

Towards Large-Scale Socialist Agricultural Production, FLPH, Hanoi, 1975

Foreword

When the US war escalation began in 1965, almost all peasants had been regrouped in agricultural cooperatives; the first steps of an all-round technical renovation had been taken alongside the application of appropriate modalities of organization and management. The new structures were put to the test in the anti-US war of resistance they stood firm, and one can say that it was thanks to the agricultural co-operatives that the North Vietnamese countryside was able to fight effectively and to contribute so actively to the national victory.

The war, however, has obstructed agricultural development by

- slowing down industrial development;*
- drawing away a great part of the rural labour force and forcing the co-operatives to devote part of their activity to defence work. and*
- diminishing the State's investments in agriculture.*

Moreover, the US bombing raids destroyed many dams, dykes and other projects or installations serving agriculture.

A new stage began following the restoration of peace in 1973. Industry has been able to resume its advance, the State to increase its investments, and the agricultural co-operatives to devote more efforts to the development of production..... Many front-rank co-operatives and areas have applied modalities and formulas of organization and management that can now serve as models. pp 7-8

PROBLEMS OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

PHAM VAN DONG

(Speech at national conference on agricultural development in August 1974.)

..... the area under cultivation in North Viet Nam is still very small, very inadequate compared with the population and with our needs in all fields. We must quickly expand this area by many means and in many directions. The main direction consists in opening new farmlands in the midlands and mountain regions, vast areas with still untapped abundant resources. p 61

A general survey of the agricultural areas in our country (North Viet Nam at present) shows that *we are capable of building a comprehensive agriculture comprising farming and livestock-breeding, production and processing, an agriculture fully capable of meeting the needs in food of our people as well as supplying agricultural products for light industries and an increasing quantity of farm products for export.* p 64

We must gradually do away with the state of small, scattered, autarkic production and organize an ever larger and more centralized production in order to meet the growing needs of the people's life and of export.
p 64

Many of us, including members of agricultural co-ops and State farms, have not clearly seen the very close inter-relations between cultivation and stockbreeding. p 66

In a word, production, processing, transport and consumption should be closely connected, parts of a system placed under the centralized management of the State only in this way can we achieve high economic results. p 68

This is the process of growth of production bases. first of all, of agricultural co-operatives, and of State farms. It is also the process of growth of enterprises serving agricultural production comprising cultivation and stockbreeding, first of all serving agricultural co-operatives. p 68

If the majority of agricultural co-ops in North Viet Nam could catch up with advanced co-ops, this would be an important success of the co-ops in the re-organization of agricultural production and in the improvement of the management of agriculture. At the same time, we must strive urgently to boost the productive forces, i.e., in essence, to increase the technical equipment of the co-ops.

With regard to the State farms, every one of us has seen the necessity of reorganizing these enterprises so that they could perform their function as required by their position and role. These are fairly large agricultural enterprises in our country and are provided with relatively adequate and modern equipment. Along with reorganizing existing State farms, *we must set up a number or new ones with the aim of producing some of the farm products, like meat and eggs, so badly needed at present for the towns and major industrial centres, and other valuable items for export.*

With regard other State-owned enterprises catering for agriculture, we must realize their great importance. Much remains to be done in this respect. For instance, we now have a sizable number of tractors to serve agriculture. If they are put to good use, they can do many things in many respects. p 69

...whether it is capitalist or socialist, has a common point: *the increase in the productive forces, which leads to the complete transformation of agriculture from a small, scattered handicraft production into a large-scale, centralized and mechanized production on the pattern of industrial production.* pp 70-71

Realities in many co-operatives have proved that if in the present conditions of their still very small and rudimentary material-technical basis and technical equipment these agricultural co-ops have obtained such inspiring results, we are certain that when strengthened in that respect, they will obtain much greater achievements in many fields. p 72

Lenin, "On Co-operation", January 1923:

"(...) A. number of economic, financial and banking privileges must be granted to the cooperatives — this is the way our socialist state must promote the new principle on which the population must be organized. But this is only the general outline of the task ; it does not define and depict in detail the entire content of the practical task, i.e., we must find what form of “bonus” to give for joining the cooperatives (and the terms on which we should give it) the form of bonus by which we shall assist the cooperatives sufficiently...” (Emphasis by Pham Van Dong.) p 77

Up to now, the socialist countries which preceded us have gained rich experience in this matter. We should learn from their experience. However, we have to start from our practical situation and sum up our own experience, in order to solve our problems in conformity with our requirements and capabilities. p 83

We must pay especial attention to the following passage in the Resolution of the 19th Plenum of the Party Central Committee: We must strengthen *the district level* and turn it into an organization capable of giving direct guidance to agricultural production, handicrafts, the building of co-operatives, Party bases, and the administration, and organizing and leading the masses to step up the triple revolution and build the socialist countryside. The district authorities must directly control and closely guide the agricultural cooperatives, the buying-and-selling co-operatives,

the credit co-operatives, the organs for purchasing farm produce and supplying materials... in the district.”

A lot of time has gone by since and we are now confronted with an urgent problem which we must solve without delay.

The solution consists in the gradual consolidation and improvement of the district administration for it is in a position to guide directly all activities in the district, with emphasis on economic activities and particularly agricultural production. The district administration must become a centre of technical equipment for agricultural co-operatives.

pp 83-84

..... role of the district as a centre of technical equipment must be closely linked with its role of economic management. It follows that the district administration is both a level of economic management and a centre of technical equipment. These two roles are inseparable and require the cadres responsible for the district to have economic and technical capabilities and knowledge. p 85

Now we can imagine how our agriculture will march forward towards large-scale socialist production.

It must be achieved step by step and part by part, coordinating industry with agriculture, the State-run economy with the co-operative economy, the administration of economic branches with that of economic regions, the Party leadership and State management with grassroots action by our revolutionary and creative-minded masses. p 87

For the 252 districts of the North. p 87

1. *The co-operatives must make necessary preparations so as to be able to use new technical equipment.* These preparations include those made in the fields of production, organization, and management so that the level and capabilities of the co-operatives should be sufficient for the new productive forces. For example, the use of tractors requires the co-operatives to create the prerequisites and favourable conditions for their use such as the re-arrangement of the fields, the construction of better roads and revision or production plans. That is to say, the co-operatives must realize that their fundamental and long-term interests require them to make careful preparations before receiving tractors.

2. *The co-operatives must anticipate the problems that are likely to crop up as a result of the utilization of new equipment and get ready to solve them.* It is impossible to detect these problems overnight. They will only be recognized gradually through practice. What is essential is to be dynamic, to find out problems and solve them. Special attention should be paid to the problem of the *surplus labour force* resulting from the use of such new equipment. This is an inevitable outcome which will lead to a new division of labour, a rational redistribution of the labour force aimed at pushing forward socialist industrialization and bringing about a more balanced distribution of manpower over the whole territory of North Viet Nam. p 90

We must strengthen the productive forces of the co-operatives and build the district into a centre of technical equipment for the co-operatives, so as to take agriculture steadily, step by step, to large-scale socialist production. However, the tempo and quality of this work largely depend on the contributions of the services of the central administration, chiefly those responsible for economic and financial management and for the supply of technical materials. pp 90-91

The price policy should be properly applied so as to have positive effects on agricultural production and at the same time conform to the interests of socialist industrialization. p 92

To Reorganize Production and Revamp Management in the Direction of Large-scale Socialist Production

(Excerpts from the report delivered by Hoang Anh, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party and Vice-Premier of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, at the Agricultural Conference held in Thai Binh)

Due to the difference in position and character of these two major areas, *agriculture in North Viet Nam has the conditions and capabilities to combine effectively intensive cultivation, crop multiplication and other advantageous conditions of the delta area with the expansion of acreage and the development of the strong points of the mountain areas; it can combine the reorganization and redeployment of the labour force and population in the various areas.* p 97

These tasks can be accomplished only through the enthusiastic participation of the masses in the revolutionary movement under the firm

and effective leadership of the Party and with the assistance and management of the State. p 99