

PARTY ACTIVITIES AND GOVERNMENT

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TRUONG CHINH OUTLINES TASK OF PARTY HISTORIANS

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[Speech by Truong Chinh: "Accelerating the Research on Party History, Strengthening the Research Organization and Training Research Cadres*"]

[Text] Dear Comrades,

Today, we commemorate the 15th anniversary of the founding of the Department of Research on Party History in the atmosphere filled with enthusiasm following the victory of the completion of the nation's liberation, the reunification of the country and the victory of the 4th National Congress of Delegates of our party.

The Department of Research on Party History of the Central Committee has been in operation for 15 years. The majority of the local departments in the North have been in operation for more than 10 years. In the South, local departments were only recently established.

The past 15 years have been years of struggling to overcome difficulties and complete the task of the Department of Research on Party History under war time conditions in which both the quality and number of research cadres were limited. During that period of time, several major jobs had to be performed, namely, collecting and verifying data needed for the research on party history, building a corps of scientific cadres capable of conducting research and reviewing the experiences of history and compiling several documents in order to meet immediate requirements and make long-term preparations for the research and compilation of party history.

Displaying a high spirit of responsibility to the party, we made every effort, overcame our difficulties and completed the primary tasks assigned by the Party Central Committee.

Special research projects dealing with the various periods of history and projects introducing a summary of the history of the party, the life and work of President Ho Chi Minh and the major events in the history of our country's revolution since the founding of the party were carried out by our department. In the course of researching and compiling these projects, an apparatus and a

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corps of cadres researching party history were formed from the central to the local levels.

Our shortcomings have been many, but the primary one has been that we have yet to compile the official history of the party in order to meet the training and research requirements of cadres, party members and the people and, at the same time, more thoroughly introduce our party to the people of the world; in addition, we have not developed a corps of scientific research cadres commensurate with the importance, nature and demands of the science of party history.

Our immediate task is a very large one. The 4th National Congress of Delegates of the Party established the following guideline for the ideological and theoretical work of the party at this time: "Accelerating the research of theory in order to shed more light on matters pertaining to the line of the socialist revolution while summarizing the rich experiences of the Vietnamese revolution." (1)

To complete the large task of the new stage and move forward to compile a history of the party, it is very necessary that we gain experience from the past in order to accelerate the research on party history.

Today, to contribute to this effort, I would like to discuss two matters:

1. We must truly have a thorough understanding of the party nature and the scientific nature of the history of the party when researching and writing this history.
2. To research the science of party history, we must have a suitable organization and properly trained scientific cadres.

We Must Truly Have a Thorough Understanding of the Party Nature and the Scientific Nature of the History of the Party When Researching and Writing This History

Dear Comrades,

Since the birth of Marxism, the research of social history has become a science. Under the light of dialectical materialism and historical materialism, historical research has been liberated from idealistic prejudices, anti-scientific concepts and viewpoints which maintain that the writing of history involves nothing more than recording social phenomena as a string of random, separate and unrelated incidents, a string of events which develops in accordance with the desires of several historical characters and that social conditions and objective laws exercise virtually no control whatsoever over the development of history.

By means of analyzing the phenomena of social life on the basis of objective laws, Marxism-Leninism brought the subject of history from the dark shadows of subjectivism and spiritual idealism into the light of science and caused history to become a true science.

Lenin said:

"Marx...revealed the scientific way to research history in which history is considered to be a single process controlled by laws, even though it is very complex and involves very many contradictions."(2)

In fact, Marxism-Leninism considers the science of social history to be an exact science. All social phenomena are related and tied to one another. They do not develop in an accidental manner, but in accordance with the inevitable laws of the development of society. Every practical action of our party must be based on these laws. Correctly understanding and applying these laws is a very necessary prerequisite which our party must meet in order to lead the Vietnamese revolution to victory.

In summary, social history is a science; the task of the science of history is to shed light on the laws of development of society; the history of the party of the working class is the history of leading the revolution in order to liberate the working class and working people from all oppression and exploitation on the basis of the objective laws of the development of society.

The history of the Vietnam Communist Party is the history of the development of the revolutionary movement of the working class and people of Vietnam under the leadership of the party. Researching the history of the Vietnam Communist Party involves researching how our party has creatively applied Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of Vietnam in order to establish the correct lines and policies for advancing the Vietnamese revolution to victory after victory; in substance, it involves researching the history of the effort to find, understand and apply the objective laws of society in the leadership of the Vietnamese revolution during the various stages of the revolution and the different periods of the history of the party.

Clarifying matters which are in the nature of laws of the Vietnamese revolution is the task of all social sciences. This task was recorded in the resolution of the 3rd National Congress of Delegates and in the resolution of the 4th National Congress of Delegates of the Vietnam Communist Party.(3) How must the science of the history of our party clarify matters which are in the nature of laws of the Vietnamese revolution? How does the science of party history differ from philosophy, political economics and scientific socialism in the way it clarifies these laws?

Based on the experience our department has gained over the past 15 years, we can present several concepts concerning this matter.

In speeches delivered at the conferences on the research on party history held in 1966 and 1973, I emphasized the matter of the party nature and the scientific nature of the research on party history. Now, on the basis of the experience recorded in 15 years of researching party history, we must gain a deeper understanding of the party nature and scientific nature of researching and writing party history.

Our country was once a colonial and semi-feudal country; therefore, our people had to wage two revolutions: the people's national democratic revolution and the socialist revolution. The first revolution became the second, the second revolution was a continuation of the first. Each of these revolutions had its own objective, requirements, strategic task, revolutionary targets, revolutionary forces and moving forces, guidelines and methods. However, both of these revolutions were led by the working class on the basis of the alliance of workers and farmers.

Thus, generally speaking, our country's revolution had to experience two strategic stages: the stage of the people's national democratic revolution and the stage of the socialist revolution. In each strategic stage, if the ranks of the enemy and their allies changed, the stage can be divided into many periods. In the various periods of a stage, the fundamental strategic task did not change but the specific strategies and tactics could change. The party, in its leadership, had to alter its positions and policies and reorient its strategy and tactics in a manner consistent with the actual situation. I had a chance to present this matter in a speech entitled "The Strategic Guidelines of Our Party." (4)

The science of party history must show how the party has thoroughly understood and applied the laws of the development of society in the establishment of the lines, policies, guidelines and methods for leading our country's revolution in each stage and during each period of a stage in order to advance the revolution to victory. We must shed light on this matter by presenting the history of the party in the following areas:

- a) Scientifically presenting the lines and policies of the party in the stages and periods of the revolutionary campaign in our country;
 - b) Scientifically presenting the revolutionary movement of the masses to implement these lines and policies;
 - c) Presenting the positions and measures concerning the building of the party to insure the successful implementation of the political line and the successful performance of the revolutionary task of the party in the two stages and the various periods;
 - d) Presenting the experiences of the party as it led the revolution in each stage and each period and the overall revolutionary experiences of the party that have led to conclusions which are in the nature of theories.
1. Presenting the lines and policies of the party during the various stages and various periods.

The resolution of the 4th National Congress of Delegates of the Party held in December 1976 emphasized the revolutionary and scientific nature of the line of the party as follows:

"Our party has been able to lead the people in carrying out a great revolutionary undertaking primarily because it has a thorough understanding

of Marxism-Leninism; our party has always fully reflected the revolutionary and scientific nature of Marxism-Leninism in its line and revolutionary methods, in the entire struggle of the party in all periods."

This revolutionary nature and scientific nature are inseparable. A correct political line must be one that is of a fully revolutionary and scientific nature.

The revolutionary nature of the political line lies in the fact that this line reflects the needs of the development of society and reflects the need to overthrow the old society and build the new by transforming the political line of the party into revolutionary actions of the masses and transforming objective capabilities into objective reality. The scientific nature of the line of the party lies in the fact that this line reflects the objective laws of development of society and reflects the actual situation and the present needs of the revolution. The line of the party cannot be based on the feelings, aspirations or desires of only a few persons, rather, in the final analysis, it must be based on the objective conditions of society.

The correct line is one that is based on specific economic, political and social conditions. Therefore, it is necessary to present these economic, political and social conditions when presenting and clarifying the scientific base of the line.

When setting forth its revolutionary line, our party has always done so on the basis of a thorough analysis of each aspect of the situation of Vietnamese society, our situation and the enemy's situation and the balance of forces between the revolution and the counter-revolution at home and abroad during a specific period of time.

Only by correctly analyzing and evaluating the situation is it possible to adopt a correct line and position. The experience of our party as well as the experience of fraternal parties show that it is never possible to accurately and fully evaluate the entire situation; the best we can do is understand the basic trend of development of the situation. In reality, it is frequently only necessary for the leadership agency to grasp the basic trend of development and a number of basic factors and conditions and be willing to make a decision and mobilize the masses to take bold action in order for victory to be won. While this is being done, the movement will fully show us its capabilities and trend of development; at the same time, the inexhaustible creativity of the masses, the persons who write history, will provide us with guidelines and ways to resolve each and every problem. The enlarged conference of the party Central Committee Standing Committee (held from 9 to 12 March 1945) and the directive "The Japanese-French Conflict and Our Action" are two typical examples.

The Political Report of the Party Central Committee presented by Le Duan at the 4th National Congress of Delegates of the Party read in part: "On the basis of correct strategic guidelines, let us begin our work, reality will permit us to understand things more clearly... Understanding the enemy and

understanding ourselves are a process gaining deeper, more precise, clearer and more certain understanding through the realities of combat and the specific changes in the test of strength on the battlefield."

Facts have shown that we cannot demand that all objective conditions fully emerge before adopting the line. The concept that a correct line must be based on the fullest possible economic, political and social conditions is a concept of mechanical materialism, of the tendency to sit and wait. For example, our party took the position of carrying out agricultural cooperativization at a time when agriculture had not been mechanized but other conditions made it both possible and necessary for us to transform production relations before mechanizing production.

The process of the formation of the objective conditions of the revolution is not a spontaneous process. As we know, the laws of society differ from the laws of nature in that they are implemented through the conscious actions of man. Therefore, to transform objective capabilities into objective reality, man, the masses, must play a positive role. Man need not passively sit and wait for the spontaneous formation of all objective conditions, rather, in reality, only some of the necessary objective conditions are required for the masses to take revolutionary action under the leadership of the party which, in turn, stimulates the development of other objective conditions. In the course of the revolutionary activities of the masses, the comparison of forces between us and the enemy evolves, thereby causing objective conditions to ripen quickly.

In the general uprising in August 1945, the objective conditions underlying the armed uprising resulted from the defeat of the Japanese-French fascists in World War II; on the other hand, the revolutionary movement of the people led by the party stimulated the rapid development of these objective conditions. As the forces of the revolution grew stronger, they had the effect of stimulating the even more rapid development of objective conditions.

Subjective factors are also very important. Correct lines, positions, guidelines and methods are based on the objective laws of the development of society and implemented through the determined, brave and bold actions of the masses. This is of decisive significance. Conversely, sometimes when the necessary material conditions and capabilities exist but there is no correct line nor method, there is a lack of clearheadedness in trying to understand the situation and a lack of the bravery needed to take action or a lack of internal unity, it is possible to become paralyzed and miss an opportunity and even possible for the revolution to suffer a defeat. Under similar circumstances, the results achieved can vary very widely due to variations in the ability to apply the objective laws. Consider, for example, Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia in 1945...

Explaining the scientific nature of the line also involves explaining how this line has been supplemented, developed and perfected through the experience gained in the mass movement and the realities of the mass movement. Life is always changing and developing. Phenomena of a social nature rarely are fully

evident when they first emerge. The knowledge of man generally is limited in the face of the rapid development of reality. Frequently, man's understanding lags behind changes in the objective situation. Therefore, concretizing, developing, supplementing and perfecting its line and policies are essential jobs of every Marxist-Leninist party. Presenting the line and policies of the party in each stage and each period in a scientific manner does not mean simply presenting the resolutions on which they are based, rather, this presentation must extend from the time they are first set forth by the party and implemented until the most recent time they were supplemented.

We also recall that the position taken by the party to liberate the nation was not only set forth at the party plenums in 1939, 1940 and 1941, but also at the Merger Conference in February 1930 and the Party Plenum in October 1930 and concretized, supplemented and developed at the conferences of the Party Central Committee Standing Committee in February 1943 and March 1945, the National Conference in August 1945 and many other conferences.

Clarifying the scientific nature of the party's line also involves showing how this line is impregnated with the principles of Marxism-Leninism, how it is based on the special characteristics of Vietnam, how it applies the long-standing experiences of our country's revolution and, at the same time, how it selectively incorporates the experiences of the world revolution. Therefore, this line is established in an independent, autonomous and creative manner.

2. Presenting the revolutionary movement of the masses led by our party.

The doctrine of Marx not only explains the world, it also transforms the world. The dialectical materialism of Marx is completely different from old style materialism because it attaches importance to the revolutionary actions of the masses, views the revolution as the undertaking of the masses and views the masses as capable of transforming objective capabilities into objective reality under the leadership of progressive ideology. Our party has applied the universal laws of the development of history to the specific conditions of our country during each stage and period in order to establish correct lines, positions and policies. This is the first step in the process of transforming society, the first step in transforming objective capabilities into objective reality. Once they have been established, these lines and positions become a revolutionary movement of the masses within a short period of time, thereby demanding that our party perform very detailed and difficult organizational work to achieve the implementation of these lines and positions.

For this reason, the science of party history cannot simply stop at researching and presenting the lines, positions and policies of the party, but must also present the revolutionary movements carried out by the masses to implement these lines, positions and policies.

How should the revolutionary movement of the masses be presented?

In his doctrine, Marx presented the general laws of development of nature, society and thought. The revolutionary movement of the masses is an important

historic event, it is the moving force behind the development of society. In our country, during the stage of the people's national democratic revolution as well as the stage of the socialist revolution, the revolutionary movement of the masses developed in accordance with the laws set forth by Marxism-Leninism.

For nearly one-half century, the history of our country's revolutionary movement has been the history of the class struggle combined with the national struggle of millions of persons under the leadership of the working class; it has been the history of continuous revolutionary movements, of armed uprisings and revolutionary wars, the history of the process of transforming society and building the new society under the circumstances of intermittent war and peace. Our party is the leader, the commander on the battlefield; it is the conductor of this great revolutionary orchestra. The party historian must present the revolutionary movement in a manner consistent with the multi-faceted, rich and intense nature of this movement within each stratum of the people, primarily workers and farmers, under the leadership of our party. While presenting our country's revolutionary movement, it is necessary to fully illuminate its comprehensive and integrated nature. It would be both monotonous and dull to only present the revolutionary movement in terms of lines and policies or only analyze the overall movement in a dry and lifeless manner lacking specific details.

Generally speaking, the revolutionary movement under the leadership of the party has been a movement that has developed from a low to a high level, from small to large, from a few localities to a nationwide movement; one movement has followed another on a constant momentum of development. However, under certain conditions, the movement has, while developing normally, suddenly grown dramatically and, conversely, there have been times when the revolution met with temporary defeat or declined. The period of decline between 1932 and 1935 and the 1954-1959 period of maintaining our forces in the South are specific examples. The party historian must verify the reasons for these stages of decline or temporary defeats; at the same time, he must point out the weaknesses of the revolution during these stages and show the art of the party in leading the rapid restoration and development of the movement.

In the course of the revolutionary struggle filled with sacrifices and hardships, new factors, new persons are always emerging, growing and winning victory. Reactionary powers, backward factors and impediments to the progress of the movement are defeated and annihilated. Therefore, when presenting the history of the revolutionary movement, it is necessary to attach full importance to and praise new factors while strongly condemning reactionary and opportunistic powers.

The process of development of the revolutionary movement is a process of dialectical development from orderly progress to leaps forward. During the past half-century, numerous historic leaps forward have occurred in our country's revolutionary movement under the leadership of the party. Never before in the history of our nation have so many profound changes of such

tremendous importance occurred in such rapid succession as they have in recent years. We are living great moments in the history of the nation. As persons living these moments, it seems as though we feel nothing very special at all. However, the future generations of Vietnamese will be very surprised by and very proud of the victories we won in the war of resistance against the United States for national salvation, in the reunification of the country and in our socialist transformation and socialist construction of today.

The task of the party historian is to point out the great magnitude of the leaps forward and historic turning points mentioned above and prove that they were the inevitable results of the long and difficult struggle waged by our people under the leadership of the party. Whether these leaps forward occurred rapidly or slowly, whether their scale was broad or narrow and whether their victory was large or small depended upon the objective and subjective conditions of our country's revolution.

Every revolutionary movement has its own specific economic, political and social conditions, every revolutionary movement is closely linked to internal and external circumstances. Therefore, the party historian must observe and evaluate historic events from an historic point of view. Every revolutionary movement also has its own strongpoints and, at the same time, its own weaknesses or shortcomings. Of course, presenting historic events in a correct and objective manner does not mean simply praising the victories that have been won or simply emphasizing shortcomings. Present understandings cannot be imposed upon past events in a non-historic manner that detaches these events from the historic circumstances which existed at that time.

3. Presenting the positions and measures for building and developing the party in the various stages and periods.

An important job in the writing of party history is to present the positions and measures for building and developing the party for the purpose of insuring the performance of the political task of each stage and period. These positions and measures are indispensable factors in the victory of each stage and period, the victory of the entire history of the party.

Illuminating the scientific nature of the building of the party basically involves explaining how the building of the party politically, ideologically and organizationally had to be carried out to insure the completion of the specific task of each stage and period. At the same time, it is necessary to show how the specific tasks involved in building the party reflected the general principles of party building and the specific conditions surrounding the building of our party during each stage and period.

Let us consider two examples.

The task of preparing for the uprising, overthrowing the imperialists and feudalists and putting political power into the hands of the people faced cadres and party members with the following requirements: they had to be

well versed in the art of staging uprisings; combat the tendency to waver and combat hesitant, half-way thinking when the opportunity arose and conditions ripened for the uprising; possess a brave, tenacious attitude and know how to organize, mobilize and lead the masses in the struggle; promptly create propaganda and inspirational slogans and employ transitional forms of organization and struggle (political, economic and military) to move the masses forward; and utilize both the people's armed forces and the political forces of the masses to carry out local uprisings, launch a pre-uprising movement and carry out a general armed uprising throughout the country.

The political task of building the material and technical base of socialism during peace time demanded, once the revolution had achieved success, that cadres and party members be well versed in science and technology, have a knowledge of economic management, forge their spirit of self-reliance and willingness to endure hardships and launch a victorious attack on poverty, backwardness and ignorance.

The different political tasks during the various stages and periods have demanded that the building of the party politically, ideologically and organizationally also differ.

During and immediately after the period of agrarian reform, in addition to accepting outstanding members of the working class into the party, attention had to be given to accepting outstanding poor and middle peasants into the party; this was necessary in order to maintain and develop upon the victory of agrarian reform. However, once the socialist transformation of agriculture (in terms of production relations) had been virtually completed, the primary guideline for the development of the party was recruiting outstanding manual workers and collective farmers.

Applying the general principles governing the building of the party in the same way during every period would have been unscientific and would have separated the various measures for building the party from the specific task of the party in its leadership of the revolution.

4. Presenting the leadership experiences of the party during the various stages and periods.

To emphasize the major lessons learned throughout the course of the party's leadership of the revolution, lessons that have the value of laws, it is necessary to present a number of specific experiences gained during each stage of the revolution and each period of history. These experiences might not be of a universal nature. However, if they have repeated themselves many times under specific conditions, their value as laws becomes evident.

The Bac Son uprising in 1940 laid the basis for our party to reach a conclusion concerning the ability to carry out "local uprisings." Later, with the experience gained from the local uprisings during the pre-general uprising period and following the coup d'etat of the Japanese (9 March 1945),

our party reached the conclusion that it was possible to progress from local uprisings (primarily in the countryside) to a general uprising to seize political power throughout the country. This was a law of the Vietnamese people's national democratic revolution.

On the basis of its "local uprisings" argument, our party examined the realities of the world revolution during the period in which imperialism is declining and the three revolutionary movements are in an offensive position and took the position of "gradually repulsing and overthrowing one contingent at a time and eventually overthrowing all of imperialism." This is a law of the world revolution.

The experiences of each stage and period of the revolution have constantly been supplemented and improved; the party's understanding of a matter has been deepened more with each passing day. Concerning the factors of the dialectic, Lenin pointed out: "...Understanding progresses from the phenomenon to the essence of the phenomenon, from a shallow understanding of its essence to a deeper understanding."(5)

The experiences of the Vietnamese revolution that were reviewed by the 2nd National Congress of Delegates of the Party in February 1951 were developed upon and supplemented by the 3rd National Congress of Delegates of the Party in September 1960; these experiences were again improved and developed upon during the proceedings of the recent 4th National Congress of Delegates of the Party.

For this reason, researchers of party history have the task of helping the entire party constantly improve upon the experiences that have been reviewed and constantly increasing the scientific nature of these experiences under the light of the new lessons of history and on the basis of the new level of understanding. Doing this also increases the party nature and the scientific nature of the research of party history.

To Research the Science of Party History, We Must Have a Suitable Organization and Properly Trained Scientific Cadres

Dear Comrades,

Writing the history of the party is the work of the entire party; however, it is also necessary to have an organization and cadres who specialize in researching and writing party history.

To correctly resolve the problem of the organization and cadres needed to research the history of the party, we must rely upon the specifics of the task of researching and writing this history.

Political Bureau resolution number 225 on cadre activities in the new stage (1973) specifically defined the relationship between the political task and organizational work as follows:

"The building of the corps of cadres must be based on the political and organizational lines of the party during each specific period. The political line determines the organizational task, within which cadre activities occupy a very important position. Only with a correct political line and organizational task is it possible to develop correct guidelines and specific requirements for building a strong, stable corps of cadres. Conversely, only a high quality corps of cadres insures that the organizations of the party and state are effective and that the political line of the party is successfully implemented."

A correct political line gives birth to good cadres. Conversely, good cadres insure that the political line is successfully implemented.

Thus, what kind of organization and corps of specialized cadres is needed in order to smoothly carry out the task of researching and writing party history? Over the past 15 years, we have made an effort to resolve this problem and have achieved several results; however, there are still some weaknesses which we must make every effort to correct. From the jobs that have been performed as well as those that have not, we can gain a number of valuable experiences that help us deeply understand the relationship between the political task and organizational and cadre work.

To build an organization and a corps of cadres suited to the task of researching and writing party history, it is first of all necessary to have a deep understanding of exactly what is involved in researching and writing party history; on this basis, we must determine the kind of organization and corps of cadres this task requires. The actual experience of past years shows that the apparatus established to research party history must consist of organizations and cadres capable of researching and writing party history under the requirements of scientifically presenting and analyzing the lines and policies of the party, the revolutionary movement of the masses under the leadership of the party and the positions and measures for building the party during the different stages and periods and learning lessons and gaining experiences of a general nature. This apparatus must guarantee that each cadre and the entire research agency can focus their capabilities and energies on their main job of researching and writing party history. A scientific research agency cannot allocate much time or many people to administrative jobs. Even though such work as administrative work, personnel work, the organization of life and so forth is necessary, neither too many persons nor too much time can be devoted to these jobs. Moreover, the organizational apparatus must have clear work rules and regulations designed to insure the completion of its research plan and improve the quality of research projects. An apparatus which does not meet the requirements mentioned above cannot be called a scientific apparatus and, for this reason, is not suited to the political task and might even pose obstacles to the performance of this task. Over the past 15 years, we have made many efforts to meet the requirements of the political task; however, we are still weak in some areas; our most serious weakness at this time is that the party history research agencies on the central and local levels do not possess the full nature of a scientific research apparatus and the qualifications of the cadres who research and write history do not meet the requirements of the task assigned them.

Building the corps of party history research cadres in such a way that it is consistent with its task is a problem that will take many more years to resolve. Of importance is the need to establish the standards of the party history research cadre and correctly apply these standards to our actual circumstances.

The Party Central Committee has established the standards of the person engaged in the research of party history as the following:

"He must be politically strong and agree with the viewpoints and line of the party; possess a basic knowledge of Marxist-Leninist theory, have deep knowledge of the history of our party and the history of the nation and have the necessary knowledge of the history of the international communist and worker movement; possess an academic education and the ability to conduct research, practice correct research methods and be able to review experiences; possess good revolutionary qualities and virtues and have a certain amount of work experience."(6)

Why must the person engaged in researching the history of the party meet the standards mentioned above?

As I stated earlier, the line of our party is the result of the application of Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of our country; it reflects the stand of the working class, reflects the objective laws of the development of history. The person who researches the history of the party absolutely must clearly understand and agree with the viewpoints and line of the party.

Marxism-Leninism is the revolutionary science of the working class, it is the system of knowledge of the universal laws of nature and society. Without a knowledge of Marxism-Leninism, it is impossible to clarify the scientific base of the correct lines and policies of the party, impossible to analyze the complex phenomena of society, analyze historic events in an objective manner and determine the essence of matters; without this knowledge, it is impossible to differentiate right and wrong, impossible to differentiate the phenomenon from its essence, know how to see through the phenomenon in order to determine its essence and use the essence to explain the phenomenon and impossible to avoid falling into anecdotism...

The history of our party is the history of the application of Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of Vietnam for the purposes of establishing lines, positions, policies and methods for leading the Vietnamese in the struggle against the imperialists, feudalists and bourgeoisie, winning political power and building a Vietnam of peace, independence, unity and socialism. The history of our party is the history of the brave struggle waged by the Vietnamese under the leadership of the party, the history of the combination of the nation's tradition of revolutionary struggle with the essence and intelligence of the age. The researcher of party history must not only have profound knowledge of the history of the party, he must also have profound knowledge of the history of the nation.

The Vietnamese revolution is a component of the world revolution. The line of the party is based on specific conditions in the country and the world. As a result, the researcher of party history must have a certain knowledge of the history of the international communist and worker movement and world history, in general, especially the history of the modern world.

If permitted by the Party Central Committee, the researcher of party history can study secret directives and resolutions of the party to learn the mistaken positions and viewpoints within the party during each period. Therefore, it is even more necessary for the researcher of party history to possess revolutionary qualities and virtues and possess a high sense of organization and discipline; he must thoroughly understand the party nature and scientific nature of researching and writing party history and express a loyal attitude in this work.

The lines and policies of the party are based on the revolutionary realities of the masses and are tested and developed by reality. The researcher of party history who does not have a certain amount of experience in the mass movement will find it difficult to deeply understand the revolutionary nature and scientific nature of the lines and policies of the party and, as a result, might easily become subjective or dogmatic in his research work.

In summary, the standards mentioned above comprise an entity, they cannot be separated from one another. The person engaged in researching and writing party history cannot fail to meet any one of these standards. The selection, use and training of party history research cadres must be carried out on the basis of the standards mentioned above. Persons who have the responsibility of and the authority to resolve the organization and cadre problem must have a clear understanding of the substance and nature of researching and writing party history and must be thoroughly familiar with the standards for party history research cadres in order to adopt correct guidelines for resolving this problem.

Due to the failure to fully understand the substance and nature of researching party history and due to the fact that party history research cadre standards have been established slowly, the arrangement of the organization and the use of cadres have not been satisfactory in some cases and cadres have not been carefully selected in terms of their qualities, ethics and ability to research and write history.

The qualifications needed to meet the standards mentioned above are not fully possessed by a cadre as soon as he begins his work, rather, they must be developed through the process of the cadre's participation in researching and writing history, through studying and training. However, we must still rely upon these standards in selecting cadres for the sector and assigning more cadres to the agency.

It would be a serious organizational mistake for us to want the agency to grow by rapidly recruiting many cadres and placing heavy emphasis upon sheer numbers while giving light attention to quality!

The matter of foremost importance with regard to party history research cadres is that they make every effort to study and train in order to cultivate revolutionary qualities and develop the abilities required by their work.

The researcher of party history must have the habit of delving deeply into matters and must possess the ability to analyze matters pertaining to the history of the party, review experiences and help build the theory of the Vietnamese revolution. He must firmly adhere to the stand of Marxism-Leninism and attack the science of party history; he can fear neither difficulties nor hardships and not be afraid to write, even write a paper over many times; he must be determined to reach the pinnacle of the science of party history.

Marx said:

"In science, there is no straight, wide road, and only those who are unafraid of the hardships encountered in traveling the rough road of science are fortunate enough to reach the shining pinnacle of science." (7)

To reach the "shining pinnacle of science," we must have correct guidelines, a suitable organization and plan, suitable methods, high determination...

The process of training party history research cadres in order to help them meet the prescribed standards is a process coordinating two efforts: on the one hand, the agency adopts a long-term plan for the elementary and advanced training of cadres; on the other hand, cadres must be determined to improve themselves. These two efforts are closely related. However, the matter of most decisive significance is the struggle waged by the cadre himself.

It is my hope that each of our research cadres can establish the following target for himself: to become, within the space of roughly 10 years, a party history research cadre who is highly specialized in a number of periods or subjects of party history and capable of helping the department generalize experiences and reach conclusions of theoretical value. Comrades who possess rather good political qualifications, have a rather good command of theory and have gained a certain amount of experience can meet this target in a shorter amount of time.

To meet this target, the cadres of our sector must struggle and work as hard as they can and patiently study and train.

The cadre who researches party history can never be complacent, never be satisfied with his work. He must be determined not to endure a dearth of knowledge or superficiality and a lack of thoroughness in his research. He must be determined not to endure the backward in the face of the development of revolutionary theory and practice. He must "learn, learn some more, never stop learning." Many of our comrades working under extremely difficult conditions have transformed prisons into schools! We should not allow ourselves to feel regret in the future simply because we are too lazy to study and train under the favorable conditions that exist today.

The question of how to learn in order to achieve the highest possible returns is also very important. We must not only learn from books and the press, but also in our everyday work; through the research of special subjects and periods of history, we must gradually improve our qualifications. We must not be afraid to engage in discussions nor be afraid to listen to opinions contrary to our own. We must practice generalizing matters and thinking in abstract terms.

In the cultivation of qualities, the matter of foremost importance is that of heightening our sense of organization and discipline. This is the important virtue which differentiates the ideological stand of the working class from petty bourgeois individualism and bourgeois liberalism. The party history research cadre who engages in divisiveness and factionalism, is unorganized and undisciplined, lives a disorderly life and speaks in an irresponsible manner naturally cannot conduct good research.

To help the party history research cadre struggle and train and meet the target mentioned above, the Department of Research on Party History must adopt a very good plan for training cadres, a plan which closely and smoothly coordinates training in specialized party history schools, short-term classes and on-the-job classes with everyday research, political and scientific activities and the practice of self-criticism and criticism.

Assigning cadres to the right jobs at the right place, efficiently employing the capabilities and qualifications of cadres and creating the conditions for cadres to develop upon their strengths and correct their weaknesses are also effective cadre training methods.

Dear Comrades,

A new era of our nation of Vietnam has begun: the era of independence, freedom, unity and socialism. The great undertaking of our people under the leadership of the party demands that our party history research sector write pages of party history shining with revolutionary heroism and deeply impregnated with the ever victorious thinking of Marxism-Leninism. The quality of these pages depends, to an important extent, upon the scientific organization and the efforts of our corps of research cadres under the leadership of the party.

We must make every effort to work, study and train so that we can complete "The Draft History of the Party," supplement and improve "President Ho Chi Minh, His Life and Work" and eventually write the "History of the Vietnam Communist Party"; complete the review of the special topics assigned by the Political Bureau to the Department of Research on Party History of the Party Central Committee, namely, the Nghe-Tinh Soviet, the August Revolution and agrarian reform. We must also remind and help the sectors that have assumed the responsibility for reviewing such matters as the national united front, the people's war and the people's armed forces, the dictatorship of the proletariat state and the building of the party.

At the same time, the Department of Research on Party History of the Party Central Committee must give its attention to helping the local departments, especially those in the South, because these departments were only recently established, they have not been strengthened and they lack much experience.

Depending upon their capabilities, the Departments of Research on Party History in the various localities should build and strengthen their forces and research and write about several special revolutionary themes in order to eventually compile the history of the local party organization and actively contribute to the compilation of the history of our party. The various party committee echelons must closely lead and give their attention to helping the Departments of Research on Party History in every respect and create favorable conditions for them to complete their task well.

I wish you health and much success in your work.

FOOTNOTES

- * Speech at the Conference of Sector Cadres held on the 15th anniversary of the founding of the Department of Research on Party History of the Party Central Committee, 7 February 1977.
- 1. See: "The resolution of the 4th Congress of the Vietnam Communist Party."
- 2. V. Lenin: "Karl Marx, Engels and Marxism," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1959, p 20.
- 3. See VII, subtitle "Improving Ideological Work Within the Party."
- 4. See: "The Vietnamese People's National Democratic Revolution," Volume II, p 403.
- 5. Lenin: "Philosophical Notes," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1963, p 246.
- 6. Party Secretariat circular 309 TT/TW of 9 December 1974.
- 7. Karl Marx: "Capital," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1963, Book I, Volume II, p 47.

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