as that of a national democratic revolution led by the working class evolving straight into a socialist revolution without passing through the stage of capitalist development.’
p 7

‘The Third National Congress..... was directed towards the building of socialism in the North,’ p 9

‘..... complete independence, national independence and socialism have become one.

Only under socialism will our motherland have a modern economy, advanced culture and science and a strong national defence.’ p 10

‘.... to take the economy of our country from small-scale production to large-scale socialist production with a modern industrial and agricultural structure.

- to give priority to the rational development of heavy industry on the basis of developing agriculture and light industry.’ p 10

‘..... this [the development of the highlands] will necessitate an important movement of population towards these regions in the years to come.’ p 11

‘... - to develop simultaneously a flexible central economy and the regional economy.’ p 11

‘... - to lay particular emphasis on the problems of economic management.’ p 11

‘Despite attempts by enemies, external and internal to undermine it, an undoubted and stable popular consensus exists from South to North.’ p 11

‘National reconstruction started off well. Although the take-off was very painful, the economy obtained honourable results for 1976 which were to be subsequently wasted by objective and subjective difficulties. Abroad people expected a nation which had defeated US imperialism to make a fairly rapid and perhaps spectacular economic comeback, forgetting that Vietnam is a Third World country with all its inherent weaknesses. To this was added the heavy inheritance left by war and the twenty-year division of the country in two parts, the burden of national defence, enemy sabotage, and repeated natural calamities. In the South there were 20,000 bomb craters, two-thirds of the hamlets destroyed, 5 million hectares of forest devastated, 20 million villagers chased from the countryside, 362,000 war invalids, 1 million widows, 880,000 orphans, 290,000 drug addicts, 300,000 prostitutes and 3 million unemployed. In the North, two-thirds of rural communes had been bombed, a thousand of them razed to the ground, the whole road infrastructure damaged, the infant industrial system almost dismantled. Society, especially the South, was marked by the impact of the war, while the situation was rendered more complicated by the maze of ethnic minorities (including a million Hloa (sic) of Chinese origin), and religious sects with elements linked to foreign powers. The economy had been abruptly cut off from very important foreign aid.’ pp 11-12

‘... the 6th Party Plenum held in August 1979 laid down adequate rectification measures....

- a) In agriculture, compulsory deliveries to the State were stabilized and the excess could be either sold to State trading services at agreed prices or freely offered on the parallel market, buying prices of agricultural produces were revised so as to stimulate production and increase procurement, and payment in the cooperatives should be given to each according to his work.
- b) In industry..... to maintain the State sector and, under its supervision, the other four sectors, not over the whole country but only in certain towns in the South. For crafts and small production, including services and repairs, if the individual worker is capable of supplying the clients' needs, he should be encouraged and given effective aid, not 'collectivized'.
- c) In commerce, beside the state sector and under its supervision, there is the parallel market..... the right to use foreign currency according to fixed norms and modalities.
- d)the supply of necessities should be ensured according to the norm in fixed rations.....salaries by piecework and by task should be made general, along with the application of material incentives (bonuses, rewards according to gradually increasing norms) in coordination with the reinforcement of ideological and political work.' pp 13-14

'..... to rectify certain utopian and voluntarist practices and struggle against bureaucracy and other negative social manifestations.' p 14

'..... severe economic problems which "to some extent were aggravated or provoked by our own errors and shortcomings".'

p 14

'The Fifth Congress.....reaffirming the correctness of the orientation of the socialist revolution and socialist economic construction.....underlined the weaknesses and the inadequacies in economic and social leadership....of

“subjectivism, impatience, conservatism, inertia, bureaucracy, lack of realism, irresponsibility...” both in “concretising and executing the Party line” and in “organizing and directing the implementation of the concrete policies, economic and social management”.’ pp 14-15

‘We must resolve the problem of food supplies, and make efforts to meet requirements in clothing, study, medical care, housing, transport, childcare, and other essential consumer needs.’ p 15

‘To complete the socialist transformation in the southern provinces, to continue improving the socialist relations of production in the North; and to consolidate the socialist relations of production in the whole country.’ p 16

‘.... the 8th Plenum of the CPV Central Committee (1985) revolutionary reform in the field of economic management. The bureaucratic method of centrally controlled management with its system of administrative subsidies was abolished and a system of socialist accounting and profitability based on rational planning mediated through three levels, the centre, region and base, with the emphasis on encouraging initiative at grassroots level.’ p 16

‘.... the Vietnamese State depended on the increased aid from the USSR and other socialist countries.’ p 17

‘Planning only existed for form’s sake..... Thus economic management through administrative subsidies came into being.

This system was necessary in war conditions when the State was receiving a large amount of foreign aid. It should have been abandoned as soon as the war was over, when the country, now reunified, was embarking on the stage of socialist construction. But conservative ideas and the tendency to rely on foreign aid delayed the reorganization of economic management. Effective

for the years of war, the old system of management became a hindrance to all economic activities.

The 8th Plenum laid down that “the elimination of the system of economic management by administrative subsidies is an urgent need, the decisive link for converting the economy to a balanced form of management and socialist profitability based on planning”.....

- a) In the enterprises all reasonable expenses are used in the calculation of the net cost price. The price covers all effective and reasonable expenses.... The State accumulation fund will gradually rise. The State will cease buying and selling at low prices and covering unjustified deficits. Prices are fixed on the basis of planning.....
 - b) The real wages should be enough to maintain the worker and ensure the reproduction of the work force in harmony with national economic potential. The salary is paid in money; payments in kind are abolished. The amount is related to productivity, quality and work efficiency. Salary levels and scales will be revised as will fines and bonuses. The minimum salary will be fixed according to the new system of unified basic salaries for the whole country.
 - c) Financial autonomy is given to production, trade and service units. All production, trade and service activities are subject to the system of balanced management. The State budget will no longer cover unjustified deficits. Enterprises are responsible for their productive activity and for any losses they may incur.
 - d) Banking activities should be rapidly converted to the system of balancing books and socialist accountability.....Embezzlement, wastage, and the formation of “black accounts” should be punished.’
- pp 17-19

‘..... “However, owing to poor preparation, the resolutions of the 8th Plenum did not bring about the desired results..... The resolutions of the 8th Plenum of the CC and Resolution 28 of the CPV Political Bureau are entirely correct, the fault lies with the Council of Ministers”. (Report of Vo Van Kiet, Vice-President of the Council of Ministers, Director of the State Planning Committee, delivered before the National Assembly, 7th Legislature.)’ p 19

‘The Council of Ministers made a severe self-criticism on this subject.....the work is expected to take a fairly long time.’ p 19

‘..... the war of sabotage waged by Beijing in collusion with Washington.’ p 20

‘Thanks to the economic line drawn by the Fourth Congress given concrete expression by the resolutions of the 6th Plenum in particular, our economy began to move in a positive direction, especially in the production of foodstuffs..... 1983 was the first year for decades when we did not have to import food to meet our needs.’ p 20

‘..... following a division of labour determined by the collective and in the general framework of cooperative organization.’ p 21

‘Socialist industrialization constitutes the central task for the whole period of the transition to socialism..... Let us emphasize the size of these projects for a Third World country.’ p 22

‘External trade has seen a certain improvement.’ p 23

‘The large room for manoeuvre left to regional administrative units have encouraged some brave initiatives.’ p 23

‘.... after 21 years of the US presence the province and the town [of Da Nang] have gradually rediscovered the proverbial character as a people hardworking, tenacious, inventive.’ p 23

‘Hanoi is carrying out a transformation from a town of consumers to an industrial centre.’ p 24

‘In the cultural and social field, the progress made is much clearer and more substantial than in the economic. In the South, not many years after the liberation of Saigon the evils left behind by neo-colonialism such as prostitution, drug-addiction have been mostly overcome; illiteracy was eliminated from the middle of 1978.’ p 24

‘In the South, village medico-sanitary clinics, almost unknown under the old regime, are multiplying to form a ubiquitous network following the model of what has already been done in the North. WHO and UNESCO have recognised the remarkable successes made by Vietnam, despite the war, in the fields of instruction and public health.’ p 24

‘Vietnam.....a member of the world socialist system.’ p 25

‘The decisive factor in our independence as well as in our economic construction remains the support and aid coming from the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.’ p 25

‘Washington and Beijing want to make Indochina a hot spot in the world.’ p 25

‘Its [Vietnam’s] efforts at reconstruction in a socialist direction have met, and will continue to meet, with many obstacles. They have been marked by shortcomings, failures but also by gains and successes in the painful progress between 1976 and 1986. Under the leadership of a party which has proved its worth over more than half a century, the Vietnamese people will know how to draw the lessons of experience out of its successes and

failures in order to advance towards the final end, that of socialism, for “only under socialism can the age-old dream of the working people for liberation from oppression, exploitation, poverty and backwardness, a life in plenty, with an assured tomorrow, civilized and happy, come true”.’ pp 25-26

Aspects of Vietnam 1976 – 86

Excerpts from the press (*Vietnam Courier, Nhan Dan* and *Dai Doan Ket*). The articles published in the years 1980 – 85 on the achievements of the period 1976 – 86.

From Contracted Work to Contracted Produce in Agricultural Cooperatives

Nguyen Yem 1981

‘In the North, agricultural cooperation was basically completed in 1960 and further consolidated in 1965 when most cooperatives adopted a more advanced, “higher level”, system (public ownership of all means of production and distribution of profit according to work done). Contracted work made its appearance: for a set amount of work, the farmer received a set number of work points, 10 work-points amounted to a workday.’ p 29

‘Contracted work was a step forward compared with the method of working for a daily wage as formerly applied, but it had the disadvantage of being based upon the number of workdays irrespective of the quality of the work. Co-op members thus tended to work to get as many work-points as possible, which incited them to scamp their work and shorten their working time.

To put an end to this state of affairs, the “work-point computing” system was applied which introduced a measure of quality control of the daily work done by each farmer.....as the team members are all neighbours or relatives they are indulgent towards one another and mind only their own business....A new

distribution of labour has been introduced, and specialized teams have made their appearance.....In this period, the agricultural cooperatives accumulated a rich experience in management.’ pp 29-30

‘After agreeing upon a “three-point contract” with the cooperative, the production brigade signs contracts with individual peasants or groups of peasants.

The system of contracts with specialized teams is definitely superior to the “work-day” system or the “work-point computing” system because it marks a step forward in the division of labour, and to some extent facilitates the introduction of mechanization and new farming techniques, thereby contributing to step up the development of production and to strengthen the relations of production.’ pp 31-32

‘They only care for their work-points and not for the quality of their work.’ p 32

‘The gist of this new system is that the cooperatives sign the “three-point contract” not with the production brigade but directly with each peasant team or individual peasant in order to bind them to the final produce.’ pp 32-33

‘The contracted production quotas are also fixed at a meeting and kept constant for several years to gain the confidence of the farmers and encourage them in their work by guaranteeing the “three benefits”: benefit to the State, to the collective and to the individual.’ p 33

‘As the interests and responsibilities of the farmers are thereby closely related to their final produce, the new forms of contract have become an incentive to work within the framework of the cooperative and its division of labour.’ pp 33-34

‘Thanks to these types of contracts, production is increased, the co-op members’ incomes rise and consequently the cooperative can increase its accumulation of capital and supply greater quantities of farm produce to the State.

In practice, these types of contracts strengthen the relations of production, bring the farmers closer to their cooperatives, consolidate their collective mastery, streamline the managerial apparatus of the cooperatives and promote technical innovations.’ p 34

Rehabilitation and Development of Coffee Cultivation in Vietnam

Tran Phu Thanh 1981

‘..... plantations can be enlarged to a total of 200,000 hectares.’ p 36

‘We shall build scores of State farms’ p 36

‘Our policy is to develop coffee growing in all three economic sectors: State farms, co-operatives and peasant households so as to promote the compound strength of the \State and people. However, priority will be given to build State farms into advanced production units with a high level of specialization, intensive farming and application of advanced technique, with high labour productivity and coffee yield, good managerial organization, thus setting a model in the areas specialized in coffee growing.’ p 37

‘.... we shall build a coffee-processing mill and make ground and instant coffee.’ p 38

The New Economic Zone of An Ha

Thien Anh 1983

‘Mr Hai Cao said to us, “I drove a cyclomotor [in Ho Chi Minh City] from 4 a.m. till mid-night but our family was always deeply in debt”.’ p 46

‘The management pays particular attention to the technique of production and the quality of the products. According to Le Kim Hung, a responsible cadre, many engineers and technical and managerial cadres have been offered jobs at the farm or have signed contract with it. This has enabled An Ha to score much success.’ p 47

“‘An Ha farm begins to show profit”, said Chin Tan, the manager. “However, we will always remember our first days here. The State invested 8 million *dong* in the farm. We netted 1.5 million *dong* from our first crop of sugarcane; and we retrieved our investment after two more crops. Now we can stand on our own feet”.’ p 47

‘.... A 200-bed clinic for the farmworkers and also for the people of Binh Chanh district.’ p 48

Vietnamese Tropical Fruit for Export Nguyen Chu 1984

‘Individual farmers formerly and co-op farmers at present are not accustomed to raising fruit trees in concentrated fashion.....This shortcoming is now being removed. Some State farms have specialized in fruit growing while the State has raised buying prices of fruit and thus encouraged the farmers to grow it on large areas.’ pp 49-50

‘Due to the shortage of materials, lack of investments and delay in the application of modern technique, the canning industry in Vietnam is far from matching the growing potentials.’ p 50

Socialist Industrialization in the Eighties Dao Duy Tung 1983

‘Socialist industrialization is the central task throughout the transitional period in our country, the keystone of which is the building of a system of heavy industries to serve as the infrastructures of socialism. Lenin wrote: “The only possible economic basis of socialism is a large-scale mechanized industry. Who forgets this is not a communist”. He also wrote: “The material bases of socialism can only be a large-scale mechanized industry capable of transforming agriculture”.’
p 52

‘That is the guideline for the whole period of transition to socialism in our country, and also for the present stage.’ p 54

‘.... on the correct handling of the most fundamental relationship in our national economy: that between industry and agriculture in the stage ahead.’ p 55

‘To concentrate efforts on strongly developing agriculture, considering agriculture to be in the fore-front; take agriculture one step further toward large-scale socialist production while making great efforts to promote the production of consumer goods and continue the building of a number of important branches of heavy industry.’ p 56

‘ a) Our most precious asset is our labour force.....

d) The most important motive power behind our economic construction is the system of socialist collective mastery.’ p 57

‘We still have a large surplus workforce and plenty of cropland, forestland and sea areas that remain unexploited. Yet we are short of food and have achieved no accumulation..... Marx dealt with this question in the conditions of capitalist production. He wrote, “....by incorporating with itself the two primary creators

of wealth, labour power and land, capital acquires a power of expansion that permits it to augment the elements of its accumulation beyond the limits apparently fixed by its own magnitude, or by the value and the mass of the means of production already produced in which it has its being”. Karl Marx, *Capital* Vol. 1, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p 604.)

On the basis of the above analysis, the 5th Party Congress affirmed that “.....the most important task, which can and must come first is to achieve collective mastery in the interests of a rational and effective use of labour and land, and a vigorous expansion of local industries and trades at all points of production, in every locality, and throughout the country; the purpose is to provide jobs for all working people, to exploit all available land, to develop all branches and trades in both quantity and scope, to achieve better social labour productivity, a higher gross national product, and a wider variety of product”. (*CPV – 5th National Congress, Political Report*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi, 1982, pp 44-45.)’ p 58

‘...it means to develop agriculture in close and correct combination with industry.’ p 59

‘Lenin said: “Of course, it is wrong to speak of accumulation being ‘independent’ of the production of articles of consumption, if only because the expansion of production calls for the new variable capital and consequently, articles of consumption”. (V I Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1963, p85.) p 59

““To boost consumer goods production is to increase the value of agricultural produce, provide the State with commodities for exchange with the peasants, stimulate agricultural production; broaden the division of labour, create more jobs, develop the economy, increase social labour productivity, the national product and national income in the present stage”. (*CPV – 5th*

National Congress, Political Report, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi, 1982, pp 49-50.) p 60

‘In this way, we shall combine agriculture, consumer goods industries and heavy industry into a rational industrial-agricultural structure in the present stage.’ p 61

‘Without steel, there cannot be socialism.’ p 62

Blocking the Flow of the Da River
1983

‘Lenin’s well-known motto “Communism is the Soviet power plus nationwide electrification” is being realized in Vietnam.’
p 65

Thang Long Bridge over the Red River
Ngoc Thao 1984

‘..... Vietnam signed with China an agreement for the building of the Thang Long bridge.... Work started in November 1974, but the Chinese side deliberately slowed down construction and then withdrew all its experts four years later.’ p 67

Off shore Oil Exploitation at Vung Tau
Tran Quan Ngoc 1985

‘Five years ago, this region [Vung Tau] was just a stretch of mangroves. It was turned by the unflagging efforts of Army Regiment 318 and of the workers and engineers of the ministries of construction and transport and communications and of the oil department into a large and beautiful harbour.’ p 70

‘By the end of this year, 1985, a dozen such buildings with all proper conveniences will have been completed. They will house

mess halls, clubs, kindergartens and schools as well as apartments for the thousands of members of our staff and their families.’ p 70

The Bai Bang Paper Mill
Thanh Khanh 1981

‘It is encouraging thousands of other workers engaged in afforestation for the complex and hundreds of assembly workers who have by now completed half of the second phase assembly job.’ p 76

The Pha Lai Power Station
Duc Thang 1983

‘Building materials were lacking. Many of them had not yet arrived from the Soviet Union. The order was signed while the blueprints of the plan was not yet completed. The materials were not supplied in their correct order.’ p 79

‘Without helicopters, a platform and a 13-tonne iron beam were raised to the top of the chimney by rudimentary means.’ p 80

An Under-Developed Enterprise
Dao Quang Binh 1982

‘So, I hit upon the idea of participating in, or setting up, if possible, a handicraft co-operative to turn out more goods for society and also to raise my family’s income.’ p 85

‘Since we managed to use the waste of weaving-mills we have saved material for the State while reducing cost price and raising our co-op members’ income.’ p 86

‘You are right. Our co-operative was born in an under-developed economy and has grown in that context. But the fact is that it is developing and helping the country to develop.’ p 87

The New Coal Mine of Mong Duong
Dao Quang Thiep and Le Viet Chung 1983

‘We do not allow ourselves to be attracted by immediate interests but always bear in mind the long-term interests of State and the miners.’ p 90

The Da Nhim Hydro-Electric Station
T T L 1980

‘It was built by the Japanese when South Vietnam was under US-puppet rule. The building lasted from 1961 to 1965. During the war, it only supplied a few megawatts to the Da Lat area. Only after liberation of the South (30 April 1975) has it been put to full use to serve production and the people’s life.’ p 93

‘Of course, the Japanese were contacted. The Saki firm, however, said it would need 12 months to complete the work and asked for a very high price.

So, we took matters into our own hands.’ p 94

‘The cadres and workers in charge of the repair work racked their brains and eventually worked out one which ensured complete safety.’ p 94

Constructions in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Ngoc Tuong 1985

‘A vast health-care network, a truly omnipresent one, was also set up with a polyclinic in every province and a smaller one in each district, not counting health-care stations in the communes.’ p 96

‘The war of destruction launched by the USA against North Vietnam in 1965 was to destroy almost all our material bases which had been built at the cost of immense efforts.....Out of a total of 5,800 communes, 4,000 were attacked – All our industrial centres were razed to the ground. Civilian dwellings totalling more than five million metres of floorspace were knocked down. More than 3,000 schools and 350 hospitals were bombed, and ten hospitals totally destroyed.’ p 96

‘In the social and cultural fields, let us note the construction of the Hanoi Gynaecology-Obstetrics hospital, the Hanoi Paediatrics Hospital, the Dong Hoi Hospital, and many provincial and district hospitals throughout the country; the restoration and construction of 1,300 general education and higher education establishments; the building of housing totalling more than ten million square metres of floor space, etc., to mention only the major undertakings..’ p 97

‘The maturity of our building industry is evidenced by projects requiring high technical qualifications such as the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum.’ p 98

Export Goods from Thai Binh Huu Tho 1983

‘The province now has two State-owned enterprises and over three hundred cooperatives turning out export items. It’s interesting to note that of these three hundred cooperatives, only forty are working on their own, the rest, being appendages of agricultural cooperatives. Under the present circumstances, this structure makes for greater solidity. The reason is that so long

as agriculture relies mainly on manual labour, it may be affected by both shortage and redundancy of manpower. With handicraft shops set up within agricultural co-ops, we can have sufficient work force for intensive farming during cultivation campaigns and make full use of redundant manpower during the slack periods to turn out export items. Thus, the co-op members' income is raised and its capital accumulation increased while a large volume of products is contributed to the State. This also leads to better local division of labour, a gradual shaping of agro-industrial structure within the cooperatives, and lays the foundation for the speedy formation of an agro-industrial structure in the district – and this, without having to ask for food subsidies from the State as the country is facing difficulties in food supply.' p 100

Curing Drug Addicts in Ho Chi Minh City Dr. Truong Thin 1981

'Those belonging to the first kind are addicts who are not so corrupted as to be harmful to society and can still work, although they are handicapped by their addiction. Accounting for 90%, they are cured in their own houses by social methods.

The second kind comprises corrupt adults, who, apart from contracting social diseases, lived a perverted life harmful to order and security and easily fell into criminal practices. They account for 10% of the addicts and need to be concentrated for long treatment and reform.

The addicts in the first kind (about 90,000) are cured by society, while those belonging to the second kind (about 10,000) are gathered together for treatment. Ninety per cent of the patients treated by social methods have their disease cured by means of receiving smaller and smaller doses of drugs until complete recovery.' p 103

‘2. The authorities and inhabitants in the city educate hooligans and step up the new life movement....

3. The economic difficulties in post-war days have lowered the living standard of the people and compelled the addicts to curtail the consumption of drugs.’ p 104

‘Thus, the number of addicts for the whole [Ho Chi Minh] city is now about 3,000 (or 1.07%) compared with hundreds of thousands of addicts before liberation.’ p 104

Achievements in Public Health Since the August 1945 Revolution

Prof. Dang Hoi Xuan, Minister of Health, 1985

‘We have built **a stratified healthcare network** in the whole country down to the district and the grassroots, thus bringing health care to the masses.’ p 108

‘.....laying emphasis on the prevention of diseases, combining modern medicine with traditional national medicine, acting upon the watch-word “Parallel efforts by the State and the people”, launching a mass movement for completing the five major tasks in health care (building sanitary and anti-epidemic facilities; family planning; growing and using traditional medicinal herbs; looking after the people’s health and controlling social diseases; and building a popular health network) our department has gradually brought health care to the masses.’ p 108

‘..... comprises hospitals and clinics, anti-epidemic and anti-malarial teams, pharmacies and traditional medicine rooms for examination and treatment (in the district), and polyclinics (in the city quarter).’ p 109

‘Now the figure is one physician (doctor and assistant doctor) for every thousand people.’ p 109

‘**Specialized medicine** has made constant progress in order to serve popular medicine and help build a Vietnamese medicine that has attained international standards in many fields and won some prestige in the world.’ p 110

‘The above organization and structure of our health-care system bespeaks the line, orientation and objectives of our socialist health system, which lays emphasis on the struggle against epidemics, the prevention of contagious and social diseases, and closely relates such matters as sanitation, environmental hygiene and the keeping of health records to the examination, treatment and rehabilitation of patients. It pays due attention to modern medical science while setting great store by traditional medicine, combining the two for the benefit of the patients and the progress of Vietnamese medicine as a whole.’ pp 110-111

Family Planning and its Prospects Anh Thu 1985

‘Users of contraceptive devices, apart from free medical care. Also receive bonuses in paddy and other foods.’ p 116

‘More importantly still, Government policies should provide for more effective incentives in this regard.’ p 118

General Education in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Viet Chung 1985

‘By 1958, illiteracy had been eradicated in the North, and by 1978, three years after national reunification, it had been liquidated in the main throughout the country.’ p 120

‘At present, there are more than 55,000 kindergartens where 1.6 million children are looked after and educated. The best

conditions for the setting up of infant classes and schools are found in construction sites, factories, government offices, cities and densely populated rural regions.’ p 121

‘Under the present circumstances, the development of education will benefit from cooperation between the State and the people.’ p 122

Higher Education and Secondary Vocational Education
Hoang Xuan Tuy, Vice-Minister of Higher education and
Secondary Vocational Education 1985

‘The resolution of the Political Bureau of the Party central Committee on educational reform in 1979 pointed out, “To train a vast body of managerial, scientific, technical and professional cadres, that is well-balanced and well-coordinated with regard to skills, standards, and categories, and congruent with our plans for economic and cultural development. These cadres must have good political and professional qualities which will enable them to step by step resolve the scientific, technical and managerial problems they will encounter in the practical conditions of our country”.’ p 126

‘The body of teachers at present still lacks balance, and their professional standards are not uniform. The management personnel are not sufficiently well-trained and well-prepared for their jobs.’ p 127

‘..... re-examine policies affected by bureaucratic centralism, egalitarianism, and subsidy-based management and abolish them if need be; build a mechanism of management governed by democratic centralism and carry out a system of management aimed at achieving efficiency in training, scientific research and production.’ p 128

Da Nang Revisited
Nguyen Khac Vien 1984

‘Exactly the same landscape we had known in the northern countryside following the first war of resistance and the land REFORM.’ p 133

‘... FORMED A state-private enterprise and given a strong fillip local industry (sic).’ p 135

The Old and the New in Hoi An
Huu Ngoc 1985

‘The Hoi An authorities intend to ban motorists from this old quarter.’ p 140

‘Wooden statues and curios are made in a State-run workshop on the other bank of the Thu Bon. Four months ago, the commune started a cooperative building wooden boats.’ p 141

Experience in Economic management in Hai Phong Port
1984

‘Relying heavily as it did on subsidies from the central administration and confining itself to the role of distributor of centrally-supplied food and equipment, the city’s economy was immediately affected as soon as the central sources dried up....Starting in 1979, the city had to cope with machinations of Beijing-instigated elements among 30,000 ethnic Chinese: many technicians and skilled workers among them were induced to leave the country and go to China.’ pp 143-144

‘The above situation put the city leaders before an alternative: either continuing to rely on subsidies from the central administration, or seeking to exploit local possibilities,

overcome weaknesses and shortcomings and progress. They opted for the second solution.’ p 144

‘The home-trade department quickly checked and took the goods sent by the higher echelon and expanded its sales network down to rural commune and city ward, thus achieving a quick turnover and accumulating funds.’ p 145

‘Among the commercial activities, the city administration mobilized contributions from the people.’ p 145

‘.... the city made better and better use of manufacturing units, both State and collective, supplied them with materials and equipment.’ p 146

‘The city leaders thought: no industrialization is possible without enough food to eat.’ p 146

‘This guideline is in accordance with the spirit of the resolution adopted at the Fifth Party Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam which holds that efforts should be concentrated on agricultural development in the 1981-85 Five Year Plan and in the 1980s. Facts show that far from making light of industry, the objective pursued by this policy is the future development of industry itself.’ pp 146-147

‘The city has invested....’ p 147

‘Thanks to additional investments in seed selection and multiplication the cooperatives have received new strains of rice.’ p 147

‘In 1983, the city spent some foreign exchange.....These [imported goods] have been sold on credit to cooperatives and individual farmers.’ p 147

‘While giving a strong boost to production, the State must also hold control over the bulk of goods and money.

The city fund of consumer goods is fed partly by the central administration, partly by the city foreign-trade departments and partly by on-the-spot buying or exchange operations.

This fund is disposed of in three ways: one part is reserved for workers, public employees and members of the armed forces, who buy them at low “supply prices”; one part is sold to them at fixed but higher prices, to cover the costs; the third part is retailed on the market to the population at large, at prices slightly lower than those on the free market, in order to keep private traders in check.’ p 149

‘Control over the food supply gets top priority. The essential measure is to promote the people’s right to collective mastery. The city calls on the farmers to sell to the State the surplus food they have left after the compulsory deliveries.’ p 150

‘The above measures have led to State control over the bulk of goods especially food and money.’ p 150

‘At present there remains in Hai Phong no fewer than 19,000 small traders, nearly 10,000 of them in the rural areas. The City Party Committee has adopted a resolution on the reform of the market and the reorganization of small trades. Their aim is to shift 90% of them over to productive or service activities in 1984-85, or they may become agents of the State trade. To this end, materials have been imported to give jobs for them, the State trade has been strengthened and market management improved.’ p 151

‘A number of State policies and guidelines have been amended in time to accord with the new situation.’ p 151

Distribution and Circulation of Goods in Long An 1984

‘Before steps were taken to improve the situation, the provincial economy was beset with difficulties: food grain production in 1980 was only 436,000 tonnes. Industrial crops were erratic. Animal husbandry was seriously declining. The socialist sector of the provincial economy accounted for 7-8% in agriculture, 36% in industry, 22% in retail trade. Market management was slack and the larger part of farm products were controlled by private traders in the province and neighbouring provinces. The administrative style of conducting business in the State sector made nuisances for public employees and the people at large and led to such evils as bribery, collusion, theft, abuses, etc. many difficulties plagued the life of workers, public employees, and members of the armed forces. Hundreds of employees on the health and educational services and the building and textile industries handed in their resignation.’ pp 152-153

‘.....aimed at solving this key problem in goods circulation and distribution, viz. control by the State over the bulk of goods and money on the basis of readjusting buying and selling prices, giving a fillip to production, and stabilizing the living conditions of cadres in particular and the population in general.’ p153

‘Have industrial goods, mainly means of production, to exchange with the peasants for farm products.

Improve the ways to buy from and sell to the peasants in order to eliminate the interference of private traders.’ p 153

‘The main one is the two-way contract, whereby the State would provide an advance supply of means of production (no consumer goods).

With regard to the surpluses left to peasants after delivery to the State#, the latter would pay a mutually agreed price, a bit lower than the market price, in cash.’ p 154

‘The proportion of goods purchased by the State compared with that controlled by private traders has also increased.’ p 154

‘With regard to prices, the provincial authorities decided first to readjust buying prices of farm produces and improve the distribution of materials and commodities; next to readjust other prices to strive to establish *unified prices*; step by step abolish the system of administrative subsidies and shift to the socialist mode of enterprise and economic accounting. However, the system of unified prices is applied only in relations between the State sector and other sectors; with in the State sector, the system of prices is established by the central authorities is to be observed. The reason is because the economy of Long An is dependent upon the goods supplied by the central authorities.

With regard to State employees, goods are no longer supplied in kind: instead, they receive money compensation for price differentials, and efforts are made to allow them to get all the supplies they are entitled to.’

The means of production, technical materials and other industrial goods are supplied to State-run enterprises and government departments according to the procedure and the prices established by the centre. Medicines and exercise books for school pupils are distributed through the healthcare and educational networks at prices established by the centre.’ p 155

‘Naturally, the above step could only be taken as market management gradually improved, and the private traders underwent socialist transformation.’ p 156

‘.... the job of managing the free market, managing, reforming and utilizing private traders in the province, and preventing

traders from other cities and provinces from infiltrating Long An and causing economic disturbances there is a very complicated and difficult undertaking.’ p 156

‘...the extension of buying-and-selling cooperatives to the countryside, which has led to direct contracts between the State Trade and the peasants, and ever better control by the former of the goods produced by the latter. The network of State retail stores has also been expanded in town and countryside, and prices have been fixed with greater flexibility according to market fluctuations.

Thanks to better distribution of materials and consumer goods, better market management, and systematic reform of private traders, the provincial authorities have been able to purchase ever more goods, hence, to gain control over the bulk of goods.....

Thanks to better control over the money, the State has been able to grant more credit.’ pp 156-157

‘Another success recorded has been the abolition of ration tickets, and consequently of much nuisance for salaried people. Each year hundreds of thousands of *dong* are saved in the printing of ration tickets and other red tape; the number of cadres having to occupy themselves with the management of ration tickets has been greatly reduced; much time is saved in queuing, waiting in line, and other time-consuming procedures. This means also doing away with discriminatory treatment between the cadres and the population and between cadres of various categories, and with such negative activities as trafficking in ration tickets, theft, abuses, collusion, giving short weight, arrogance towards the population, etc.’ pp 157-158

‘.... revenues from the State economic sector are still modest owing to poor management of State enterprises.’ p 158

‘Another positive feature is the visible reduction in the number of private traders. There remain in the province practically no trading capitalists. As for the medium and small traders, they have registered with the authorities and are given guidance on the correct way to do business. Markets in towns and districts have been reorganized.’ p 158

‘The Successful Transformation of Private Traders and Improvement of Market management Have Been Due to the Consolidation and Expansion of the Network of Socialist Trade.

One may say that the consolidation and expansion of socialist trade is the essential lever used in the improvement of market management and the reform of private traders,’ p 159

‘The improvement in goods circulation and distribution, better market management, and the development of socialist trade have provided Long An province with favourable conditions to gradually improve the living conditions of workers, public employees and members of the armed forces of the province.....at prices which are the same for both the cadres and the population.’ pp 159-160

‘.... at prices which allow the province to do away with State subsidies, compensations being given to the people concerned for the price differentials.’ p 160

‘One must give a strong push to agricultural production by supplying the farmers with enough technical materials. One must gain control over the farm produces grown by the peasants through the network of socialist trade and buying-and-selling cooperatives, eliminate the disturbances created by private traders, and manage the market well. The State Trade, with the assistance of the buying-and-selling cooperatives, must control the sources of goods, farm produces, handicraft and industrial goods, export items. This, in addition to well-organized retail

sales, will allow the State to control the bulk of the money in circulation. Thanks to control over goods and money, the State will be in a position to guarantee real salaries and wages for workers, public employees and members of the armed forces, and gradually improve the living conditions and those of the people at large.’ pp 161-162

Ho Chi Minh City and the Economic Development of the Region

At the Third Congress (second round) of the Ho Chi Minh City party Organization, Vo Van Kiet, member of the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee, Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers and President of the State Planning Commission, delivered, in his capacity as ex-secretary of the City Party Committee, an important speech, 1984.

‘Our food production [from 1980 to 1983] did not meet the needs of the population.....

The granting of State subsidies according to the bureaucratic method of management had disastrous economic and social consequences.

The toiling masses experienced insuperable difficulties in their daily life, which badly affected their production work.’ pp 163-164

‘The daily life of our workers in regions enjoying relatively stable conditions of production has become less difficult.’ p 164

‘The new measures of economic management advocated by our Party and State have stimulated the workers’ enthusiasm, their dynamism and their spirit of collective mastery and self-reliance in various branches, sectors and regions.’ p 165

‘Proceeding from the results obtained these last few years, we must study the socio-economic strategy of our Party and work with might and main to bring about a turning-point, so as to obtain, from 1990 onwards, a fundamental change in our economy and secure socio-economic stability while laying the basis and preparing the forces necessary for socialist industrialization in the next decade.’ p 166

‘Parallel with the acceleration of food production, we must develop industrial crops. This is a strategic orientation.

In the historical condition of our country, the primitive accumulation necessary for socialist industrialization must begin with agriculture and light industry..... for socialist construction cannot be achieved with monoculture.’ pp166-167

‘..... industrial crops, both perennial and annual, make up the material and technical basis of our socialist industrialization.’ p 167

‘The processing and storage of agricultural produces (paddy, industrial crops) and fishing produces make it necessary to build a processing industry, which poses the problem of electrical energy.’ p 169

‘..... the necessity to start building, right now, an industrial agricultural structure, that is the socio-economic structure linking a city with great industrial potentialities to neighbouring provinces rich in agricultural and fishing produces.’ p 170

‘The city has a body of well-trained scientific and technical workers and tens of thousands of skilled and experienced workers (mainly in construction).’ p 171

‘The interests of Ho Chi Minh City are closely bound up with those of the other provinces in the region. If the supply of raw materials from the provinces rich in agricultural produces is cut

off, the city will see its prosperity jeopardized. Conversely, without the industrial support of Ho Chi Minh City, the provinces in the region cannot make rapid progress. This is a process of economic integration between a city with some degree of industrial development and surrounding areas rich in agricultural resources.’ p 171

‘This task is closely associated with the transformation of agriculture in the region. If crowned with success, it will directly contribute to agricultural cooperatisation, a sine qua non condition for the complete use of the manpower and land available in the region.’ p 172

‘Full employment is required for economic development.’
p 173

‘At present, a great obstacle stands in our way: the acute shortage of capital. But if a judicious orientation and appropriate methods are worked out, this seemingly insuperable obstacle can be overcome.’ p 173

‘In this field, difficulties still exist, due to inadequate organization, the lack of appropriate economic measures and policies, and to some extent, faulty managerial methods. Nevertheless, the city has many assets: great industrial potentials, competent cadres, experience in promoting the people’s collective mastery. In the first year after liberation (1975), under the impulse of the Women’s Union, selling –and– buying cooperatives, and consumer cooperatives of various kinds made their appearance, giving precious support to the State trade.....A stubborn struggle must be waged against speculation, illegal trafficking, the stealing of State property and upsetting the market, in coordination with the various branches of activity and the support of the population and mass organizations.’ p 174

Hanoi: From a Consumer City to an Industrial One
Nhan Dang 1984

‘... it [Hanoi] has changed from a city of consumers to a city of producers.’ p 175

‘The streets were mostly inhabited by traders, one out of every two families being engaged in some kind of trade.....It was against that background that liberated Hanoi embarked on the period of transition to socialism, simultaneously building and transforming its economy.’ pp 175-176

‘In the ensuing drives for the transformation of private capitalist trade and industry, all the industrial means of production, together with 421 trading enterprises and shops and more than 600 means of transport were taken over from the bourgeoisie.....Over 50,000 persons were organized into units of collective handicraft production.....Thus, Hanoi had radically abolished colonial, capitalist and feudal exploitation and established socialist relations of production based on State and collective ownership. The transformation of the relations of production immediately gave a strong impetus to the productive forces. But more important still has been the building, consolidation and strengthening of the State –run economic establishments which would serve as the core and leading force of the whole economy. Together with the expansion of the joint State-private enterprises and their equipment with new machines, the city began building a series of new industrial plants under the post-war industrial development programme.’ pp 176-177

‘Hundreds of machine tools and tens of thousands of machine parts and accessories from this plant have been exported to Cuba, Poland and Czechoslovakia.’ p 179

‘Hanoi has been the scene of many campaigns of emulation for improvement of management, technical innovation and rationalization of production.’ pp 179-180

‘Now the point is to develop it intensively in order to increase work productivity, product quality and economic efficiency..... to enhance their sense of collective mastery.’ pp 180-181